

Request for Applications Tommy Fuss Center 2022 Research Grant

Background: The Tommy Fuss Center for Neuropsychiatric Disease Research Award Program was designed to promote the mission of the Center by providing support for young, independent, and exceptional investigators to conduct research projects in the area of pediatric neuropsychiatric disease. The Fuss Center was created in 2016 to advance understanding of developmental pathways leading to major neuropsychiatric disorders. The primary goals of the Center are to develop innovative strategies to identify children and adolescents at risk for mental illness along with transformative new therapies that can limit the progression or even prevent the emergence of these disorders.

The Research Award Program is intended to facilitate innovative research opportunities and supports basic, translational and/or clinical investigators. All research must be relevant to our understanding, treatment and prevention of serious psychiatric disorders such as schizophrenia; bipolar; mood and anxiety disorders; or ADHD with child or adolescent onset. Individual research projects can range from initial proof of concept and pilot data to more comprehensive hypothesis testing studies, with a goal of attracting longer term funding from internal and/or external funding agencies. Innovative and collaborative studies utilizing new technology or leveraging recent advances in behavioral science, genetics and/or neuroscience are encouraged. In addition to supporting the full ranges of relevant neurobiological and psychobiological basic research, we support clinical science, which can include careful studies using qualitative research approaches or research generating preliminary data to explore a new hypothesis generated by clinical experience or large sample studies.

Types of Grants, Award Amounts and Eligibility:

Young Investigator Award provide support for the most promising young scientists conducting pediatric neuropsychiatric research. These two-year awards are up to \$50,000 (\$25,000 per year inclusive of 15% overhead) to enable promising investigators to begin careers as independent research faculty. To be eligible for a Young Investigator Award, an individual must have a doctoral level degree (e.g., M.D. with [minimum PGY-IV] training, Ph.D., Psy.D., Pharm.D., etc.). Additionally, applicants must be employed at Boston Children's Hospital (or have a medical staff appointment) as an advanced post-doctoral fellow, instructor or assistant professor (or equivalent). Pre-doctoral students, first year post-doctoral fellows, associate or full professors or faculty who serve or have served as a Principal Investigator on a NIH R01 or equivalent grant are ineligible. An Individual is eligible for a maximum of two Young Investigator Awards and only one principal investigator is allowed per application.

Independent Investigator Award provides support for investigators at the rank of assistant, associate or full professor who have an established record of research. These two-year awards are up to \$150,000 (\$75,000 per year inclusive of 15% overhead) to enable scientists who are clearly independent and have won national competitive support as a principal investigator. To be eligible for an Independent Investigator Award, an individual must have a doctoral level degree, be employed as faculty at Boston Children's Hospital (or have a medical staff appointment) and have track record of prior research. Independent Investigator Awards will be granted for more developed projects, typically hypothesis testing, which will establish a track record to support application for new research proposals with the goal of attracting longer term funding from the NIH and other mainstream funding agencies. Independent Investigator Awards can include up to two co-PIs.

Allowable Use of Funds: The Tommy Fuss Center for Neuropsychiatric Disease Research allows considerable flexibility in the use of funds. Grants may be used to support salaries, fringe, consultation by biostatisticians or other specialists, research subject expenses, travel, supplies and other necessary fees.

Limited funds can be used for subcontracts to outside institutions. Major equipment expenses are not allowable.

Process: Advertisement for Young Investigator and Independent Investigator Awards will be made on the Fuss Center web site, and electronically to a mailing list of all BCH faculty maintained by the Office of Sponsored Programs. After the call for awards, applicants have approximately 4 weeks to submit a full proposal, as outlined below. Proposals will be reviewed by two independent reviewers and scored based on the 9-point NIH system and prioritized by the Center Director and Executive Committee for funding. This process should require 4 weeks and end in notification of funding with a start date of October 1.

Schedule: Although the exact dates may vary from year to year, the general outline should be:

1. Call for applications: April 1, 2022
2. Full application due: May 5, 2022 (5:00pm)
3. Notification of award decisions: August 1, 2022
4. Grant start date: October 1, 2022

Application Requirements: Applications must be emailed to TommyFussCenterGrants@childrens.harvard.edu as a single PDF document. Full proposals must be submitted in single spaced text, one-half inch margins, and no smaller than an 11-point font. Arial or Helvetica typeface and page numbering are recommended. The applicant's name must appear in the upper right-hand corner of each page of the application. Standard PHS 398 forms for Biosketch, Other Support, and Resources should be used. Receipt of proposal from the PI's institutional email account will be sufficient to serve as an electronic signature on the face page. The full application consists of:

1. **Face Page on PHS398 form** – including the Title, PI name, PI contact information, and name and signature of division chairperson/division chief/program director.
2. **Detailed Abstract** - a maximum 500-word description of the proposed research on a separate page written in terms understandable to a sophisticated lay audience. If the proposal is funded, this abstract may be used in the Tommy Fuss Center for Neuropsychiatric Disease Research announcements.
3. **Mission Relevance** – a maximum 150-word explanation of how the proposed work supports the specific mission of the Tommy Fuss Center.
4. **Plan for Subsequent Funding** – a maximum 150-word explanation of how the data to be collected will figure in a longer-range line of research
5. **Specific Aims** – 1-page maximum outlining the overarching aims and clearly specify hypotheses.
6. **Research Plan** – 2-page maximum describing the project background, preliminary results, scientific methods, data analysis (including tables, diagrams and figures) and interpretation. Appendices are not allowed.
7. **References** -- a separate page listing up to 30 bibliographical references
8. **Resources and Facilities** – NIH style resources and facilities
9. **Budget on PHS398 forms** – a complete budget and a separate page of the budget description specifying the amount requested with a brief justification. Requests must not exceed the maximum allotted per year per award type. Specific assurance that receipt of this grant will not result in duplication of funding is required.
10. **NIH Biosketch** -- Standard NIH Biosketch on PHS 398 forms for the PI and co-investigators (if relevant)
11. **NIH Other support** -- received or pending grants must be included for PI only
12. **Collaborator Letter** (optional) -- letters of commitment from essential project collaborators, addressed to the applicant briefly explaining the specific contribution and confirming a willingness to collaborate.

Email confirmation of receipt of the application will be sent to the applicant within 48 hours.

Evaluation Criteria: Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Quality of the science proposed

- Relevance to the stated mission of the Tommy Fuss Center
- Quality of the principal investigator's research, including past productivity
- Potential for significant research or clinical advances to improve our understanding, care or treatment of neuropsychiatric diseases
- Evidence of collaboration
- Potential for future external funding of the research program
- Justification of the budget request and availability of alternate sources of support

Potential reviewers will be selected from among faculty at Boston Children's Hospital or the larger Harvard Medical School community. Reviewers can also be selected from outside of this group if specific expertise is required. Sufficiently meritorious applications will be nominated for funding by the Center Director. These nonrationed applications, along with budget recommendations, will be provided to Executive Committee for final approval.

Feedback: It is the Center's policy not to provide feedback on applications, other than funding notification.

Financial and Scientific Progress Reporting: Annual financial and scientific progress reports are required and will be detailed following grant award. Awardees will also be required to provide to the Tommy Fuss Center any publications resulting from the funding and titles of any grants submitted. Any resulting publications, posters, etc. must acknowledge the Tommy Fuss Center.

Questions: Please address questions to Sabrina Heisey, Program Administration Manager, Tommy Fuss Center for Neuropsychiatric Disease Research, Department of Psychiatry at Sabrina.Heisey@childrens.harvard.edu