

MN Spinal Cord Injury and Traumatic Brain Injury Annual Research Grant Program: Full Proposal Reference Guide

For reference purposes only.

Instructions for completing your full proposal will be provided to applicants via email from OHE once the Letter to Intent to Submit has been submitted and approved.

A complete full proposal must include all of the following:

1. Principal Investigator/Institutional Assurance Form
2. Proposal Cover Sheet
3. Proposal Abstract
4. Research Plan
5. Reference Page
6. Budget and Budget Justification Pages
7. Senior/Key Personnel Report
8. Biographical Sketch of Principal Investigator and Senior/Key Personnel
9. Other Grant Support for Principal Investigator and Senior/Key Personnel
10. Financial and Capacity Review Responses
11. Additional appendices (optional)

Principal Investigator/Institutional Assurance Form

“The undersigned agrees to accept responsibility for the scientific and technical conduct of the research project and for provision of required progress reports if a grant is awarded as the result of this proposal.”

- Principal Investigator Signature and Date
- Institutional Official Signature and Date

Proposal Cover Sheet

Principal Investigator (PI):

Rank, department, and school, if appropriate:

Institutional Affiliation:

E-mail address of PI:

Phone number of PI:

Address of principal investigator:

Title of proposal:

Funding tier:

- Pilot project grant
- Standard research grant
- Clinical/translational research grant

Research area:

- Spinal cord injury
- Traumatic brain injury

Project period: (begins date of contract execution)

Amount requested:

- Direct:
- Indirect: (maximum 8%)
- Total: (may not exceed the maximum allowable request per each funding tier)

Approval

Answer **Yes or No**, and **Provide Protocol #** and **Approval Date** for each of the following:

- Recombinant DNA
- Human subjects
- Vertebrate animals
- Does this project involve clinical research

Authorized Representative Certification/Signature

To the best of my knowledge and belief, all data in this proposal are true and correct. The document has been duly authorized by the governing body of the applicant.

- Authorized Rep Name:
- Authorized Rep Title:
- Authorized Rep Phone:
- Authorized Rep Email:

- Authorized Rep Signature:

Proposal Abstract

The Program Abstract MUST be written in lay-persons terms and be accessible to a reviewer with little-to-no existing science knowledge.

Project title:

Applicant institution:

Background to the research topic:

The question(s) or central hypothesis of the research:

The general methodology to be used:

Innovative elements of the project:

Impact on treatments and rehabilitative efforts for functional improvement of people with spinal cord or traumatic brain injuries:

Research Plan

Not to exceed ten (10) numbered, double-spaced pages using 12-point Times New Roman font.

Do not double space charts, tables, or graphs.

The Research Plan should align with the anticipated project timeline and funding requested, show the scope of the overall project, and justify how the proposed research will provide new or innovative treatments or rehabilitative efforts for the functional improvement of people with spinal cord and traumatic brain injuries. It should also include a justification as to why the project falls within the funding tier that was selected. The Research Plan must also include the following:

Introduction

Provide an explicit description of how the proposed research will meet the goals of the research grant program. Review the most significant previous work, and describe the current status of research in the field. Document with references. Describe any preliminary work the principal investigator/collaborator has done which lead to this proposal.

Specific Aims

List the specific aims.

Procedural Methods

Give details of the research plan, including a description of the proposed work; the hypothesis being tested, methods, animal model and species/genetic background, and techniques to be used; the kinds of data expected to be obtained; statistical analysis plan including the interpretations and discussion of alternative explanations, and benchmarks for success. If clinical studies are involved, give details of responsibility for patient selection, patient care, and process of informed consent and protection of vulnerable populations. Include a discussion of pitfalls that might be encountered and limitations of the procedures proposed. Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to study personnel and the precautions to be exercised (list any SOPs regarding appropriate personal protective equipment, biological waste management and spill containment as a separate appendix if applicable). Illustrate the tentative timeline in which experiments will be conducted in order to meet the study goals within the funding period.

Significance

Describe how the proposed project addresses a critical need or barrier to progress in the field. Discuss any new and innovative ideas and contributions that the project offers, and its translational impact should aims be met. Discuss any new and innovative ideas and contributions that the project offers. Make clear the potential importance of the proposed project for stimulating further research or attracting federal grant support and described the planned efforts to secured such future funding.

