

NIDCD Administrative Research Supplements to Promote Emergence of Independent Otolaryngologist-Investigators

Objectives and Background

The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) announces the availability of two-year administrative research supplements to currently-active NIDCD-supported R01 and P50 grants for junior tenure-track faculty in Otolaryngology. This initiative targets applicants who have demonstrated a keen interest in forging an independent physician-scientist career track in fundamental, translational or patient-oriented research within the NIDCD scientific mission areas of hearing, balance, smell, taste, voice, speech and language, but have less than two years of prior full-time research training and experience. Such individuals would not be competitive applicants for NIDCD mentored clinician-scientist career development (K08 & K23) awards or for research project grant awards, including the NIDCD Small Grants (R03). This program seeks to nurture these individuals to successfully compete for NIDCD K08/K23 awards and R03 awards.

The NIDCD recognizes the compelling need to recruit physicians trained in the surgical subspecialty of otolaryngology into its research enterprise to facilitate translation of fundamental scientific discoveries within its scientific mission from “bench-to-bedside.” The rigors of clinical training and the need for refinement of surgical skills over the years of residency, post residency fellowship training and early clinical practice have proven formidable challenges for attracting otolaryngologists to integrate a research trajectory into their careers. In addition, the dearth of physician-investigator role models among clinical faculty members and the desire to strike a more favorable balance between work and life/family demands have discouraged many promising physician-scientists from pursuing this career track. While the popular perception is that physicians are disadvantaged in the NIH peer review process, it has been recently demonstrated that physician-investigators, whether engaged in basic or clinical research, compete favorably with non-clinical PhDs for NIH R01 funding across the NIDCD and the other NIH Institutes (Kotchen et al., JAMA 2004; NIDCD data).

The NIDCD K08/K23 Award Program has been shown to be an efficacious vehicle for transitioning junior clinical faculty with substantive research backgrounds in otolaryngology to independent investigators competitive for NIH research grant funding. However, there are junior faculty members in otolaryngology with a keen interest in research, but limited research backgrounds. NIDCD requires that its K08 and K23 applicants have at least two years of prior research experience.

The present initiative is one of the responses of the NIDCD to a corpus of recommendations directed to it by the Conference on Research Education and Training in Otolaryngology (Grandis, JR, et al.: Research Education and Training in Otolaryngology: Meeting Summary and Research Opportunities; OHNS 2006; 135, 361-367), co-sponsored by the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery Foundation and the NIDCD in late 2005.

This research supplement program hardwires a mentoring relationship between the sponsoring PI and the budding clinician-scientist through directly “tethering” the latter to the funded NIH research grant of the mentoring PI. The research experience proposed

for the candidate must be within the research scope of the parent grant at the level of the specific research aims, and it must have the potential to contribute significantly to the research career development of the candidate. It is expected that a follow-up mentored K-award (K08 or K23) or R03 application will be prepared and submitted during Year Two of the supplement award period.

Eligibility

Administrative research supplements may be requested by Principal Investigators (PIs) and Program Directors (PDs) holding active NIDCD R01 and P50 grants, respectively, having a minimum of two years of support remaining, as of the anticipated start time of the supplemental award. A supplement award may not extend beyond the parent award period. The applicant PI/PD must be a faculty member within the candidate's home institution.

A candidate must be an otolaryngologist holding a full-time tenure-track junior faculty position at the Assistant Professor academic rank in a university department of otolaryngology within the United States. Candidates need not be citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. However, candidates who are foreign nationals will not be eligible to subsequently apply for the NIH mentored clinician-investigator K-award programs, and will be expected to submit an R03 application to follow-up the supplemental award. The candidate is required to devote at least half-time (50%) commitment of effort to the proposed research and career development experience over a period of two years, allowing for further refinement of clinical/surgical skills in tandem with a meaningful research career development experience, including preparation in crafting and submitting a competitive K08, K23 or R03 application. Prior research experience is desirable, but not necessary.

Award Information

Up to \$100,000 direct costs per year may be requested. Of that amount, up to \$25,000 may be requested for research costs (including supplies, technical personnel, computational services, but not equipment), travel, tuition and fees related to the proposed research experience; a maximum of \$2,000 per year may be allocated for travel. Salary and fringe benefits for the candidate should be consistent with the institution's salary structure for surgeons at the assistant professor-level. No funds may be requested to supplement the salaries of the PI or other personnel, or to purchase equipment. Facilities and administrative costs may be requested at a level consistent with the current negotiated facilities and administrative costs rate agreement.

The earliest anticipated award date is **December 1, 2008**, although earlier awards are possible if Fiscal Year 2008 (FY08) funds become available late in FY08 (which ends on September 30, 2008). The NIDCD expects to make up to six new supplement awards (each two years in duration) during Fiscal Year 2009 (FY09), based on the quality of applications and the availability of funds, for an aggregate expenditure of up to \$900k for FY09. There will be a limit of one supplemental awardee per parent grant and two active supplemental awardees per academic clinical department (whether or not the parent grant(s) is/are held by a faculty member in the home clinical department of the candidate).

