



Request for Proposal (RFP)

2019 WSS Research Project

The Wiedemann-Steiner Syndrome Foundation will provide grant funding for a combined maximum amount of \$200,000 (total cost) to support research related to Wiedemann-Steiner Syndrome. One or more grant awards may be issued as a result of this RFP.

Background

Wiedemann-Steiner Syndrome (WSS) is a rare genetic disorder resulting from haploinsufficiency at the KMT2A locus on the long arm of Chromosome 11, where the majority of mutations occur *de novo*. The gene encodes a histone-modifying enzyme forming part of the epigenetic machinery that regulates the expression of other genes. The mechanisms by which mutations in the KMT2A gene causes the phenotype of Wiedemann-Steiner syndrome are not fully understood. WSS was genetically identified in 2012, and since that time parents and families of those affected have faced the challenge of having little or no information. The number of diagnosed patients is estimated to be 700 worldwide and continues to increase with the prevalence of whole exome sequencing.

Research Objective

The WSS Foundation is accepting grant proposals that advance the discovery or development of treatments for WSS. Grants will be awarded to qualified researchers to initiate scientific research studies or clinical trials, the results of which could be used to obtain future funding from NIH, FDA, or other funding agencies, or to attract a corporate sponsor. Procedures or proposed therapeutic trials may be new, based on recent biochemical or pharmacological evidence, or in the preliminary stages of clinical investigation. Evaluation of proposals will include careful consideration of protocol design, objectivity of parameters measured, and the statistical evaluation proposed. Research that focuses on understanding the dysfunction resulting from mutated forms of the KMT2A gene will be given priority. It is recognized that many gaps exist in the basic understanding of WSS and its role in human development. Therefore, research that may address these gaps are welcomed, provided they are tethered to the development of a potential therapy.



Eligibility

- Proposals from researchers from an academic institution, non-profit institutions or foundations, and biopharmaceutical companies, are eligible to respond to this RFP.
- Researchers must have a clear research plan.
- Principal Investigator (PI) must hold a Ph.D. or M.D. in a relevant discipline, or other credentials that demonstrate his or her expertise to carry out the proposed research.
- For proposals involving Human Subjects research, PI must provide evidence prior to funding being awarded that the proposed activities have been approved by a Common Rule-compliant University or federally approved appropriate Institutional Review Board (IRB).
- For proposal involving Vertebrate Animals, PI must provide evidence prior to funding being awarded that the proposed activities have been approved by an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) or appropriate animal care and use program.
- At this time, proposals must be submitted in English.

The WSS Foundation requires that research will be conducted in a transparent, accountable, and ethical way; that the findings will meet the highest standards of science; and, that scientific results will be published.

All applicants must first submit a Letter of Interest (LOI) that will determine if a full application submission is warranted.



Letter of Interest (LOI) Instructions and Review Procedure

LOI Due Date: LOI document is to be received by the WSS Foundation no later than Monday, September 30, 2019, via USPS or email at WSSFoundation@gmail.com in a single file. Applicants will be notified via email on or before Wednesday, October 16, 2019, with a decision regarding their LOI, which, if successful, will invite the applicant to submit a full application. Note, the WSS Foundation may at its discretion choose to extend the due dates. Any modification to this document will be communicated through the WSS Foundation website at www.wssfoundation.org.

LOI Format:

- *Style:* Times New Roman, black ink, 12 point font, text single spaced.
- *Header:* There should be a header at the top right on every page of the documents indicating the full name of the PI (e.g. Jane D. Jones).
- *Footer:* There should be a footer at the bottom right on every page of the documents indicating the page number.
- *Recommended Length:* Ideally, the LOI will be five pages or less.
- *File names:* LOI files should start with the last name of the PI followed by the brief name of the document. (e.g. Jones-WSS_LOI)
- *File Type:* All emailed LOIs should be submitted in one file, preferably a Portable Document Format (PDF).

