

## Policy for reviewing applications for CNR seed grants

**Goal:** Ensure unbiased selection of the CNR seed grant applications most likely to result in expansion of CNR collaborations and acquisition of external funding. Applications with two or more collaborators will be considered as long as all applicants are members of the Center for Neuroscience.

**Review committee:** The review committee will be comprised of five members drawn from the CNR leadership team, the CNR internal advisors, and other qualified SLU personnel as deemed appropriate by the leadership team. The committee will select a Chair from its membership. Membership will rotate on a regular basis.

**Conflicts:** Review committee members will be in conflict with an application if:

- They are a PI or co-investigator on the application.
- They have an active grant or a grant application under review with the seed grant PI.
- They have been co-authors on a paper with the PI published in the last 18 months.
- They have a personal association with the PI that may cause an appearance of conflict.
- They would receive funding through the grant or they consulted with the applicant beyond answering programmatic or budget questions.

Potential conflicts will be declared to the CNR leadership team, which will determine if a conflict exists. Reviewers can be in conflict with no more than 1 application per review cycle. Conflicted reviewers must not be involved review the application with which they are conflicted but will participate in review of the remaining applications.

**Review criteria:** Review criteria largely mimic those of an NIH grant application. They are:

- **Significance:** Is the work addressing significant neuro-related issues and advancing knowledge in the field of neuroscience that will significantly impact basic and clinical research, education, outreach and treatment?
- **Investigator:** Is the investigator(s) qualified to do the work and/or has s/he identified a collaborator or vendor with the appropriate expertise? Does the investigative team represent a new collaboration involving SLU faculty?
- **Innovation:** Does the proposed work significantly advance the investigator's project beyond its current state?
- **Approach:** Is the project scientifically robust and rigorous? Is it feasible within the approved budget and timeline?
- **Funding potential.** Would successful completion of the seed grant project significantly increase chances of the investigator acquiring external funding?

Applications that are strong in all criteria except funding potential will not be eligible for CNR seed grant funding.

**Scoring:** Applications will be scored using the NIH scoring system (1-9 in integers, with 1 being the best). Scores will be assigned for each criterion. The significance, investigator, innovation, and approach criterion scores will be used to guide assignment of a scientific impact score by each reviewer. The final impact score will be the average of the impact scores assigned by all reviewers x 10. The final funding score will be the average of the individual funding scores x 10. Reviewers are asked to provide constructive feedback that can be used to improve subsequent submissions and increase chance of funding.

**Review timeline:** A final impact score assigned within 6 weeks of the grant deadline.

**Funding selection:** Applications will be selected for potential funding by the review committee based on their impact score and funding potential. Applications selected for funding will be shared with the CNR Executive Sponsors for their feedback and approval. Applications proposed for funding that are not denied by the Executive Sponsors within 2 weeks of distribution will be assumed to have tacit approval.

**Funding Procedures:** The SLU Research Institute will be informed of successful applications by the review committee Chair.

## CNR Seed Grant Review Form

PI: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposal title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Significance** (Criterion score = \_\_\_\_\_)

**Investigator** (Criterion score = \_\_\_\_\_)

**Innovation** (Criterion score = \_\_\_\_\_)

**Approach** (Criterion score = \_\_\_\_\_)

**Overall impact** (Criterion score = \_\_\_\_\_)

**Funding potential** (Criterion score = \_\_\_\_\_)