

Life Sciences

DISCOVERY FUND

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Life Sciences Discovery Fund Announces 2009 Grant Competitions New Grant Awards to Stimulate Commercialization of Early-Stage Technologies

Seattle – (November 20, 2008) – The Life Sciences Discovery Fund (LSDF) announces its 2009 grant competitions. The funding opportunities and amounts include a project grant competition of up to \$8 million in total awards, a program grant competition of up to \$20 million in total awards and, new in 2009, two commercialization grant competitions of up to \$750,000 per round.

LSDF 2009 project grants will support focused investigator-initiated research. Project proposals that emphasize disease prevention and/or cost-effective health care are of particular interest. Program awards will support the launch of new collaborative research initiatives that address major problems within a field of study and position organizations for future competitiveness and leadership.

Commercialization Grant Competitions

The new Life Sciences Discovery Fund Commercialization Grants will encourage commercialization of science—moving technology from discovery to development for eventual delivery to the marketplace. LSDF regards commercialization as one of the primary pathways to impact health and the economy in Washington.

“With the launch of this new grant program we hope to advance the commercialization of emerging, promising technologies,” said LSDF Executive Director Lee Huntsman. “Too often these technologies are stuck in the ‘valley of death’—a segment of the commercialization pathway where funding is difficult to attract because the research work is considered too applied for federal funding and too risky for private investment.”

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The LSDF Commercialization Grants will target research efforts centered on validating the commercial merit of new technologies. This type of research is often referred to as prototype development, proof of principle, and reduction to practice. Grants of up to \$150,000 will be made to eligible Washington private non-profit and public institutions. Industry collaboration is encouraged for these grants.

As with other LSDF grants, all commercialization grant proposals will be subjected to expert review. Scientific review will be conducted by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. In addition, LSDF will assemble a cadre of qualified Washington-based experts to review the commercial merit of the proposed research. The LSDF Board of Trustees will make the final decision regarding awards.

Funding for the project and program grant competitions comes from Washington's allocation of bonus payments under the Master Tobacco Settlement, revenues arising from multi-state litigation with tobacco product manufacturers. Funding for the commercialization grant program comes from a portion of the tobacco settlement payments and donor funds provided by Amgen Corporation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Microsoft Corporation, the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, Group Health Cooperative, Safeco Foundation, and Regence BlueShield.

Requests for Proposals for all of the LSDF 2009 grant competitions will be released in early January, 2009. For more information on key dates, public information sessions, and how to nominate someone to be a commercial reviewer, visit the Life Sciences Discovery Fund 2009 Funding Opportunities webpage at: <http://www.lsdfa.org/grants/current.html>.

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The Life Sciences Discovery Fund, a Washington State agency established in May 2005, makes grant investments in innovative life sciences research to benefit Washington and its citizens.