Request for Applications:
The Lawrence and Isabel Barnett Drug Development Program

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1 Overview Information

1.1 Funder Overview

The ALS Association is doing "whatever it takes" to bring us closer to a cure for ALS and to make ALS a livable disease. Our strategic priorities are to find new treatments and cures, optimize current treatments and care, and prevent or delay harms of ALS. To support these priorities, our Research Program funds cutting-edge research across the translational pipeline from basic science to clinical trials in addition to research in other important areas such as assistive technology, natural history, tool development, prevention, fellowship training and infrastructure. The Association is the largest philanthropic funder of ALS research worldwide, and our efforts have led to some of the most promising and significant advances in ALS research.

1.2 Funding Opportunity in Brief

Title: The Lawrence and Isabel Barnett Drug Development Program

Award: $500,000 in total funding across two years for the preclinical assessment of therapeutics for ALS

1.3 Key Dates

Request for Applications Open: February 23, 2023
Letter of Intent Due Date: March 30, 2023, 5 p.m. US EDT
Full Proposal Due Date (by invitation only): June 1, 2023, 5 p.m. US EDT
Anticipated Award Decision: July 2023
Anticipated Earliest Start Date: August 2023

Our expectation is that contracting will be completed within 60 days of award offer. If not, we reserve the right to rescind the award offer and redirect the funds to other projects.

1.4 Grants Policy Statement

For more detail on all policies described in this document, please consult our Grants Policy Statement, available at: https://www.als.org/Grants-Policy-Statement.

2 Full Text of the Announcement

2.1 Funding Opportunity Description

2.1.1 Overview

There is an urgent need for new and improved therapies for ALS, as there is still no cure. The Lawrence and Isabel Barnett Drug Development Program is open to industry and academic

investigators who are developing novel therapies or repositioning treatment approaches for ALS. The Association seeks applications for the preclinical assessment of therapeutics for ALS that have a high probability of reaching the clinic within three years.

2.1.2 Topics of Interest

Both novel programs and repurposing of approved or clinically safe therapies from other disease indications are appropriate for this RFA. Studies can be performed by a contract research organization in collaboration with the principal investigator (PI). We are especially interested in drug development projects supporting the following:

- *In vivo* efficacy testing of therapeutic candidates (pharmacological treatments, biological therapies or gene therapy) in models of ALS
- Studies on pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics, preclinical toxicology/safety (ADME/Tox), dose-range finding and target engagement
- Other IND-enabling studies

Successful applications will provide strong and compelling data supporting the biological rationale for the proposed treatment and a clear plan, including essential "go/no-go" decision milestones, for moving the approach through the essential stages of development.

2.1.3 Topics Not Supported Under This Funding Opportunity

Clinical trials will not be supported with this funding opportunity. Early drug discovery studies proposing high-throughput screening, hit-to-lead and lead optimization will also not be supported through this funding opportunity. **Applications focusing on these topics will be administratively withdrawn.**

2.2 Award Information

2.2.1 Funding Instrument

- Grant: A support mechanism providing money to an eligible entity to carry out an approved project or activity.
- If the funded research contributes to revenue generation, the Association expects to share, proportionally, in that revenue (see Grants Policy Statement for details).

2.2.2 Funds Available and Anticipated Number of Awards

- The number of awards is contingent upon The ALS Association's budget allocation and the submission of a sufficient number of meritorious applications.

2.2.3 Award Budget

- Budgets for total costs up to $500,000 (inclusive of both direct and indirect costs) may be requested (up to $250,000 per year across two years).

- Indirect costs are limited to 10% of total direct costs.

2.2.4 Award Period of Performance:

- The maximum period of performance is two (2) years.

2.3 Eligibility

2.3.1 Eligible Individuals

- Individuals with the skills, knowledge and resources necessary to carry out the proposed research may apply as a PI.
- Postdoctoral fellows are not eligible to apply as PIs.

