Please note that this funding opportunity has a very short timeline.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY - OFFICE OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

Limited Submission Funding Opportunity

Dr. Ralph and Marian Falk Medical Research Trust Awards Programs: Catalyst Award

http://www.hria.org/tmfservices/tmfservices/tmfgrants/tmfservices/tmfservices/falk-catalyst/

Program Overview and Statement of Purpose:
The Dr. Ralph and Marian Falk Medical Research Trust has sought out brilliant investigators and supported them, as well as the young investigators who worked with them, by funding “medical research to improve treatments of the past and eventually find cures for diseases for which no definite cure is known.”

In 2014, the Falk Medical Research Trust launched a new program to fund transformational research focused on increasing the impact of its funding. In keeping with the intention to fund breakthrough research designed to overcome roadblocks in scientific progress, there are two separate linked awards:

- The **Catalyst Research Award** provides one-year seed funding to help investigators lay the foundation for the Transformational Award. *Note: This RFP solicits proposals only for the Catalyst Award.*
- The **Transformational Research Award** provides two-years of additional research funding to support successful projects funded by a Catalyst Award and help them achieve their final goals.

The Catalyst Awards provide an opportunity to conduct preliminary work on high-risk, high-reward research addressing a wide variety of clinical disease areas. The Catalyst Research Award Program provides seed funding to enable planning and development of projects, teams, tools, techniques and management infrastructure necessary to successfully compete for two-year contracts through the Transformational Research Award Program.

**Research Focus:**
This program is designed to support high-risk, high-reward projects that address critical scientific and therapeutic roadblocks. If successful, these projects will open new avenues for treating and curing disease. Applications should be responsive to one of the four principle areas of Research Focus below:

1. Understanding underlying disease processes and how they disrupt normal human biology,
2. Identification of biological markers of disease activity and progression,
3. Identification of targets for therapeutic interventions, and
4. Development of therapeutic agents that will disrupt, arrest, or prevent the disease process.
Collaborations:
The Trust encourages the use of collaborations between industry, government, academic and disease advocacy organizations. In support of this collaborative approach, the Catalyst Program may provide funding to investigators for:

- Identifying any competencies necessary to complete the project that are not available within the applicant institution,
- Identifying collaborators who will provide those competencies,
- Building relationships and negotiating contracts between institutions,
- Internal development of critical expertise or tools that are not available from external sources, and
- Building the management infrastructure to support future project proposals.

Award Amount and Funding Period:
One-year Awards totaling up to $400,000 will be awarded for the funding period of November 30, 2015 - November 29, 2016.

ELIGIBILITY
Investigators must meet the following eligibility requirements to submit an application:

- Hold a full-time faculty appointment
- Are independent investigator(s) with demonstrated institutional support and the specialized space and facilities needed to conduct the proposed research
- Each PI may only submit one application
- Applicants may not have funding support for a similar project
- United States citizenship is not required; visa documentation is not required

LIMIT ON NUMBER OF PROPOSALS PER ORGANIZATION
Each invited institution may submit only two applications.

KEY DATES
Internal Letter of Intent Due: Tuesday July 28, 2015 (by 12 noon)
Internal Proposal Due (by Invitation): Sunday August 9, 2015 (by midnight)
Notification by: Thursday August 20, 2015
Sponsor Proposal Due Dates (Required):

- Online Submission: September 22, 2015 (12:00 noon, ET)
- Mailed Hard Copy received by The Medical Foundation: September 24, 2015 (5:00 pm ET)

SUBMITTING A MANDATORY LETTER OF INTENT
Faculty members interested in applying are required to submit a letter of intent (LOI). An LOI is required but not binding.

1. Click here to access the form.
2. Name the LOI as follows: “LastName-FirstInitial-LOI-Falk-Catalyst-2015”, replacing “LastName” with your last name and “First Initial” with your first initial.