Facilities Available

Describe the facilities available for this project including laboratories, clinical resources, office space, animal quarters, etc. List major items of equipment available for the proposed work.

Collaborative Arrangements

If the proposed project requires collaboration with other investigators, describe the collaboration and provide evidence to assure the reviewers that the other collaborators agree (letters of support in the appendix).

Reference Page

Cite any research-based references that support proposed activities and lists the PubMed central reference number (PMCID) at the end of the full journal citation, if available.

Budget and Budget Justification Pages

On the budget form, list the direct costs for all budget categories. Supplies and other costs must relate directly to performance of the projects. Indirect costs cannot exceed 8% of total direct costs. Sub-awards must be listed in the budget and budget justification. All costs must be specifically justified on the one-page budget justification form.

Senior/Key Personnel Report

Provide required information for each senior/key personnel.

- Name
- Degree
- Role on Project (i.e. PI, Res. Assoc., etc)
- Institutional Affiliation
- Effort Devoted to Project (Cal/Acad/Sum)

Biographical Sketch of Principal Investigator and Senior/Key Personnel

Including bibliographies - 4-page maximum for each individual.

- Name
- Position Title
- Education/Training
- Institution and Location
- Degree (if applicable)/Date of Degree Earned/Field of Study
- Personal Statement
- Positions and Honors
- Selected Peer-Reviewed Publications

Other Grant Support for Principal Investigator and Senior/Key Personnel

Provide active support for the Principal Investigator and any key personnel. (three page maximum for each individual).

Other Support includes all financial resources, whether Federal, non-Federal, commercial or institutional, available in direct support of an individual’s research endeavors, including but not limited to research grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, and/or institutional awards. Training awards, prizes, or gifts do not need to be included.

It is critical that the Other Support page be clear and detailed, and include funding through program projects, centers, joint grants, and other programs as well as the role of the person in each grant and any potential overlap. Both Active and Pending support should be listed.

Include all information noted below for each proposal/award:

- Name of Individual
- Person Months
- Active/Pending
- Project Number
- Source
- Title
- Dates of Project
- Annual Direct Cost
- Major Goals of Project
- Overlap

Financial and Capacity Review Responses

Only applicable to business entities, nonprofit organizations, and political subdivisions:

- **Business Entity:** An organization that is formed under Minnesota statutes (Chapters 300-324A) pertaining to corporations, cooperative associations, partnerships, limited partnerships, or limited liability companies and that has filed documents with the secretary of state
- **Nonprofit Organization:** A charitable organization that is formed for the purpose of fulfilling a mission to improve the common good of society rather than to acquire and distribute profits. The organization meets the definition in Chapter 317A (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/317A>), Minnesota Statutes 309.50, Subdivision 4 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/309.50#stat.309.50.4>), or meets the definitions defined in the Internal Revenue Service code, with the most common type being a 501 (c)(3)
- **Political Subdivision:** A county, town, city, school district, or other municipal corporation or political subdivision of the state authorized by law to enter into contracts

In alignment with Minnesota Statute §16B.981, Minnesota Session Laws Chapter 62, Article 7, Section 11, Subdivisions 2-5 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2023/0/Session+Law/Chapter/62/>), OHE requires applicants who are business entities, nonprofit organizations, and political subdivisions to undergo a risk assessment prior to grant award to determine whether a risk mitigation plan and/or enhanced oversight is required to responsibly award the grant.

Business entities and Nonprofit organizations will complete the following review components:

1. Capacity Response
2. Certification of No Felony Financial Crime
3. Certifications of Good Standing with Secretary of State
4. Business Entity Financial Documents

Political subdivisions will complete the following review components:

1. Certification of No Felony Financial Crime

Applicant Capacity Review

The Applicant Capacity Review section includes the following fields:

Capacity Response

- Describe the applicant's history of performing the work that will be funded by this grant. This includes describing the applicant's current staffing, organization structure, and budget.
- Has the applicant been awarded or have an active grant from the Minnesota Office of Higher Education in the past 5 years?
 - No
 - Yes (If yes, please list the grant program and fiscal year (July 1, 2019-June 30, 2024))
- Has the applicant been awarded or have an active grant from another State of Minnesota Agency in the past 5 years?
 - No
 - Yes (If yes, please list the grant program and fiscal year (July 1, 2019-June 30, 2024))

