



## **San Antonio Partnership for Precision Therapeutics (SAPPT) Request for Proposals**

### **Award Information:**

- Maximum funding available per award: up to \$200,000 total
- Period of funding/performance: 1 or 2 years

### **Background:**

The Presidents of Southwest Research Institute (SwRI®), Texas Biomedical Research Institute (Texas Biomed), The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UT Health San Antonio), and The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) created the San Antonio Partnership for Precision Therapeutics (SAPPT) as a novel generator for advanced and timelier biomedical breakthroughs that accelerate the delivery of life-saving treatment options. SAPPT's program promotes the integration of basic research and therapeutics channels with innovative "multi-omic" or big data integration of precision medicine with the goal of developing novel precision therapies and/or approaches to individualized therapies in any disease area.

### **Research Objectives and Scope:**

The objective of this pilot grant program is to foster the development of cohesive, ongoing multi-institution research initiatives organized around **precision therapeutics**. The program provides seed funding for collaborative teams to grow a more robust external public and private grant and contract portfolio. One of the goals of SAPPT is to build a sustainable program that will eventually attract outside funding to further advance your proposed research initiatives and for additional new research. Therefore, all applicants should provide sufficient rationale and evidence (1) for the strong probability of success of near future funding applications and (2) that such funding will benefit the efforts of the SAPPT mission. Award selections will be based on the innovative application of precision therapeutics, scientific merit, trajectory for success, and the collaborative nature of project.

**NOTE:** COVID-19 related projects will be accepted provided the project applies Precision Therapeutic principles in an innovative manner.

### **Additional Review Criteria:**

In addition to the technical focus on Precision Therapeutics, the collaboration of the four partner institutions is also intended to highlight the breadth and depth of the combined expertise of the four partner institutions. Proposals for projects to be funded by the SAPPT should describe the contributions of each entity and emphasize the way that project performance will enhance future

technical collaborations amongst the entities. Of the proposals that score well based on the evaluation of technical content, **consideration will be given to proposals that include participation by all of the partner institutions.**

- Please contact Liz Tullis ([ltullis@sappt.org](mailto:ltullis@sappt.org)) if you need assistance in identifying or defining a potential partner organization collaboration.

SAPPT will hold a virtual informational session on **Wednesday August 26th at 4:30 PM Central Time** to answer questions related to the RFP. If your project does not currently have all 4 institutions represented, but you believe the research will have significant impact, this is an excellent opportunity to gain assistance in identifying the appropriate collaboration. More information on the information session will be on the website at [sappt.org](http://sappt.org).

#### **Award Timeline:**

A brief email indicating your intent to submit a proposal is due **Wednesday September 2, 2020** by 5 PM Central Time to [ltullis@sappt.org](mailto:ltullis@sappt.org). You do not need to provide project details at this time. However, you must indicate your intention to apply by this date in order to submit.

**Full RFP submissions are due September 30, 2020, 5 PM Central Time** to [ltullis@sappt.org](mailto:ltullis@sappt.org)

SAPPT anticipates releasing award notices in late October to early November, 2020.

#### **Submission & Formatting:**

All pages must be formatted for 8.5" x 11" paper and saved in a single PDF attachment

- Margins must be at least 0.5" on all sides
- Text must be single spaced in 11 pt Arial font
- All pages must be numbered

In addition, the submission must include the completed Excel budget template.

**Page Limitations:** See Proposal Outline below.

**Proposals that do not comply with the guidance above will be returned without review.**

**NOTE:** It is important that you consult with your institutional Office of Commercialization and Innovation (if applicable) before disclosing details of any research that may be patentable. Any proprietary information in this proposal must be clearly identified by marking "Proprietary" at the top and bottom of each page where the proprietary information appears.

Please contact Liz Tullis ([ltullis@sappt.org](mailto:ltullis@sappt.org)) if you have questions regarding submission requirements.

## **Proposal Outline:**

Please number all pages and apply these letter headings, in the order shown below:

- A. Cover Page
- B. Specific Aims
- C. Research Strategy
- D. Joint Execution Plan
- E. Budget Justification (for the completed excel template)
- F. Literature Cited (NIH format)
- G. Biosketch for Each Investigator (NIH format)

### **A. Cover Page**

- Name and Institution of the Principal Investigator
- Name and Institution of all Co-Principal Investigators
- Title of proposal
- Abstract (maximum 250 words). Brief description of the project, including: Problem to be solved. What is the current gap and proposed solution?
- Duration of project (assuming a start date of January 1, 2021) and total funds requested.

### **B. Specific Aims (maximum 1 page)**

- A clear statement of the project objectives, including: rationale, hypotheses tested, research questions addressed, and predicted outcomes, including any products to be developed.

### **C. Research Strategy (maximum 6 pages)**

- **Rationale and Significance.** Concisely present the rationale behind the proposed research. Describe the probable end products of the study and associated significance to the field. Summarize the current status of research and significant published work. **Explain the relationship to precision therapeutics, and how it differs from current projects.**
- **Innovation.** Describe how the proposed research features new methods, advanced and original new ideas, and creative thinking.
- **Research Approach.** Include information on preliminary studies and/or experience pertinent to this application. This should be followed by a description of the research design, methods, data analysis, application of results, limitations of the procedures, and a schedule of activities. Proposals should provide clearly labeled “Milestones” within the Research Approach section, for assessing progress and success of experiments, and a discussion of the implications of successful completion of these milestones. Milestones should be specific, quantifiable and scientifically justified, and lead to “go/no go” decisions; they should not be simply a restatement of the specific aims.
- **Future Funding and/or Commercialization.** Fully address plans for future applications for external funding. Fully address commercialization opportunities (e.g. invention disclosure, provisional patent, patents, licensing, creation of startups, etc.) including anticipated timeframe for each.

