REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS FOR TWO-YEAR LABORATORY AND ANIMAL RESEARCH STUDIES ADDRESSING THE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF COVID-19 INFECTION

BLRD is currently accepting applications for two-year research studies which meet the following criteria:

- Applications should address issues related to the prevention and treatment of COVID-19 infection. Proposals that focus on aspects unique to the Veteran population are encouraged.
- Responsive applications could include development of protective measures ranging from the production and testing of personal protective devices for use in VA facilities to development of vaccines, studies of small molecules or biologics as treatments for active disease (in vitro and/or in vivo studies), and studies of the role and modulation of immune responses that may contribute to the disease pathogenesis.
- All applications involving samples containing or any studies involving SARS-CoV-2 virus must comply with the interim BSL-3 requirement and the CDC guidance at the link: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/lab/lab-biosafety-guidelines.html, “Interim Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines for Handling and Processing Specimens Associated with Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)”. Specifically, virus isolation in cell culture and initial characterization of viral agents recovered in cultures of SARS-CoV-2 specimens must be conducted in a Biosafety Level 3 (BSL-3) or higher containment level laboratories. Appropriate documentation of access to appropriate BSL-3 laboratory and/or animal facilities, either at VA facilities or through their university affiliates, must be included in proposals that include work with SARS-CoV-2 infected materials or the virus itself.
- Any animal model systems employed should be supported by evidence of their relevance in terms of the high transmissibility of COVID-19 and include pulmonary involvement.
- The Principal Investigator on the application must have at least 5/8 VA salaried appointment at the time of application (applications that do not include documentation of this will be returned without review). Note that WOC status and salary on an IPA or contract do not constitute VA paid employment for this purpose.
- Note that while applicant principal investigators are not required to have received eligibility through the BLRD peer-review eligibility process, funding through this program does not confer eligibility to submit to any other BLRD RFA or FOA.
- The application must be submitted through the local research office using the eRA Commons system.
- To allow VA to identify this type of application. Application titles must have the following format COVID19: Title. Titles may not exceed 200 characters in length, including the COVID19: at the beginning of the title.
- Application formatting should follow the instructions in RFA BX 20-001, with the following exceptions:
The application narrative is limited to 9 pages.
- The budget is capped at 2 years and $165,000 per year.
- Note that this is a one-time solicitation so resubmissions will not be accepted.

Application Submission:
- The last date to submit an application is COB April 30, 2020. In order to utilize a 2-day correction window, applications should be submitted by COB April 28, 2020.
- Applications must be submitted to RFA BX-20-001 using Grants.gov by the local research signing official (SO).
- Submission guidance and requirements may be found in the VA-ORD Application Guide SF424 and RFA BX-20-001.

Funding notifications will be sent out by the end of August 31, 2020.

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Thank you, BLRD