Rett Syndrome Innovation Award
Request for Proposals

Opportunity:
There are no FDA approved treatments available for Rett syndrome, a rare neurodevelopmental disorder caused by mutations in MECP2, but advances over the last 20 years since the discovery of the genetic cause of Rett syndrome have made treatments targeting the underlying pathology associated with the loss of MECP2 a reality. The International Rett Syndrome Foundation (IRSF), a nonprofit organization dedicated to finding treatments for Rett syndrome and supporting families living with Rett syndrome, accelerate the progress by supporting basic, translational, and clinical research to achieve the goal of disease modifying or curative treatments for Rett syndrome. The Rett Syndrome Innovation Award seeks to gain a better understanding of the underlying pathology of the disorder in order to identify novel therapeutic approaches to treat and cure for Rett syndrome.

Program objective:
The two-year Innovation award is meant to (1) provide seed money for research that leads to the identification of therapeutics or therapeutic approaches to Rett syndrome, (2) assist investigators establish careers in fields relevant to Rett syndrome research, and (3) lead to follow-on funding from other agencies.

Main areas of research interest:
Although we have identified main areas of interest, the examples listed below are not intended to prevent the submission of novel and innovative proposals that will lead to therapeutic approaches for Rett syndrome.

1. Molecular, cellular and circuit level characterization of MECP2 function to generate novel therapeutic approaches
2. Characterization of Rett Syndrome disease states including pre- and post-regression phases in disease models encompassing both MECP2 genetically restored states and non-restored states
3. Profile of cellular and brain-region-specific vulnerability to loss or gain of MECP2 function
4. Identifying or development of genetic modifiers and novel targets

This RFP does not support clinical research projects.

Funding and Timeline of award
The Rett Syndrome Innovation Award funds innovative research up to $150,000 per year for two years ($300,000 total). Indirect costs are limited to 10% of the total budget. Additional details can be found in the general budget guideline section below.

Eligibility
• Independent investigators with an appointment in an academic, government, non-profit research institution or biotechnology company worldwide
• History of independent publication record
• History of grant support in which the applicant is the principal investigator (PI)
• US Citizenship is not required

Scientists from underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply.

Submission dates:
• July 15, 2021 Letter of intent
• August 29, 2021 Full Application due
• October 2021 Award notification

Instructions for submission:
Please submit a one-page letter of intent detailing your research plan and a biographical sketch. Please highlight how your research plan will benefit the progression of science leading to a treatment or cure for Rett syndrome.

Letters of intent should be emailed to research@rettsyndrome.org by July 15, 2021 at 5:00 PM Eastern time. The subject of the email should read: LOI_Innovation_Last name. Letters of intent will be reviewed and select candidates will be invited to submit a full application.

Full applications will include a research and lay summary, a detailed research plan, budget and budget justification. Applications will be reviewed for scientific merit by members of the Scientific Review Board, and then undergo programmatic review by IRSF staff. Final funding decisions are approved by IRSF’s Board of Directors. Notifications are expected to be emailed by the end of October, 2021.

General Budget Guidelines
• The maximum funding level is $150,000 a year for two years.
• Grants are made for technical support, supplies, equipment and relevant travel. PI salary support will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be limited to 20% of the total award.
• Indirect costs of up to 10% of direct costs may be included within the total request amount.
• Proposals for less than the maximum amount are encouraged.
• Second year funding is non-competitive but is based on review of the first year’s progress report.

Contact information:
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