Overview Information

Purpose
The goal of the VeloSano Pilot Awards is to provide seed funding for cancer research activities being performed at Cleveland Clinic. Latin for “swift cure”, VeloSano is a year-round, community-driven fundraising initiative with “Bike to cure” weekend serving as the flagship fundraising event held annually during the third full weekend in July. VeloSano 6 (July 19-21, 2019) was a huge success resulting in increases in terms of funds raised and participation (riders, virtual riders and volunteers). Learn more about VeloSano on the event website: www.velosano.org.

Key Dates

- Funding Announcement: October 7th, 2019
- Letter of Intent (LOI) Due Date: November 1st, 2019, 5pm EST (Required)
- Application Due Date: January 3rd, 2020, 5pm EST (Required)
- Scientific Review/Approval: January-February 2020
- Selection Committee Notification: February 2020
- Earliest Start Date: March 1st, 2020
- Award Cycle: March 1st, 2020 – February 28th, 2021

Section I: Funding Opportunity Description

Scope
This Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) encourages small research grant applications focused on supporting projects that will build upon and transition recent advancements in cancer research into new diagnostics and therapeutics with a high likelihood of leading to successful, future, extramural grant funding. The current grant cycle of the VeloSano pilot grant program will fund multiple awards of $100,000 each.

Topics of Interest include, but are not limited to:

- Clinically relevant translational cancer research
- Genetic and epigenetic changes as therapeutic targets
- Targeted drug design and development for cancer therapeutics
- Tumor Immunology
- Development and utilization of cancer biorepositories
- Research that advances cancer survivorship and quality of life (QOL)
- Research that contributes to the reduction of cancer health disparities

Please note: Projects proposed in response to this FOA should be able to be accomplished in 12 months (completed by February 28th, 2021).
Section II: Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants

- Principal Investigators must be full-time staff members (Project Scientist/Staff Scientist, Assistant, Associate, Full Staff) involved in cancer research within the Cleveland Clinic Health System
- Awardees from the previous year grant cycle (2018-2019) are not eligible to submit an application as Principal Investigator but can serve as key personnel (Co-Investigator) on other proposals

Number of Applications

- Applicants may submit only one application as Principal Investigator but can serve as key personnel (Co-Investigator) on other proposals

Grant Application Process

The application process will consist of two stages. Each interested applicant must submit an initial Letter of Intent (LOI). Letters are limited to 2 pages and should include the following:

- Title of proposed activity
- Name, department/institute and contact information of the Principal Investigator (PI)
- Names of other key personnel
- 500 word scientific summary providing a brief description of the research proposal stating the objectives, rationale and specific aims

Letters of Intent (LOI) must be uploaded as a PDF document electronically to the VeloSano website www.velosano.org by November 1st, 2019. E-mail receipt of your LOI will be provided. Those found to be of highest quality and responsiveness to the goals of VeloSano will be invited to submit full proposals.

The LOIs and full proposals will be reviewed by a selection committee that will consist of a specially convened group composed of members from the Taussig Cancer Institute, Lerner Research Institute and CASE Comprehensive Cancer Center Leadership along with other staff members with scientific expertise in this area of research. Proposals will be vetted to ensure that they meet the pre-specified eligibility criteria.

Eligible proposals will be reviewed using a 1-9 scoring system that aligns with the NIH format, taking into account the following review criteria:

- Potential of the proposal, or future studies that will be generated because of the pilot study, to impact advancements in cancer research
- Alignment with VeloSano’s stated topics of interest for this FOA
- Feasibility of completion within the 12 month funding period
- Level of innovation
- Investigators and environment
- Likelihood of leading to successful future extramural grant funding.

All proposals in a given funding cycle will receive a decision of acceptance for funding, request for revisions and reconsideration in the next funding cycle, or not funded.

General Inquires:
John Pellecchia, M.S. – Research Administrator
pellecj@ccf.org

Scientific/Research Contact:
Dale Shepard, MD, PhD – Vice Chair, Scientific Review and Selection Committee
shepard@ccf.org
Section III: Research Project Format for Full Proposal
(5 single-spaced page limit, 11 font, 1/2 inch margins)

Please include a cover page with the following (cover page does not count towards 5 page limit):

• Title of Grant
• Name, department/institute and address (including telephone and email) of the PI
• Name, department/institute and address (including telephone and email) of other key personnel

Application details:
The application should be 5-pages in length or less for the specific aims plus research strategy, organized according to NIH format (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/writing_application.htm).

Biosketches, budget documents, human subjects, lay summary, scientific environment and references do not count in the page limit:

• Specific Aims (1 page)
• 250 word project summary providing a brief description of the research proposal and the relevance of this research to public health. Use plain language that can be understood by a general, lay audience.
• Research Strategy (4 pages)
  o Significance
  o Innovation
  o Approach
• Budget and budget justification
• Biosketches - submit an NIH-style biosketch for the PI and any other designated key personnel
• Human Subjects
  o Studies involving human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the Cleveland Clinic Institutional Review Board (IRB) in order to proceed. Once selected for funding, documentation of IRB approval must be provided and continue throughout the study period.
• Scientific Environment (1 page)
• References

Proposals must be uploaded as a PDF document electronically to the VeloSano website www.velosano.org by January 3rd, 2020. E-mail receipt of your application will be provided.

Section IV: Award Information

Budgetary Issues

• All budgets will be submitted on the NIH PHS398 budget form and must comply with NIH guidelines (http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html).
• All research funds must be expended by February 28th, 2020.
• Budget and justification should include all relevant costs (i.e. breakdown of effort, consumables/reagents, necessary core facilities etc.)
• Costs not allowable include staff salary (research associate allowed), equipment over $5,000 (including any computer hardware or software), international travel, and basic office supplies.
• 75% of the approved budget will be made available at time of award with the remaining amount released after receipt of interim progress report described below.
Dissemination Expectations for Funded Projects
Investigators whose research is funded under this program will be expected to:

- Provide a progress report that will be due at the beginning of the tenth month of the award period (December 2020). The progress report should include a summary of the progress to date, including a summary of expenditures. Any problems encountered during experiments or studies should be noted along with plans for rectifying them. The progress report should also include a list of all planned, submitted and accepted abstracts and publications that have resulted from the award as well as a list of related extramural grant proposals planned, submitted or received. No-cost extension requests may be submitted at this time provided there is programmatic need to continue the research and sufficient funds remaining to cover the extended effort. The request should include a description of approved grant activities that remain unmet as they relate to approved goals and objectives. Requests are not approved merely for the purpose of using unobligated balances.
- Provide a final, updated report within 3 months after completion of the project.
- Present findings of the research at appropriate forums, including local, regional or national venues such as AACR, ASH, ASCO or other VeloSano sponsored venues.
- Report publications and future awarded grant proposals based on this research.
- Cite the VeloSano funding source on all publications and presentations.
- As a condition of receiving an award it is expected that Grantees will make all reasonable efforts to attend and participate in events when requested by VeloSano including the annual 2-day cycling event as a rider, virtual rider or volunteer. Grantees shall cooperate with VeloSano in connection with any written, photographic, filmed, broadcast or any other forms of material VeloSano elects to produce to publicize the work.