2.3.2 Eligible Organizations

- U.S. and non-U.S. biotechnology/pharmaceutical companies, or other publicly or privately held for-profit entities.
- U.S. and non-U.S. public and private non-profit entities, such as universities, colleges, hospitals, laboratories, units of state and local governments and eligible agencies of the federal government.
- The applicant organization must be the organization that controls the intellectual property under development. For example, if an academic lab has out-licensed the relevant intellectual property to a commercial partner, then the commercial partner must be the applicant organization even if the work will be completed by the academic lab. Please consult ALS Association staff if you need clarification.

2.3.3 Collaborations

- The preclinical drug development process often requires resources beyond those available at a single organization. Therefore, applications are open to investigators participating in synergistic collaborations focused on testing and developing lead agents for the treatment of ALS.
- If a collaboration is proposed, letters confirming/supporting the collaboration **are required**. Specific roles and responsibilities for each collaborator need to be clearly articulated. If the collaboration is multi-organizational, participating organizations will ensure the success of the collaboration by resolving potential intellectual and material property issues and by removing organizational barriers that might interfere with achieving high levels of cooperation.
- **Collaborative applications must identify a lead organization, which must be the entity that controls the intellectual property under development.**

2.4 Content and Review of Applications

2.4.1 Content of Letter of Intent

By the date listed in Key Dates above, all prospective applicants are required to submit a Letter of Intent that includes the following information:

- Descriptive title of proposed activity
- Name, address, and telephone number of the PI
- Names of other key personnel
- Participating institution(s)
- Title of this funding opportunity
- A scientific rationale for the proposed study and its relevance to ALS, including a summary of the target/biology and the proposed therapeutic
- A brief description of the study hypothesis and/or objectives and overall experimental plan to meet those objectives

Please note: Applicants must submit a new Letter of Intent for each funding cycle.

2.4.2 Review Criteria for Letter of Intent

- **Fit**: The letter of intent should allow reviewers to assess whether or not there is a good match between The ALS Association's interests/priorities and the project.
- **Relevance and rationale**: The Letter of Intent should provide appropriate scientific rationale for the proposed study and its relevance to ALS.
- **Overall Experimental Objectives**: The Letter of Intent should provide a study hypothesis and/or objectives in addition to an overall experimental plan to meet those objectives.

The Letter of Intent can either be accepted or declined. If the Letter of Intent is accepted, the applicant will be invited to submit a full proposal. Reviewer comments from the Letter of Intent review phase will not be provided to the applicant.

2.4.3 Content of Full Proposal

If/when an applicant's Letter of Intent is accepted, instructions for submitting a full proposal will be provided.

2.4.4 Review Criteria for Full Proposal

- **Impact/Contribution to ALS:** Potential of the proposed study to make an important contribution to ALS research.
- **Target/Biology:** Rationale for developing compounds against the given target/pathway.
- **Research Plan:** Feasibility, timeline and design of experiments, and whether the development plan will result in go/no-go decisions in moving the therapeutic forward.

- **Research Team:** Qualifications of the PI, key personnel and collaborators/consultants are appropriate to perform the proposed research project.
- **IP/Patent Landscape:** Impact on future development/commercialization of the therapeutic.

2.4.5 Peer Review and Selection Process

- All full proposals are peer reviewed by an ad hoc Scientific Review Committee constituted by The ALS Association.
- The Scientific Review Committee's priority scores are forwarded only to The ALS Association Board of Trustees, which has the sole authority for approving the funding of research grants.
- For applications selected for funding, The ALS Association will send the reviewer comments to the PI. To the extent practical and within the scope of the budget, The ALS Association recommends that the PI integrate any recommendations that the reviewers may have suggested to further optimize the project and outcomes.

2.5 Submission Information

2.5.1 Format of Submissions

- All application materials (i.e., Letters of Intent and full proposals) are to be submitted through our online grants management platform, Proposal Central: https://proposalcentral.com/.
- To find this funding opportunity in Proposal Central, navigate to the Grant Opportunities tab (https://proposalcentral.com/GrantOpportunities.asp) and search for Grant Maker: The ALS Association.
- Instructions on how to register as a new user of Proposal Central: https://docs.proposalcentral.com/RegUser.pdf.
- Applications must be prepared according to Proposal Central's instructions: https://docs.proposalcentral.com/CreateApp.pdf.
- Upon receipt, applications will be evaluated for completeness and compliance with application instructions. Applications that are incomplete and/or non-compliant will not be reviewed.