#### **D. Joint Execution Plan (maximum 1 page)**

- To aid in the reviewers' assessment of the proposed scope, roles, and responsibilities within the team as well as the collaborative environment, summarize activities to be performed by each key investigator as they relate to the overall project's objectives. Include information about percent effort of each investigator. Describe areas of interdependence.

#### **E. Budget Justification (maximum 1 page per institution)**

##### **Budget Justification (maximum 1 page per institution)**

- Funding allocation across the SAPPT institutions will be based on the specific needs of each project. Each Institution must complete their tab in the excel budget template.
- Budget justification should include all categories listed in the template. For items that are not relevant write N/A. If there is a project category not listed, please add a line in the template and provide justification.
- The application must identify any use of infectious agents, animals, and/or human subjects. IACUC, IRB, and/or IBC approval letters will be required at award.
- Program will not fund F&A costs.
- Allowable costs include: PI/faculty, other personnel, non-capital equipment purchases (under \$5,000), materials/reagents/supplies.
- Unallowable costs include: Student tuition/fees/scholarships, travel, and program management costs.
- If your project requires large equipment that is not currently available to you, please identify these items in the proposal. SA-PPT will work to identify this resource.

#### **F. Literature Cited (NIH format)**

#### **G. Biosketch (NIH format)**

- Required for PI, Co-PI(s), and any other Key Personnel
- [NIH format](#) (non-fellowship) must be used

#### **Additional Guidance and Awardee Responsibilities:**

- SAPPT will provide an email confirmation for receipt of proposal application materials. Please inquire if you do not receive this email within 24 hours at [ltullis@sappt.org](mailto:ltullis@sappt.org)
- If a project is awarded, all required regulatory documents (e.g., IACUC/IRB/IBC approval letters) must be provided to SAPPT prior to the release of funds. These must be received by the SAPPT program within 60 days of the award start date.
- Project teams must complete and sign a Letter of Agreement that outlines legal aspects related to Nondisclosure Agreements, declaration of existing background intellectual property (BIP), and management of jointly created arising intellectual property (AIP).

- Awardees are required to provide a 6-month milestone timeline related to the specific aims of the project (SAPPT to provide a template) and participate in SAPPT Technical Steering Committee Reviews, as needed, to discuss milestones and “go/no go” decisions based on these milestones.
- Project teams will be asked to provide information and participate in SAPPT communication activities (note: a presentation may be required).
- Project teams must submit a final report describing project accomplishments within 30 days of the project end date (note: a presentation may be required).
- Following the final performance period end date, the SAPPT administration will request periodic updates of progress related to project (e.g. publications, external funding, intellectual property, patents, meeting presentations, media coverage, etc.).

**Application Review:**

SAPPT is applying the NIH Grant Application Peer Review Scoring System. The NIH grant application scoring system uses a 9-point scale for both overall impact scores and scores for individual review criteria:

	Score	Description	Additional Guidance on Strengths/Weaknesses
<b>High</b>	1	<b>Exceptional</b>	Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses
	2	<b>Excellent</b>	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
	3	<b>Very Good</b>	Very strong with only some minor weaknesses
<b>Medium</b>	4	<b>Good</b>	Strong but with numerous minor weaknesses
	5	<b>Poor</b>	Strong but with at least one moderate weakness
	6	<b>Satisfactory</b>	Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses
<b>Low</b>	7	<b>Fair</b>	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness
	8	<b>Marginal</b>	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses
	9	<b>Poor</b>	Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses

**Weakness Definitions**

**Minor:** easily addressable weakness that does not substantially lessen the impact of the project.

**Moderate:** weakness that lessens the impact of the project.

**Major:** weakness that severely limits the impact of the project.

## Overall Impact

Reviewers will provide an overall impact score to reflect their assessment of the likelihood for the project to exert a sustained, powerful influence on the field of precision therapeutics, in consideration of the following review criteria.

## Scored Review Criteria

Reviewers will consider each of the review criteria below in the determination of scientific merit, and give a separate score for each. An application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have major scientific impact.

- 1. Significance: Research strategy significantly advances the mission of SAPPT**
  - A project scored high is considered significantly important and is aligned with several mission elements of SAPPT.
  
- 2. Innovation: Proposal approach is innovative and feasible**
  - A project scored high is considered exemplarily innovative and feasible in the time period. Priority will be given to projects proposing early milestones that demonstrate the achievement of specific aims of your team's project.
  
- 3. Partnership/Collaboration: Project capitalizes on collaborations across the SAPPT Organizations**
  - A project scored high involves investigators from all four (4) core organizations in a unique and significant manner. Of the proposals that score well based on the evaluation of technical content, **consideration will be given to proposals that include participation by all of the partner institutions.**
  
- 4. Stage of Research: Proposal at an advanced stage of research development**
  - A project scored high will have evidence of an established team, pilot data or other preliminary evidence to support the research hypothesis.
  
- 5. Development and/or Commercialization: Project outcome has potential for further funding or commercial interest**
  - A project scored high would provide innovative concepts, demonstrated evidence, and detailed funding or commercialization ideas with an extremely high likelihood of success.
  
- 6. PIs' credentials align with and advance the mission of SA PPT** (Includes track record of notable past accomplishments, funding, honors, awards and publications)
  - A project scored high shows evidence that each investigator demonstrates outstanding credentials within several elements relevant to precision therapeutics.