Certification of No Felony Financial Crime

- Upload an organizational chart or list of principals that you certify with the following statement: No current principals have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last ten years. 16B.981 Subd. 2 (6) requires that no current principals of a grantee have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years. A principal is defined as a public official, a board member, or staff (paid or volunteer) with the authority to access funds provided by this grant opportunity or to determine how those funds are used. By signing below, I warrant that no current principal of my organization has been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years. I certify that this information is true, correct, and reliable. The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the grant contract agreement award and may subject me/my organization to suspension or debarment proceedings, as well as other remedies available to the State, by law.

Certification of Good Standing with Secretary of State

- Certify that applicant has filed and is up-to-date with the Secretary of State. OHE will verify applicant's status with the Secretary of State Office. Potential grantee must certify that the organization has a status of "In Good Standing" with the Secretary of State as required by 16B.981 Subd. 2 (3) and as part of the response to this Grant Request for Proposal. Is your organization (for-profit or nonprofit) registered with the Secretary of State and has a status of "In Good Standing"?

Financial Review

OHE requires applicants to submit financial information as part of the grant proposal process. OHE audit staff will review the applicant's financial documents and perform a risk assessment to ensure the organization is financially stable. The types of financial documents and certifications required by applicants vary by type and size of organizations, as described in the sections below.

Nonprofit Organization Financial Documents

Nonprofit organizations requesting less than \$50,000 in total grant amount will submit the following documents for the **most recently completed year**. Nonprofit organizations requesting \$50,000 or higher in total grant amount will submit the following documents for the **most recently completed three years**:

- IRS Form(s) 990 or Form(s) 990-EZ
- Audited financial statement of a charitable organization which has received total revenue in excess of \$750,000 for the 12 months of operations covered by the statement per Minnesota Statutes 309.53 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/309.53>)
- If the nonprofit organization is not required to file Form 990 or Form 990-EZ or has not been in existence long enough to have a completed IRS Form 990, Form 990-EZ, or audit, the organization will be required to submit their board-reviewed financial statements, proof of tax-exempt status, and documentation of internal controls.

Business Entity Financial Documents

Business entity requesting less than \$50,000 in total grant amount will submit the following documents for the **most recently completed year**. Business entity requesting \$50,000 or higher in total grant amount will submit the following documents for the **most recently completed three years**:

- Federal and state tax returns
- Financial statements
- If the business entity has not been in business long enough to have filed a tax return, the business will be required to submit documentation of their internal controls and their current financial statements.

A business entity will also certify that the business is not under bankruptcy proceedings and disclosure any liens on assets.

Addressing Substantial Risks

The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the grant contract agreement award and may subject an organization to suspension or debarment proceedings, as well as other remedies available to the State, by law.

Based on Minnesota Statute §16B.981, Minnesota Session Laws Chapter 62, Article 7, Section 11, Subdivision 2-5 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2023/0/Session+Law/Chapter/62/>), if the risk assessment identifies substantial financial, organizations, capacity, and/or management risks, OHE may:

- Request more information from the applicant for the purpose of satisfying the concerns
- Develop a risk mitigation plan that addresses the concerns and accompanies the grant contract agreement
 - Strategies may include enhanced monitoring, additional reporting, or technical assistance
- Provide enhanced technical assistance and oversight
- Not award the grant

Applicants have 30 business days to respond to requests for additional information and/or work with OHE to develop a risk mitigation plan.

OHE has the authority to not award a competitive grant source. OHE must notify the applicant and provide reasons for not awarding the grant. The applicant may contest the decision to not award within 15 business days. OHE must consider any additional information the applicant provides with an additional 15 business days. As a final decision, OHE may affirm, reverse, or modify the initial decision to not award a grant. If OHE's final decision is not to award the grant, OHE must notify the applicant and the Commissioner of Administration. The applicant may contest OHE's final decision within 30 business days of the agency's notifications about the decision.

Additional Appendices

Additional Appendices are allowed and may contain such items as letters of agreement from collaborators, letters of support, additional scientific materials, etc. **DO NOT** include the applicant institution's public relations or promotional materials.