3. Click on the Vault ticket: https://vault2.northwestern.edu/xythoswfs/webui/_xy-e6657709_1-t_L2zA9tbD

4. Click the Upload button.

5. Click the Browse button and navigate to your file on your hard drive or network.

6. Click the OK button.

Note: You will get a tiny confirmation message upon upload. If you do not see it, you may contact Karen Cielo k-cielo@northwestern.edu for a confirmation.

**SUBMITTING AN INTERNAL PROPOSAL**

If interest exceeds the number of submissions the university is allowed, invitations to submit internal proposals will be sent to all faculty who submitted an LOI. Proposals should be prepared with 1 inch margins, all around, Arial 11 point font size and type and are required to contain the following components:

1. **Cover page** with descriptive title and name of the PI, NU key personnel, and external partners (one page, max).

2. **Project Summary** (1 page, max) that clearly articulates your proposal to colleagues outside your field. State the project’s broad, long-term objectives and specific aims, and describe concisely the research design and methods for achieving these goals.

3. **Research Proposal** (3 pages, max), including the following components:
   a. **Significance and impact** that describes how this proposal fits the Falk Trust mission and provides a detailed rationale for the entire transformational research program, as well as providing a context for the proposed Catalyst Research Award.
   b. **Preliminary Studies/Preliminary Data (if available)**
   c. **Specific Aims** that will form the basis of the Catalyst Award milestones.
   d. **Catalyst Project** milestones and research plan that describes the proposed milestones and benchmarks. The successful completion of these activities will form the basis of subsequent Transformational Award applications. Create a summary table that shows each milestone, the associated benchmark measure(s) of success, estimated timeline; it may also include other explanatory material (including key personnel or collaborators).
   e. **Potential Limitations and/or Pitfalls**

4. **NIH biosketch** (new format, 5 pages max). If applicable, briefly describe gaps in work history including family or medical leave or active duty military service. For each source of existing funding, comment on any potential research overlap with the current proposal.

5. **Current and Pending Support**, including the following components:
   a. Proposal title, role, sponsor, award number, direct costs, and dates
   b. Description of any potential scientific overlap with current proposal or indicate “no overlap”
   c. Indicate “None” if there is no current or pending support
6. **Recommendation letter** from your department Chair. In addition to describing and supporting the applicant’s qualifications to carry out the proposed project, the Department Chair must explain how the Award will enhance the applicant’s research and describe the long term institutional commitment to both the applicant and his/her research. **NOTE: If you are a Department Chair and/or your Department Chair is a key personnel on any proposal for this competition, please provide a letter from your Research Dean.**

Prepare your proposal as a SINGLE PDF FILE. It should be named "LastName-FirstInitial-Falk-Catalyst-2015," replacing "LastName" with your last name and "FirstInitial" with your first initial.

**UPLOADING THE INTERNAL PROPOSAL**

1. Click on the Vault ticket provided in the email inviting you to submit the internal proposal.
2. Click the Upload button.
3. Click the Browse button and navigate to your file on your hard drive or network.
4. Click the OK button. You will get a tiny confirmation message upon upload. If you do not see it, you may contact Karen Cielo k-cielo@northwestern.edu for a confirmation.

Note: Vault access will expire after the deadline, as such late submission is not possible. Also, the Vault system does not allow you to overwrite an upload. If you need to upload a revised proposal BEFORE the deadline, contact Karen Cielo k-cielo@northwestern.edu.

**COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES**
The Office of Research Development offers assistance in identifying and facilitating collaborations, putting together interdisciplinary teams, programmatic and administrative development of large, cross-school proposals, and leveraging institutional resources for outreach and education. Contact Fruma Yehiely (yehiely@northwestern.edu), Associate Vice President for Research, Director of ORD, for more information.

**CONTACT AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**
Fruma Yehiely, Associate Vice President for Research, Director of ORD, 847-491-1074, yehiely@northwestern.edu
Limited Submissions web site: [http://www.research.northwestern.edu/ord/funding/limited-submissions/](http://www.research.northwestern.edu/ord/funding/limited-submissions/)