

Astellas and Boston Children's Hospital

Call for Proposals 2021

Background

Astellas is a pharmaceutical company dedicated to improving the health of people around the world through the provision of innovative and reliable pharmaceutical products. Boston Children's Hospital and Astellas have formed an alliance to identify and fund promising research to advance novel therapeutics.

For this round of proposal, Boston Children's Hospital and Astellas invite proposals that are focused on *development of mRNA-based therapeutics for novel application*.

The amount of **funding provided and project duration will vary based on individual project requirements**, with the total funding amount likely **up to \$500,000**. Projects will be funded through sponsored research agreements under which Astellas will provide funding, scientific expertise, and other support. In exchange for providing research support, **Astellas will have the option to license the intellectual property developed during funded projects**.

Program Eligibility

1. Applicants

- Any principal investigator performing research at and employed by Boston Children's Hospital
- There are no restrictions on the number of proposals one applicant can submit

2. Areas of interest

(a) Development of mRNA-based therapy in the following areas

- Projects on novel targets to induce any specific intracellular biology, preferably for tissue regeneration (e.g., cell differentiation, cell proliferation, direct reprogramming, etc.) by gene augmentation.
- Therapeutic approach applicable to local administration of mRNA is preferred.
- Stage: preferable that the validation of target genes in *in vivo* animal models or *in vitro* human cells demonstrated in background research.

(b) Out of scope:

- Therapeutic approaches focused on Cancer, Infectious diseases, or Rare diseases.
- Research directed towards different therapeutic applications other than mRNA, such as AAV, small molecule, antibody, etc.

3. Evaluation criteria

The goal of the funding is to provide resources to accelerate the discovery and development of novel mRNA therapeutics. Therefore, the following criteria will be considered during the review process:

- Novelty and potential to provide a tractable path towards making an-mRNA based medicine
- Large projected impact on unmet medical needs
- Rationale for competitive advantage aimed at mRNA therapeutic applications, compared to other modalities (AAV, Protein, etc).
- Principal investigators who do not have capability and expertise to prepare mRNA therapeutic materials can also submit proposals. Astellas may provide such materials for *in vivo* or *in vitro* validation upon request.

4. Examples of studies eligible for funding

- Proposal for Proof of Concept validation of approaches using mRNA therapeutics in disease animal models and/or other clinical relevant ex vivo/in vitro systems (e.g. Organ-on-chip system, Patient derived iPS cells etc.)
- Testing of novel hypothesis (target validation and/or proof of concept studies) related to tissue regeneration in relevant translational models

Submission Process

1. Pre-proposals

Pre-proposals must be **non-confidential** and limited to **two pages** (excluding bio-sketch) prepared using the template provided. **If you would like to schedule a 1-1 meeting with Astellas, please contact Tamar Alon, Director of Business Development and Strategic Alliances at (Tamar.Alon@childrens.harvard.edu).** Completed pre-proposals are due on **September 17th, 2021**. Selected applicants will be invited to submit full proposals.

2. Full proposals

Finalists invited to submit full proposals will be notified by **October 15th, 2021**. The award decisions will be made by a Joint Steering Committee composed of Astellas and Boston Children's representatives. **Funding is expected to begin in April 2022.**

3. Application Timeline

Event	Date
Pre-proposal due to TIDO (TIDO.alliances@childrens.harvard.edu)	September 17th, 2021
Announcement of selected pre-proposals invited to full proposal stage.	October 15th, 2021
Full proposal due to TIDO	November 15 th , 2021
Notification of selected projects for funding	January 3rd, 2022
Initiation of funding	April 2022

For More Information, Please Contact:

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