

Pilot Research Project Funding Background and Criteria

Background:

The Department of Family Medicine (DFM) has set aside \$40,000 for the Year 2017/2018 to fund pilot/development research projects.

- \$20,000 where the principal investigator of the proposed pilot project is a DFM Faculty member and a member of Family Medicine Associates
- \$20,000 where the principal investigator of the proposed pilot project is a DFM Faculty member and non-member of Family Medicine Associates (i.e. Community Physician)

These grants are intended to build research capacity in the DFM. The study should address areas of research related to primary health care. This funding call encourages the use of the McMaster University Sentinel Information and Collaboration (MUSIC) by GFT physicians (members of the FMA). We would like physicians working in the community to be aware of the availability of the MUSIC database if they wish to use it. The projects should be designed to produce findings that can be used to support the development and submission of future research projects within 2 years, which will be externally funded.

The maximum funding allotted to a project will be \$5,000.

Criteria for accessing DFM pilot research project funding:

- The project needs to focus on areas of research related to primary health care.
- The principal investigator of the proposed pilot project must be a DFM Faculty member and member of Family Medicine Associates or a DFM Faculty member and a non-member of Family Medicine Associates (i.e. Community Physician or faculty researcher) (*Note: Students, residents and fellows may not serve as the Principal Investigator for these research projects*).
- The project needs to have at least 2 DFM faculty members involved as core investigators.
- Projects must meet the usual requirements for approval by a Research Ethics Board (or equivalent organization) if applicable.
- The grant may serve as the total support for a project, or supplement an existing research effort, as long as a specific portion of the research is identified as being made possible by this grant, and provided that the investigator states specifically how the balance will be funded, providing evidence of its guaranteed availability.
- The grant must not duplicate funding for a research project.
- Examples of pilot/development studies could include: development and testing of a new survey instrument, a needs assessment, qualitative work to develop a survey instrument, a systematic review, or testing of an intervention.

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Guidelines for Submission of a Funding Application

The application should be no more than four pages (excluding cover page) and should provide information about each of the following:

- Background / rationale
- Research question
- Study design
- Study sample
- Intervention studied (if applicable)
- Measurement of outcomes
- Planned analyses
- Ethical issues
- Next steps: Plan for how the pilot project will facilitate the development of a full scale research proposal (including suggested funding agencies / sources targeted for application)
- Justification of how the proposed project meets the DFM criteria
- Timeline (*Note: Funding awarded by February 1, 2018, project account opened by April 30, 2018, projects must be completed by January 31, 2019*)
- Implementation plan including the need to hire staff, acquire computer resources, designate workspace
- Knowledge Translation (*Note: The presentation of research finding will be required at a future DFM event, to be discussed in conjunction with the Research Director*)
- Description of the investigator team
- Budget and budget justification (no more than 1 page). Please see <http://fammedmcmaster.ca/research/research-resources/templates-documentation> for the **Before Submitting a Grant Application** document that describes departmental and university administrative and financial considerations in the preparation of the budget. Further details about budget items and allowable expenses are provided in Appendix 1.



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Submission:

The submission should consist of the following:

- Application cover sheet
- Research proposal (maximum 4 pages)
- Curriculum vitae of the Principal Investigator, highlighting clinical and educational accomplishments, as well as research, relevant to the proposal. Abbreviated CVs preferred.

The applicants may also submit the following as optional items:

- Appendices of no more than 2 pages related to the work proposed

Proposals should be submitted by **November 30, 2017** to Patricia Habran-Dietrich at dietrich@mcmaster.ca

Note: There is a limit of one application per Principal Investigator.

Expected start of Funding: February 1, 2018

Funds will be released once evidence of Research Ethics Board approval is provided.



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Appendix 1: Budget Items and Allowable Expenses

Budget items may include:

- Research personnel costs
- Administrative personnel costs including secretarial and financial administration support related to the work proposed. *(Note: 3% of the funds (\$150) should be allocated for financial administration of the account)*
- Supplies and expendables
- Equipment to a maximum cost of \$750
- Participant costs
- Knowledge Translation/Dissemination (to a maximum cost of \$750)

Ineligible expenses:

- Institutional or administrative overhead
- Travel or other expenses related to presentation of findings at conferences
- Salary support is restricted to that of technical or support personnel, and is not to be used for salary support of the Principal Investigator or Co-investigators



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Funding decisions:

The proposals will be reviewed by a pilot research grant review committee, consisting of at least three people including two faculty members with substantial research experience and a clinician. The criteria contained in Appendix 2 will be used to review the projects.

Administrative considerations:

Upon approval the Principal Investigator will receive a letter of approval. A project that has been funded will need to meet the administrative requirements of Health Research Services at McMaster University (or the relevant home institution of the grant award recipient) which will include the submission of a completed and signed HRS checklist (obtained at http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/healthresearch/administration_forms.html), a copy of the award letter, a copy of proposal, a budget, a budget justification and any applicable ethics approvals. The Department of Family Medicine Research Administration will provide financial administration of the funds. To cover the associate costs, please include 3% (\$150) to the budget for this purpose.

Reporting requirements:

The successful applicants will be asked to complete a brief progress report after six months and a brief final report by February 28, 2019.

It will be necessary to return the funds to the Department of Family Medicine if:

- the funds have not been used by January 31, 2019,
- the project account has not been opened by April 30, 2018,
- progress reports have not been submitted, or
- the progress of the project is deemed unsatisfactory based on the proposal submitted.

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Appendix 2: Review Criteria for DFM Pilot Research Project Proposals

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE (10 points): Are the specific aims/hypothesis for the research project clearly stated? Does the proposal explain why this project should be undertaken? Does it reflect an adequate review of the literature?

SIGNIFICANCE (10 points): Is the project relevant to primary care practice? Is the proposed project original or unique in any respect (new problem or question, new or unique study method or evaluation technique, etc.)? Will the outcome of the project likely help to advance primary care?

METHODS (40 points): Do the proposed methods appropriately address the specific aims/hypotheses? Are the methods well described? Are methodological problems anticipated and alternative approaches proposed?

INVESTIGATORS (10 points): Are the professional (including clinical, educational or research) competencies and previous research experiences of the principal investigator and co-investigators appropriate to carry out the project? Do the previous research experiences, availability of pilot data, or the clarity in presentation of the research methods indicate that the investigators are familiar with the research methods being employed?

FEASIBILITY (10 points): Will sufficient subjects be available for completion of the project within the proposed timetable? Is the project's proposed timetable reasonable?

BUDGET (10 points): Does the budget match the staffing resources required (i.e. staff, students) to complete the project? Is the probable outcome worth the time and money involved? Will the grant serve as the total sum for the project or supplement an existing research effort? If the grant will provide only partial support for the project's total budget or any personnel, has the investigator stated specifically how the balance will be funded and provided evidence of its guaranteed availability? Does the budget allocate 3% (\$150) for financial administration of the account?

LIKELIHOOD TO CONTRIBUTE TO FUTURE RESEARCH ENDEAVOURS (5 points): Will the project most likely generate findings that can support a future full scale grant application?

PRIORITY AREA (5 points): Does the project focus on the priority area of the call for proposals (i.e. research related to primary health care)?



**Department of Family Medicine
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Application Cover Sheet

Title of Project:

Name, Contact Information, and Signature of Principal Investigator:

Names, Emails, and Signatures of Co-investigators:

Date: