

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
Life Sciences Discovery Fund 2009 Project Grants Competition**

This FAQ addresses key issues for LSDF 2009 Project 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 Project Grants Competition

Letters of intent due	February 18, 2009
Proposals due	April 15, 2009
Award announcement	August 4, 2009

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

A.1 What elements are required?

Applications consist of (1) a letter of intent (LOI), and (2) a proposal, which includes a narrative, budget, and other attachments.

A.2 Will LSDF provide feedback on the LOI?

No. LSDF will not give feedback on an LOI nor use it as a screening mechanism. It declares your intent to submit a proposal.

A.3 What is an LOI?

The LOI, the first part of the application process, assists LSDF in planning proposal reviews. It is essentially an abstract with basic information about the principal investigator and organization. Submitting an LOI does not require submission of a proposal, but the converse is required: a proposal cannot be submitted without an LOI.

A.4 Does an LOI automatically entitle the principal investigator to submit a proposal?

Yes, if properly submitted, unless LSDF communicates otherwise with the principal investigator.

A.5. Can I submit the same proposal to both the Project and Program competitions? If so, that means I can be PI on two proposals, right?

You may, although this isn't likely to be a productive course and both of course can not be funded. If your proposal does not meet the requirements for a program, then submitting it to the program competition is pointless. If your proposal is a program and you submit it to the project competition, you are likely to be asking for more money than other applicants.

Yes, you may be PI on two proposals as long as they are submitted to different competitions and have different content, and theoretically both could be funded. You may not submit two proposals, as PI, to the same competition.

A.6. If my proposal for a Project is rejected, can I submit it to the Commercialization competition?

Yes, but only if you've submitted a placeholder pre-proposal to the Summer Commercialization competition. You won't know if your Project proposal is funded before a Commercialization pre-proposal is due.

A.7. What about submitting a proposal simultaneously to the Project and Commercialization competitions?

You may do that, although it's unlikely that a proposal would be competitive for both, since their intent is different. If the Commercialization pre-proposal is rejected, you can proceed with the Project proposal.

A.8. I can't decide if my idea is a project or a program.

There are several ways to frame a proposal as a project or a program. **Programs** are new collaborative research initiatives that address major problems within a field of study and position organizations for future competitiveness and leadership. Programs must be innovative within their fields, create new synergies among participating researchers, demonstrate significant organizational commitment, and exhibit potential for long-term growth and sustainability beyond the LSDF award period. **Projects** are investigator-initiated studies that will be accomplished during the LSDF award term. Projects typically focus on research topics or concepts that require significant work before commercialization or widespread implementation or adoption. The best way to get a reading of this is to talk to the LSDF program staff; you can arrange a phone call or meeting at programs@lsdfa.org.

A.9. How do I submit my LOI and proposal?

Application materials must be submitted electronically at www.lsdfa.org/grants/apply.html.

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

B.1 What does it mean that you “encourage” proposals that address disease prevention and/or increased cost-effectiveness of health care? Disease prevention offers the best solution to reducing health care costs and improving quality of life. Separately, increasing the cost-effectiveness of health care is imperative. Because these two issues are so critical, the LSDF Board of Trustees is particularly interested in research that tackles these two areas, and will consider this in making award decisions. There will not be a quota or formal scheme to preferentially fund proposals focusing on these topics, however.

B.2 How do you define “disease prevention” and “increased cost-effectiveness of health care?”

“Disease prevention” includes but is not limited to:

- primary prevention of disease, such as diabetes or Alzheimer’s disease, in populations without recognized signs or symptoms of the target condition(s). This includes health promotion and lifestyle changes, such as diet or exercise programs or smoking cessation, and
- methods to identify at-risk populations or detect pre-disease states before significant morbidity or frank disease, leading to prevention of disease onset. Examples include identifying a population carrying a disease susceptibility biomarker and intervening with preventive measures, and detecting pre-cancerous lesions.

“Increased cost-effectiveness of health care” includes but is not limited to:

- approaches that lower costs associated with diseases that are particularly relevant to Washington State, or those whose incidence is projected to rise dramatically,
- measures implemented throughout the health-care system—such as in administration and infrastructure and in front-line service to patients, and
- appropriate uses of technology to more efficiently manage health care costs and/or existing resources.

B.3 What does the LSDF mean when it asks principal investigators to consider why the project 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 projects 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 project.

B.4 What are the components of the detailed budget?

The LSDF detailed budget is similar to the NIH detailed budget format. For example, the personnel category must include the name, role, percent effort, salary and fringe benefit amounts for each employed individual on the project. For the other categories

(equipment, supplies, travel and other) an itemized listing by general subcategory is required. Finally, the same level of detail is required for each subcontract.

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

Proposal evaluation starts with external expert review and concludes with LSDF Board of Trustees selection. Expert reviewers from outside of Washington State, convened by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, provide consensus reviews of all proposals. Reviewers place proposals in one of three categories based on their recommendation for funding: Not Recommended, Recommended, and Highly Recommended. Then, the Board 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. 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.