PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Awardees of this innovative Bolster Funding Opportunity will receive funds to carry out preliminary studies pertinent to reviewer recommendations for a revised R01 or R01-equivalent resubmission to a federal or other funding agencies.¹ The goal is to bolster the competitiveness of the resubmission.

ELIGIBILITY

- Individuals in the Milken Institute SPH who are eligible to submit proposals as PIs.
- Faculty members must provide reviewer comments from a recently submitted (i.e., within the past two years) grant proposal to a federal funding agency. The review comments must provide evidence for (1) fundability of the proposed research through revision and (2) the potential for pilot data or preliminary studies to significantly strengthen a revised application.
- An application may be submitted by a PI with no previous NIH funding, pending NIH funding, or an active or previous NIH award. However, the current application cannot overlap the aims in a funded grant. If a notice of award occurs for a grant with similar or overlapping aims before or during involvement with the Bolster program, please notify the Associate Dean for Research immediately.
- An investigator may not (1) serve as PI on more than one proposal in a given round of the Bolster program, or (2) serve as PI and co-investigator (Co-I) in a given round. An investigator may serve as a Co-I on an unlimited number of proposals in a given round.
- PIs must be in good standing with the Milken Institute SPH Springboard Pilot Grants Program, including the Bolster Grants Program, in order to continue to receive funds during the duration of the grant program and via future grants from this SPH granting body.
- Funds will not be granted for similar projects currently supported by other internal or external funding mechanisms at GW or elsewhere.
- Funds cannot be requested for continuation of existing funded projects or as bridge funding for research activities or staff.
- Second submissions to Bolster with the same research aims will not be accepted.

FUNDING AND PROJECT DURATION

- Bolster grant funds may not exceed $30,000.
- The number of awards will vary based on the availability of Milken Institute SPH Springboard Pilot Grants Program funding and competitiveness of the applications in each round.

¹ Note: The sponsor must allow GW’s fully negotiated federal indirect recovery (IDC) rates.
The pilot project must be completed within 12 months in duration (shorter project periods are encouraged). Projects that do not have a clear plan to be completed within 12 months will not be funded. The SPH Dean’s Office will not cost reimburse funds to the PI after 12 months. “No-cost extensions” are not allowed. Unspent funds will revert to the Springboard Pilot Grants Program in the Dean’s Office.

Funding will be on a cost-reimbursable basis from accounts set up in the PI’s department.

ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE EXPENSES

Allowable expenses: Supplies for data collection and analysis, laboratory reagents, reasonable travel expenses essential to achieving project aims or to present pilot study data at scientific meetings, equipment, research support staff, Graduate Research Assistants, and publication costs.

Non-allowable expenses: Capital equipment, direct PI salary support, indirect costs, rent, and hospitality charges.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Investigators should be aware that reviewers outside of their designated research areas might review the application. Therefore, it is important to write the proposal in a manner understandable to noncontent experts. A panel of peers internal to GW will review proposals using the standard NIH scoring criterion and scoring sheet (see http://grants.nih.gov/grants/peer_review_process.htm). Review dates, to be determined.

In keeping with NIH standards, use standard layout size of 8.5 x 11 inches with at least 0.5 inch margins.

Use an Arial typeface (or other accepted NIH fonts), a black font color, and a font size of 11 points or larger. Charts, graphs, figures, and so on may be in color with a font size no smaller than 8 points. Text should be single-spaced. SF 424 guidance should be consulted (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/#inst).

Page limits for each section of the application are stated below.

Follow the outline below in developing your proposal.

Section 1. Face Page. Required form provided.

Section 2. Cover Letter. Applicants must submit a cover letter with the Bolster Grants Program application. The cover letter should include the following:

1) Briefly describe the study aims.

2) State specifically (a) the major criticisms from your prior submission, (b) evidence for fundability, and (c) how Bolster program funds will be used to address the limitations.
3) Provide the specific funding opportunity and target submission date you plan to pursue. The cover letter should be approximately 2 pages.

**Section 3.** Summary Statement from review of original grant application.

**Section 4.** Original, complete grant application, including budget.

**Section 5.** Budget for the Bolster Grant Funds. Use attached budget template. Follow NIH guidelines for a budget and budget justification. Limit to 1 page.

**Section 6.** Budget Justification. Follow standard SF 424 instructions. Limit to 1 page.

**Section 7.** Biographical Sketch. Use the most recent version of the standard NIH ‘biosketch’ format. Please see: 
http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/index.htm#biosketch

**Section 8.** Research Design and Methods. Describe the research design, conceptual framework, and procedures that will be used to accomplish the specific aims of the Bolster grant. Describe the approach to be used for data analyses and interpretation. Justification for sample size (formal power calculations not necessary). Provide a tentative sequence or timetable for the project. Human Subjects Sections and IRB protocols do not have to be provided at this point, but may be requested if awarded.

**Study Timeline.** This must include the significant benchmarks for your project, including a timetable for project activities, project completion, and the expected submission date of your proposal.

Research Design and Methods, and Study Timeline should be approximately 3 pages.

**Note:** Sections 2 and 8 cannot exceed 5 pages

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**SPH EXPECTATIONS OF AWARDEES**

- Adhere to a rigorous Bolster timeline. See the timeline at the end of this document for the chronological order of events.

- Submit an official revised external grant proposal within *four months* of completion of the Bolster Grants Program. All grantees must document that they have submitted a full proposal to the funding agency within four months of completing their projects. Confirmation from grants.gov or eRA Commons is sufficient.

- Grant recipients are obligated to acknowledge receipt of support of work funded by the Bolster grant in any publication, presentation, or other places where funding is publicly disclosed. Specific language from the Dean’s Office will be provided to all awardees.
The final report must be submitted to the Milken Institute SPH Office of Research Excellence (GWSPHResearch@gwu.edu) within 30 days of the termination of the award. The Dean’s Office will provide a Bolster Reporting Form following the notice of award.

Those who fail to comply with the above requirements will be out of good standing with the SPH Springboard Pilot Grants Program, including the Bolster Grants Program, and ineligible for future funding for a period of two years.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DETAILS AND DEADLINES

Bolster grant applications will be accepted twice a year, on May 15th and November 15th. If dates fall on Saturday or Sunday, the due date will be the following Monday. Applications will be reviewed within one month after submission and awards made reasonably thereafter. While the precise number of awards given each cycle is unknown, the requested budgets should not exceed $30,000. Every effort will be made to fully fund proposals but the total allocation for the Bolster Grants Programs each year may be factored into the award amounts, particularly if funds are reduced. Award dates, to be determined.

Proposals should be collapsed into a single PDF.

The PDF should be e-mailed to GWSPHResearch@gwu.edu by 11:59 pm EDT on the date of submission.

Questions should be sent to GWSPHResearch@gwu.edu.