

2020 Barbara L. Crow Investigator-Concept Grant: Request for Proposal

The Barbara L. Crow Investigator-Concept Grant (ICG) is a research effort in which the investigator designs the study and LVG/Grantor acts as the study sponsor, not the investigator. As the sponsor, LVG/Grantor assumes all responsibilities for complying with applicable regulatory requirements. The investigator may support the study in the form of product or technical input where necessary.

Important Deadlines

Letter of intent – February 29, 2020

Full proposal –April 15, 2020

Award Announcement at 2020 ARVO annual meeting.

Introduction

Currently the World Health Organization estimates that 253 million people worldwide live with vision impairment; 36 million blind and another 217 million with moderate to severe vision impairment. Globally, chronic eye diseases are the main cause of vision loss, and it's estimated that over 80% of all vision impairment can be prevented or cured.

The use of donor ocular tissue in the development of treatments and surgical interventions has a long history. From the treatment of cataracts to the sequencing of genes in glaucoma, research utilizing donated cadaveric eyes has been part of the advancement of ocular medicine for over 100 years. In recent years the cost of recovery and provision of human eyes for research has climbed significantly due to regulatory changes, researcher demands on timelines and preservations, and countless other factors. Because of this increase in cost, many eye banks have limited research tissue recoveries or stopped recovering for non-transplant uses all together. As a result, it can be difficult for clinicians and scientists to conduct early-stage studies using donor ocular tissues. Thus, Lions VisionGift (LVG) has created a mechanism to help stimulate innovative early-stage projects that may lead to life-changing treatments for ocular diseases.

Funding details

The goal of this Grant is to develop novel approaches through the proof of concept stage for the treatment of ocular diseases. These approaches should demonstrate the potential for the development of a commercial technology to improve patient outcomes. The Barbara L. Crow Investigator-Concept Grant is intended to support clinicians and scientists in the early stages of product/treatment feasibility. Four grants will be awarded annually (1 to clinical/academic researchers and 1 to pharmaceutical/industry researchers twice per year). LVG will provide all cadaveric ocular tissue and staff for all research and testing necessary to complete the value of the grant. There will be **no monetary exchange** between LVG and grant recipients, and the value for tissue and research performed will be a maximum of \$15,000.

LVG Laboratory Resources

LVG's Vision Research Laboratory boasts contemporary clinical and engineering design and features common to modern operating rooms. We have more than 330 square ft of ISO Certified processing rooms. With a dedicated Research & Development department, LVG has completed numerous laboratory and clinical research projects (including contract research), from which we have published

peer-reviewed scientific reports that have helped shape the field of corneal transplantation and vision research (see our publications: <http://www.visiongift.org/medical-community/publications.php>). In addition to our own internal laboratory resources, LVG has access to research instrumentation and techniques such as DNA/RNA sequencing, mass spectrometry, electron microscopy, and histology services through our extensive network of collaborators.

Applicant Eligibility

Clinicians, Academic Researchers, and Industry Researchers/Professionals are eligible to submit applications.

Application Guidelines

Step 1: Letter of Intent (LOI)

A LOI of no more than 1000 words must be submitted by February 29, 2020. Applicants will be notified by March 6, 2020 if selected to submit a full proposal.

Please note: It is understood that the provided LOI may contain a disclosure of confidential information. LVG as the recipient of such information agrees not to disclose any information noted as confidential to any third party unless required to do so by law.

Upon notification of selection for proposal submission, the applicant will be provided with a formal Reciprocal Non-Disclosure Agreement.

LOI must contain the following elements:

- Name and Information of submitting Principal Investigator (PI) Name and Information of Scientific Mentor/Supervisor (if different than PI)
- Other Key Personnel: Names, Titles and Affiliations
- Project Title
- Project Summary (including study aims) Please limit this section to 250 words.
- Brief Summary of Project (including methods, measures, sample, expected results, impact on ophthalmic field). Please limit this section to 750 words.
- Value of grant requested (Max of \$15,000) accompanying budget
- Projected timeline to complete project

Step 2: Project proposal

Please limit your application to a maximum of 8 pages (excluding Budget and Biographical Sketches).

A complete application must include:

1. Cover page with identifying information: (Limit: 1 page)

- Project Title
- Name and Title of PI
- Department/Institutions
- PI's E-mail

- Telephone
- Co-PI's or Research Mentor/Supervisor Name
- Co-PI's or Research Mentor/Supervisor Contact Information

2. Executive Summary: (Limit: up to 1 page)

- Provide a clear, concise description of the proposed project including target population and their needs. If the project is successful, what are the long-term objectives for future studies. How will patients potentially benefit from this research?

3. Description of the Proposed Project: (Limit: remaining pages up to 8 pages total, including Cover Page, Executive Summary, and Bibliography)

- Clearly stated problem the proposal is intended to address
- Justification of the need to address this issue (supported by literature review)
- Describe in detail the proposed research:
 - Included rationale for the proposed studies
 - Include any preliminary data from the PI's group or from the published literature
 - Include detailed methods
 - List specific outcomes that will be measured
 - Included detailed time line for the entire study

4. Budget & Justification: (Limit: 2 pages)

- Provide a detailed accounting of how this funding up to \$15,000 will be directed using the figure of \$850 per whole globe cost for donor tissue (this cost is based on two eyes from single donor \$1700/pair).

5. Biographical Sketches: (Please limit each Biosketch to 5 pages).

- Include a Biosketch for PI and any Key Faculties
- Blank NIH Biosketch templates can be obtained from the NIH Grants and Funding page (link provided below).
 - <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>

Submission Guidelines

Applications must be submitted via email to: Grants@VisionGift.org

If submitting additional hard copy, please send to:

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