2.5.2 Funding Restrictions

The ALS Association awards are subject to the terms and conditions described in The ALS Association Grants Policy Statement and the award Agreement.

- Awards will be limited to $500,000 total costs for the entire two-year period of performance.

- Salary, wages and fringe benefits of personnel other than the salary of the PI are allowed.
- Salary, wages and fringe benefits of the PI are allowed only when indirect costs are waived.
- Direct salary for individuals should not exceed the salary limitation for Executive Level II of the Federal Executive Pay Scale (https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap_summary.htm).
- Indirect costs are limited to 10% of total direct cost.
- Economy travel up to $2,000 per year to attend scientific conferences is allowed.
- Moveable equipment costs should not exceed 20% of the annual budget.
- Computer hardware and software costs up to $2,000 are allowed.
- Recurring annual cost-of-living/inflationary increase up to 3% for personnel and consumable supplies are allowed.
- All funds must be expended within the approved period of support.
- All unexpended funds remaining at the end of the project must be returned to The ALS Association.

2.5.3 Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All ALS Association grants include The ALS Association Grants Policy Statement as part of the Research Grant Agreement. The Grants Policy Statement includes the requirements applicable to animal welfare, human subject protections, data sharing, research resource sharing, publications, etc. All necessary ethical and regulatory approvals must be in place before experiments are initiated.

- **Animal Welfare Requirements:** The ALS Association requires its grantees to establish appropriate policies and procedures to ensure the humane care and use of animals used in research supported by The ALS Association.
- **Human Subject Requirements**: The ALS Association requires its grantees to establish appropriate policies and procedures to ensure the protection of human subjects participating in research supported by The ALS Association.
    - **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA):** Domestic grantees must comply with the requirements of HIPAA.
    - **General Data Protection Regulation (E.U. 2016/679):** Foreign grantees must comply with the Regulation E.U. 2016/679, or its amended regulation, of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016.
- **Intellectual Property**: Grantees shall have the first right, but not the obligation, to prepare, file, prosecute, and maintain all registerable rights in Intellectual Property arising from implementation of the Research Scope of Work at its sole expense.
- **Revenue Sharing**: If the funded research contributes to revenue generation, the Association expects to share, proportionally, in that revenue (see Grants Policy Statement for details).

2.6 Award Administration

2.6.1 Award Agreement and Payment Schedule

- A formal notification in the form of an ALS Association Research Grant Agreement (Agreement) is the authorizing document and will be provided to the applicant organization for successful applicants.
- The Agreement, signed by the applicant's authorized organizational representative (AOR), PI and The ALS Association, will include the negotiated terms and conditions of the award between The ALS Association and the Grantee.
- Milestone-driven award payments will be made to the Grantee on an annual or semi-annual basis as outlined within the Agreement.

2.6.2 Administrative Requirements

- The Grantee is expected to utilize The ALS Association funds in direct support of the research project and expend funds in accordance with the established organizational policies and procedures.
- Funds charged to The ALS Association award must be for allowable project costs that are determined to be reasonable, allocable, consistently applied and conform to the program guidelines and/or limitations outlined in The ALS Association Funding Opportunity Announcement and the Agreement.
- The Grantee is expected to seek The ALS Association's approval at least 30 days before making certain types of post-award changes (see Grants Policy Statement).

2.6.3 Reporting Requirements

- The Grantee will be required to submit semi-annual Research Progress Reports and annual Grant Expenditure Reports during the period of an award unless otherwise noted in the Agreement.
- Future grant payments are contingent upon the grantee's submission of and The ALS Association's acceptance of the report(s).
- The ALS Association's issuance of the next award payment, when applicable, serves as confirmation that the information provided has been reviewed and approved by The ALS Association.
- Final closeout reports (i.e., final research progress and expenditure reports) are due within 90 days following the termination date of the Agreement.

2.7 ALS Association Contacts

We encourage inquiries concerning this research program and welcome the opportunity to answer questions from potential applicants. Submit all correspondence to ResearchGrants@als.org.