Application Instructions

Applications must be prepared using the PHS 398 research grant application forms (rev. 04/06). The application instructions are available at <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html> in an interactive format. For further assistance contact GrantsInfo, Telephone: (301) 435-0714, Email: GrantsInfo@nih.gov. An application for an administrative supplement may be submitted by current NIDCD R01 and P50 grant holders. Applications must be submitted to the NIDCD, **not to the NIH Center for Scientific Review**. The Principal Investigator must submit one original and two copies of the application in hardcopy to the NIDCD Program Official listed at the end of this document. In addition, an electronic copy (PDF file) of the signed application is strongly encouraged (also to be sent to this program official).

The request for the supplemental award MUST include the following:

- A completed face page (with appropriate signatures) from Grant Application Form PHS 398 (revised 04/06). Include the title and number of the parent grant on line 1 and enter “Administrative Research Supplements to ORLs” on line 2.
- A description of up to ten pages, prepared by the PI of the funded parent grant, in collaboration with the candidate, that includes:
 - A brief summary (up to one page) of the abstract and the specific research aims of the parent grant.
 - A description of: 1) the plan and timeline for the research and career development experiences proposed for the candidate; 2) how the proposed research plan relates to the overall and specific research aims of the parent grant; 3) how this research and career development plan will foster the career development of the candidate; and, 4) the mentorship that will be provided. In addition, a formal plan for training in the following three areas should be integrated into the two-year research experience: 1) the responsible conduct of research; 2) statistics and research design; and 3) grant writing skills. This training may be completed within the format of a face-to-face course or seminar series or a tailored directed study experience with a qualified faculty member. If one or more components of this training have been completed within the last three years, this should be documented in the application.
 - A signed statement from the candidate outlining her/his long-term career goals as an otolaryngologist-investigator.
- In addition, the following information must be provided:
 - Biographical sketches for the candidate (that includes evidence of scientific interest and achievement) and for the sponsor(s). The source(s) of current funding for the sponsor(s) and the candidate must also be listed.
 - An itemized budget entered on the budget pages from Grant Application Form PHS 398 for the two years of the research supplement. If the initial budget period requested is less than 12 months, the budget must be prorated accordingly.
 - Updated resources checklist pages.
 - A letter of support from the department chair of the candidate outlining the commitment of the department to the research career development of the candidate and affirming that the requested resources of the

parent grant and effort (at least 50%) of the candidate will be protected for the proposed research experience. If the parent grant is held by a faculty member from another department within the institution, both that chair and the candidate's chair must include letters of support.

- Documentation, if applicable, that the proposed research experience was approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) or human subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the grantee institution. Adherence to the NIH policy for inclusion of human subjects across gender, racial/ethnic and children groups must also be insured if additional human subjects' involvement is planned for the supplement component.
- If any of the research is to be conducted at a site other than the grantee institution, an appropriately signed letter from the institution where the research is to be conducted must be submitted. Documentation of IACUC and IRB approval is required from this institution, as well.
- There is a post-award requirement of a one-page summary of the research and career development accomplishments of the supplement in the next progress report of the parent grant to the NIDCD. Second-year funding of the supplemental award is contingent on acceptable progress reported for Year One.

Applicants for this administrative supplement initiative may not submit appendix materials.

Review and Selection Process

Following an administrative review for completeness, overall eligibility and relevance to the NIDCD mission, the staff of the Institute's Division of Scientific Programs will review a request for an administrative research supplement to determine its overall merit, with input from an appropriate scientific peer review group. The following review criteria will be used:

- The qualifications and commitment of the candidate to developing an independent research career trajectory as a physician-scientist in human communication, including career goals, prior research training, and research potential;
- The plan for the proposed research experiences in the supplemental request and their relationship to the parent grant;
- Suitability of the proposed research and career development experiences in the two-year period to enhance the research potential, knowledge, and/or skills of the candidate to develop an independent research career trajectory;
- Evidence that appropriate mentorship will be provided and of "goodness-of-fit" between the sponsoring PI(s) and the candidate; and
- Quality and appropriateness of institutional resources and facilities and institutional commitment to developing the candidate's independent research career trajectory.

There are two submission dates for this administrative supplement program, **May 1, 2008** and **November 1, 2008**. Applicants will be notified of the funding decision of an application within twelve weeks of its receipt.

Before submitting an application for an administrative research supplement, prospective PI and PD applicants and their candidates are required to contact Dr. Daniel Sklare, the NIDCD program official responsible for extramural research training and career development (telephone: 301-496-1804; email: sklared@nidcd.nih.gov) to discuss their application. Inquiries about fiscal matters may be directed to Mr. Christopher Myers, Chief the NIDCD Grants Management Branch (telephone: 301-402-0909; email: myersc@nidcd.nih.gov). Application materials should be submitted to Dr. Sklare at the address noted below.

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