LOI Content:

1. Project Title
2. PI and Co-PIs, and associated institutions or organizations
3. Overall goal of the project with outlined Specific Aims
4. Brief background describing the relevance to the research objective of RFP. Please note that the applicant will not be invited to submit a full application if relevance to the RFP is not clearly described in the LOI.
5. Requested resources in terms of one year of funding. The maximum award amount is \$200,000 (including direct and indirect costs), but can be spread over two years. It is preferred that applicant institutions waive, or leverage as their matching (cost-share) funds, all indirect costs, allowing the total amount of funding by the WSS Foundation to go towards research. Any indirect costs up to a maximum of 10% could be accepted in exceptional cases.



Full Application (Proposal) Instructions and Review Criteria

(Full Application is by Invitation only after review of LOI)

Proposal Due Date: If invited after a successful LOI, the full application is to be received by the WSS Foundation no later than Friday, November 15, 2019, via USPS or email at WSSFoundation@gmail.com in a single file. The WSS Foundation will make every effort to notify Applicants via email on or before Wednesday, December 18, 2019, with a decision regarding their proposal. Note, the WSS Foundation may at its discretion choose to extend the due dates. Any modification to this document will be communicated through the WSS Foundation website at www.wssfoundation.org.

Proposal Format:

- *Style:* Times New Roman, black ink, 12 point font, text single spaced.
- *Header:* There should be a header at the top right on every page of the documents indicating the full name of the PI (e.g. Jane D. Jones).
- *Footer:* There should be a footer at the bottom right on every page of the documents indicating the page number.
- *File names:* Application files should start with the last name of the PI followed by the brief name of the document. (e.g. Jones-WSS_Proposal)
- *File Type:* All emailed applications should be submitted in one file, preferably a Portable Document Format (PDF).

Proposal Content:

1. Cover Page/Checklist/Institutional Signature Page
2. Biosketch with Other Support of PI and key personnel
 - a. The PI must include accurate and complete information for all other sources of grant support (current and pending), including title, abstract, annual and total amount of grant, inclusive funding period, and percent effort.
3. Budget and Budget Narrative with Project Milestones
 - a. The detailed budget should include justification for annual costs of the award, as well as anticipated expenses within a fiscal calendar year for each year during the expected term of the project. Provide a timeline indicating clear milestones with required goals (including criteria to define successful outcomes) throughout the project.



Allowable Direct Costs

- Salary for PI
- Salary/stipend and related benefits for graduate student/postdoctoral fellow
- Travel (up to \$1,500)
- Laboratory supplies and other research expenses

Unallowable Costs

- Salary/Consultant costs
- Professional membership dues
- Equipment >\$5,000
- General office supplies
- Facilities and Administrative Costs (indirect costs)
- Pre-award charges
- Tuition
- Any expenses not directly related to the project

4. Research Plan and Bibliography

- a. Please include the following sections: Lay summary - to be shared publicly if grant is awarded; Background and Significance; Preliminary Studies/Data; Research Design and Methods. Text citations should use a numbered format. Include all author names in the reference list. Connection to other research to WSS if applicable.

5. Appendix

- a. Supplemental information should not exceed five pages. It should include publications and references of work related to research proposal. Please include IRB and/or IACUC approval letters if relevant.

Proposal Review Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed for scientific content and relevance to the research objectives of the RFP. The following criteria will be utilized in proposal review:

1. Project Proposal – Is the budget fully justified and reasonable in relation to the proposed project?
2. Scientific Approach – Is the fundamental objective of the study and hypothesis clearly defined, and the study goals supported by existing data?
3. Clinical Impact – Is the answer to the study hypothesis important to the ability to treat WSS? Will the proposed research lead to substantial advances or knowledge that will contribute to an improved quality of life, or greater understanding of WSS?



