

Jeffrey Modell Foundation and Pfizer's Centers for Therapeutic Innovation Call for Proposals

Submission deadline: Friday, October 7, 2016

Pfizer's CTI and the Jeffrey Modell Foundation seek to identify and fund novel research projects that have the potential to benefit patients with Primary Immunodeficiency.

The Centers For Therapeutic Innovation ("CTI") is an innovative Pfizer program that collaborates with leading academic medical centers and disease foundations nationwide to accelerate the translation of novel targets to the clinic. CTI's goal is to identify new compounds and speed research and drug development from validated target to proof-of-mechanism in the clinic. In collaboration with the Jeffrey Modell Foundation ("JMF"), a leading global organization funding and supporting immunological research, CTI seeks to support the development and translation of promising large- and small-molecule projects that could stimulate or redirect immunity in immune disorders.

Purpose of the Call:

The Jeffrey Modell Foundation and Pfizer's Centers for Therapeutic Innovation will jointly sponsor and fund selected, novel research projects that increase understanding of immune regulatory pathways with potential implications for Primary Immunodeficiency.

Two Collaboration Opportunities:

- Projects with strong scientific rationale and a validated target associated with Primary Immunodeficiency
- Projects with a promising target associated with Primary Immunodeficiency requiring some additional validation

Background: Primary Immunodeficiency is a group of more than 300 disorders that impact 1-2% of the population. Over the last 10 years, the diagnosis of Primary Immunodeficiency has greatly improved, as have the specific genetic defects responsible. Along with the identification of the genes altered, our understanding of the specific arms of the immune system impacted by these genetic alterations has also greatly improved, thus increasing our understanding of immune mechanisms contributing to disease. These studies have enlightened our understanding that some patients with PI do not simply have suppressed immune responses, but severe immune dysregulation causing some arms of the immune system to be enhanced while others are suppressed. In fact, many patients with Primary Immunodeficiency can have specific immune alterations that, depending on the gene altered, can lead to gastrointestinal abnormalities, pulmonary fibrosis, granulomatous disease, autoimmunity and metabolic abnormalities, as well as hyper-susceptibility to infection. As such, a better understanding of immune regulatory mechanisms can have an enormous impact on future potential treatment options for this disease and other immune-mediated diseases.

Research Projects We Seek:

JMF and CTI aim to fund original research that improves understanding of mechanisms that regulate immune function, with potential implications to improve our understanding of Primary Immunodeficiency and the immune dysregulation that can lead to the secondary symptoms that are manifested in these patients. Specifically, JMF and CTI are looking for:

- Novel pathways involved in regulating T cell or B cell function
- Mechanisms which control the function of T-regulatory cells or other immune regulatory cells
- New mechanisms that regulate antibody production and class-switching
- Innovative approaches to gene therapy, including but not limited to ways to target specific tissue sites
- Neuroimmunological mechanisms that may regulate peripheral immunity and/or contribute to the neurological symptoms involved in Primary Immunodeficiency
- New immune pathways potentially altered in Primary Immunodeficiency patients that may lead to autoimmunity, IBD, or fibrosis

Specific Attributes Sought:

- Strong project rationale based on literature references and/or unpublished research conducted by the investigator making the submission.
- Potential implications for the outcome of the research in Primary Immunodeficiency and/or the sequelae associated with the disease (e.g. fibrosis, gastrointestinal disturbances, metabolic disease, and autoimmunity).

Eligibility:

The JMF and CTI encourage all investigators with specific research interests in the areas listed above to apply. Applications will be considered from both senior and young investigators including post-doctoral fellows.

Selection Process:

A non-confidential 2-3 page summary outlining the rationale, goals, and objectives of the proposed project should be submitted along with a biosketch of the Primary Investigator. Investigators with pre-proposals that fit the criteria of the call will then be asked to submit a longer, confidential full proposal for consideration.

Funding:

- For projects with a validated target associated with Primary Immunodeficiency, funding may be up to \$250,000 per year (inclusive of indirect fees), in addition to substantial work performed by CTI scientists.
- For projects that require additional validation in preparation for a drug discovery effort, funding may be up to \$150,000 for one year of project work, inclusive of indirect fees.

To apply:

If interested, please submit to your Tech Transfer Office (TTO) a brief, non-confidential 2-3 page summary outlining the rationale, goals, and objectives of the proposed project along with the biosketch of the Primary Investigator.

For More Information:

Should you wish to discuss this RFP or ask questions, please contact JMF's Senior Scientific Strategist, Ron Gladue at gladuerp@gmail.com or CTI's Mary Faris at mary.faris@pfizer.com.