

**Research Committee**

**Full Proposal (FP) Format**

Proposals submitted for internal funding should be written in a manner that is understandable to a broad audience. A proposal is expected to stand on its own without verbal defense or clarification by its author. Proposals must be written in the format noted below and each area (A. through K.) must be addressed. Proposals that do not address each area will be returned as incomplete. Proposals must be complete without reference to attachments. Applicable portions of relevant manuscripts and other documents should be summarized or otherwise detailed within the appropriate section of the proposal.

Note: The submission, review and approval of a pre-proposal (PP) application is required prior to the submission of a full proposal (FP).

 ⮚ The format for both the PP and FP are similar with the FP expected to provide greater detail, while building on the preliminary information of the PP and incorporating PP input provided by the Research Committee.

 ⮚ PP requirement effective 10/1/13; encouraged as of 4/1/13.

**A.** **Research goal:** Express in a clear concise fashion the broad research goal or hypothesis to be tested. (<300 words)

**B.** **Specific Aims:** Specific aims should be stated in a clear, concise fashion and include the relationship to the overall goal. In sentence format, state how the specific aims relate to the research goal and any hypotheses. (<300 words)

**C.** **Background:**A discussion of the background leading to the present application, including a critical evaluation of existing knowledge, is required to place the research goal in perspective. The purpose of this section is to support the significance of the proposed research and methodology by reviewing relevant literature in the area of interest. Note: Attaching abstracts/manuscripts in lieu of detailing background within the protocol is not allowed. (<500 words)

**D.** **Significance:**Concisely state the importance and health relevance of the proposed research by relating the specific aims to the broad, long-term objectives and the background information. Specifically identify any gaps in literature that the project is intended to fill. (<300 words)

**E.** **Preliminary Studies and/or Data:** Provide a summary of the preliminary studies conducted by the PI that are pertinent to the application. The goal of this section is to establish the experience and competence of the investigator to successfully conduct the proposed project. For example, a data warehouse query may be provided as evidence of sufficient potential enrollment to complete the study. Preliminary data often aid the reviewers in assessing the probability that the researcher will be able to complete the proposed project.

Supplementary background graphs, diagrams, tables and charts relevant to the preliminary studies may also be submitted in the appendix. However, if such material is essential to an evaluation of the research plan, incorporate it in the body of the proposal. (<500 words)

**F. Research Design and Methodology (including Data Analysis):** Describe the research design and the procedures to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted, as well as plans for data-sharing as appropriate. Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies. Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims.

Many studies encounter delays because of inadequate planning related to study enrollment projections and/or feasibility assessments of available subjects for data only studies. Provide estimates of the number of study subjects/participants needed or available for the project, including estimates of controls or comparison group numbers. Describe in detail how all study participants will be identified and/or selected or recruited. Describe any processes for matching if required by the design. Clearly and completely describe how study subject numbers were estimated, including all assumptions related to any sample‑based estimates. Provide convincing evidence that supports the likelihood that adequate study numbers are available for the project. Discuss efforts undertaken to screen records or otherwise review records that would be expected to improve study subject estimates.

Discuss the statistical methods that will be used to assure the quality of data and testing *(Biostatistics and Bioinformatics Core can assist with this section)*. Particular attention should be paid to selecting the methods chosen to recruit the required number of subjects. (<1000 words)

*The total page limit for sections (A-F) may not exceed 3000 words (approximately 12 double-spaced pages), including all tables and figures. Do not use less than a 12 point font or re-size figures and tables. Applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible; there is no requirement that all 12 pages allotted be used.*

**G.** **External Collaborators**: If the investigator is collaborating with non-Marshfield Clinic staff on the project, attach a letter of support from each external co-investigator. The letter should identify the external co‑investigator, clearly state their project role, and acknowledge their responsibilities on the project.

**H.** **Timeline:** Include a timeline in chart or graph format that reflects the project activities and anticipates the time allotted per activity. Since project start dates are uncertain, note the time allotted (e.g., Month 1 through Month 3: Recruitment) rather than actual dates (e.g., January – March: Recruitment). Careful consideration should be given to the development of the project timeline, which should not exceed two years. Projects will be expected to meet the timeline proposed in the original FP.

The Committee understands that project delays are not uncommon in research, and consequently may approve at its discretion a one-time request for up to a 12-month extension of a project’s timeline. All projects are expected to be completed within 3 years of funding.

**I.** **Budget:**Itemize all expenses into personnel, supplies, equipment and miscellaneous. Include percent of effort to be committed to the project for all individuals, even if no dollars are budgeted. Cost-sharing in other budget categories should be included. Funding requests may not exceed the cap established in the Internal Funding-Physician Research and Disease Specific Restricted Funds policy. From time to time, an inflationary adjustment may be made to this cap as deemed necessary by the DMR.

**J.** **Budget** **Justification:** Provide detailed justification to validate the need and cost for all itemized expenses listed in the budget (i.e., personnel, supplies, equipment, miscellaneous, etc.). Also describe how each requested figure was calculated and arrived at.

**K. Literature Cited:** List all references. Limit references to relevant and current literature. Each reference should include the title, names of authors, book or journal, volume number, page numbers and year of publication. For publicly available citations, URL’s or PMC submission identification numbers should accompany the full reference.

**L.** **Biographical Sketch:**All investigators must have a **current** biographical sketch included for review. The biographical sketch may not be more than five pages in length. Include only those publications most relevant to the proposal being submitted.