

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Life Sciences Discovery Fund 2009 Winter and Summer Commercialization Grants Competitions

This FAQ addresses key issues for LSDF 2009 Commercialization grants and may be amended in response to questions received from the community. In the event of a discrepancy between this FAQ and the RFP, the RFP shall take precedence. Also see the general FAQ (http://www.lsdfa.org/about/FAQ_gen.pdf) for general questions and answers. Questions about grant programs and proposal guidelines may be addressed to LSDF by e-mail (programs@lsdfa.org) or telephone (206-732-6770).

Key Dates–LSDF 2009 Commercialization Grants Competition		
	<u>Winter Competition</u>	<u>Summer Competition</u>
Pre-proposals due	February 11, 2009	July 15, 2009
Pre-proposal comments provided	March 14, 2009	August 15, 2009
Proposals due	April 22, 2009	September 9, 2009
Award announcement	August 4, 2009	December 15, 2009

A. What are the submission requirements for the LSDF 2009 Commercialization Grants Competition?

A.1 What elements are required?

Applications consist of (1) a pre-proposal, and (2) a proposal, which includes a narrative, budget, and other attachments. Application materials must be submitted electronically at www.lsdfa.org/grants/apply.html.

A.2 What is the purpose of the pre-proposal?

The pre-proposal will be used by LSDF to assess the suitability of the proposed research and development activities for LSDF funding. Pre-proposals will be evaluated by an LSDF-convened panel of commercial experts having direct experience in the commercialization of technologies within the health care sector and written reviews provided to principal investigators in advance of the full proposal submission deadline. Pre-proposals deemed promising will be encouraged to submit a full proposal and those deemed unsuitable will be discouraged.

A.3 Does a pre-proposal automatically entitle the principal investigator to submit a proposal?

Yes. A full proposal may be submitted by the principal investigator regardless of the outcome of the pre-proposal review.

B. What are the most important features of LSDF commercialization grants?

B.1 Grants are meant to enhance commercialization of technologies having the capacity to improve health and health care; what does "commercialization" mean?

LSDF regards commercialization as a process, rather than a one-time event and has adopted the definition of "commercialization" established by the Washington Economic Development Commission¹ - the "effective flow of new ideas from Washington's researchers and inventors into our companies' products and services." During the commercialization process, the practical ideas or technologies of researchers and inventors are translated into marketable products, services, and practices.

B.2 Is it a requirement that a finished product be produced during a commercialization grant?

Successful commercialization grants do not have to result in a market-ready commercial product or service (*i.e.* one that is ready for commercial sale). Rather, successfully completed grants are expected to lower the risk associated with further commercial development by increasing the probability of follow-on research and development (e.g. Small Business Innovation Research) and/or investor funding, generation of significant intellectual property, formation of a new company, or licensing to an existing company.

B.3 Is collaboration with a company required to obtain a commercialization grant?

No. While collaboration with a company in a commercialization grant is desirable, it is not required.

B.4 Commercialization grants require the applicant organization to have demonstrated a commitment to commercialization of the technology under development – what does this mean?

The applicant organization must be committed to the commercialization of the technology under development. Commitments may include, but are not limited to, institutional support of the research leading up to or cost sharing in the proposal, expenditures for intellectual property protection or market analyses, and assignment of technology transfer personnel to manage the technology.

¹ Enhancing Washington State's Economic Future, Commercializing Technology Developed in Our Research Institutions. Washington Economic Development Commission, 2006.

B.5 What does the LSDF mean when it asks principal investigators to provide a compelling rationale for why the proposed work cannot be accomplished without LSDF's investment? Clearly, principal investigators would not be applying for LSDF support if they did not need the funds.

LSDF seeks unique opportunities for investment in research and development with strong potential to improve health and health care, research competitiveness, and economic vitality in Washington State. LSDF awards are not intended to replicate or replace funding from sources such as the National Institutes of Health, the Small Business Innovation Research Program, universities, or angel investors. Principal investigators must clearly articulate why funding from other sources is not available for the proposed work.

C. How will LSDF commercialization grant proposals be evaluated and selected for funding?

C.1 How will proposals be evaluated for awards?

Proposals will be evaluated by two separate panels of experts. The scientific and technical review panel will be convened by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The commercial review panel, consisting of external experts with direct experience in the commercialization of technologies within the health-care sector, will be convened by LSDF. The commercial review panel will incorporate the comments of the scientific review panel and recommend proposals to the LSDF Board of Trustees for funding.

C.2 How will proposals be selected for awards?

The LSDF Board of Trustees will select grant recipients based on reviewer recommendations, the availability of funds, the grant competition goals, and LSDF's strategic goals – improving health and health care, stimulating economic activity, and promoting life sciences competitiveness. Work that is scientifically strong, but without a compelling commercial opportunity is unlikely to be funded. Work that is scientifically weak is unlikely to be funded regardless of its commercial merit. The board may also consider other factors in making award decisions, including diversity of research topics; variety of health, health-care, and economic benefits; and geographic impact.