4. Research Significance – Does the study address an important question that is not likely to be addressed without this funding? Will the results of the study advance our knowledge of this disease and/or contribute to changes in the focus of future research questions or the way we conduct research on this issue?
5. Investigator Qualifications – While it is important for the investigator to have access to the resources and environment necessary to complete the proposed work, this RFP is not limited to scientists currently working on WSS. We encourage junior and senior investigators not previously working in this area to apply. One of our intentions is to attract new talent toward WSS research.
6. Budget and Budget Narrative – Provide a detailed cost analysis that will verify proposed expenses. We will determine necessity, reasonableness, and allocability of the costs to fulfill desired research objectives and allowability under RFP guidelines, funding agreement and applicable federal, state and local regulations. Our analysis will be initiated based on budget and budget narrative information along with supporting documents (e.g. indirect cost agreements, financial statements, etc) submitted with the research proposal or requested as part of the evaluation.
7. Research Resources – Share organizational history, structure, insurance liability and certification of conflict of interests.
8. List of other relevant research publications.



Award Information

The terms and conditions described below will apply to the awarded grantee/institution. This award is based on the application for the above-referenced project submitted to, and as approved by the WSS Foundation, and is subject to the terms and conditions below. The Award is contingent upon the availability of funds and is subject to the Terms and Conditions herein, which may be revised from time to time. By accepting an Award, the Principal Investigator and the Grantee Institution agree to be bound by the Terms and Conditions. Funding for this Award is provided by the WSS Foundation with the goal of developing effective treatments for patients and greater understanding of Wiedemann-Steiner Syndrome.

Payment

Specific payment amounts and schedules will be negotiated as part of acceptance of the research plan based on the budget request and justifications outlined in the budget narrative. Any changes to this schedule will be confirmed with the Grantee Institution upon a prior written notice.

Terms & Conditions

1. All funds shall be used exclusively for the purposes provided for in the application and in strict compliance with the approved budget.
2. The total award shall not exceed \$200,000 (including direct and indirect costs). It is preferred that applicant institutions waive or leverage to match their indirect costs thereby allowing the total amount to go towards research. However, no more than a maximum of 10% might be accepted in exceptional cases.
3. Travel expenses up to \$1,500 is allowed, including international travel, provided travel is related to the Research Project.
4. Equipment costs greater than \$5,000 are not allowed.
5. Reallocations between budget categories (Personnel, Supplies, Other Expenses) of a cumulative limit of 10% or less are allowable. Budget revisions in excess of 10% between categories require justification and prior approval by the WSS Foundation board of directors.
6. Any funds that have not been used for, or committed to, the Research Project upon the completion of or termination of the Research Project must be returned promptly to the WSS Foundation.
7. Oversight for use of animals is the responsibility of the Grantee Institution. The Grantee Institution and Principal Investigator agree that animal use will comply with all



applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to current EPA, FDA, USDA, and NIH guidelines.

8. Appropriate citation of all collaborations must be included in all publications resulting from the Award.
9. All final data sets and observations must be shared openly with the full scientific community, and all new information and research tools developed under this Award must be made accessible upon request.
10. The WSS Foundation reserves the right to share the LOI, full application, as well as progress reports and the final report with the WSS Foundation's Scientific Advisory Board and Medical Advisory Board. LOIs and full applications will also be shared with external reviewers at the discretion of the WSS Foundation board of directors. The WSS Foundation reserves the right to share the following information about the Award with the public: Principal Investigator name, Award amount, title of Award/Research Project, and a non-confidential, lay-language final report and project summary.
11. The Principal Investigator of the award will be expected to attend the annual WSS International Conference(s) and present findings and/or current research. The WSS Foundation will reimburse the PI directly for reasonable, pre-approved travel expenses related to this meeting. These meetings occur annually in conjunction with the American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) Annual Meeting.

Reporting Requirements

The PI of the grant should conduct ongoing evaluation on whether the project is meeting the goals and expected outcomes, milestones or deliverables as set forth in the application.

The PI will be required to submit a project report every year, including a final report at the end of the grant period. A final financial report is also required.

Periodic progress reports may be established upon award at a schedule that is mutually agreed upon by the PI and WSS Foundation.

Additionally, if a milestone is not accomplished, the PI must schedule a review meeting (e.g. video or telephone call) with the WSS Foundation. After a review meeting, the WSS Foundation may elect to terminate the project.