

SUBJECT: Research Bridge Funding

1. PURPOSE:

To define the Minneapolis VA Health Care System (MVAHCS) Research Service's criteria and procedures for requesting and awarding "bridge funding".

2. DEFINITIONS:

ACOS/R: Associate Chief of Staff for Research

PI: Principal Investigator

RDC: Research and Development Committee

3. OVERVIEW:

Bridge funding refers to funding provided by the MVAHCS Research Office to maintain the integrity of a research group during a temporary interruption in funding from VACO or another national funding agency, such as DoD or NIH.

Maintaining the integrity of a highly successful research program during a temporary lapse in funding maximizes the likelihood that the program will be able to secure additional funding and continue to be successful and productive.

4. PROCEDURES:

- a) Eligibility: MVAHCS researchers in good standing who have a strong history of funding.
- b) Core Investigators in a MVAHCS research center (e.g. CCDOR) that receives administrative infrastructure money are not eligible to directly apply to the Research Service for bridge funds; such requests must come from the Center Director.
- c) Requests for bridge funding should be communicated in writing to the ACOS/Research. The request must include:
 - i) A description of the work to be supported by the bridge funding;
 - ii) A description of how that work will result in new extramural funding in the ensuing 6-12 months;
 - iii) A list of any prior bridge funding;
 - iv) The investigator's funding history for the past 10 years;
 - v) A detailed budget.
- d) The ACOS/R will evaluate all requests for bridge funding and make a recommendation to the Research and Development Committee (RDC), which will make a final decision. Important considerations for the ACOS/R and the RDC include:
 - i) Availability of funds;
 - ii) Likelihood that the investigator will secure extramural funding within the following year; and
 - iii) Importance of the research program to the MVAHCS portfolio.
- e) The decision will be communicated to the investigator in writing. If funding is offered, the letter will specify:

- i) The time period covered by the agreement;
- ii) That Research Service reserves the right to revoke the agreement at any time should unforeseen circumstances occur requiring an alternate use of those funds. In this situation, the Investigator will either find alternative funding or wrap up all activities and release all affected personnel as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days after notification by the Research Service of intent to revoke the agreement;
- iii) That either party may request a review of the agreement before it expires for changes, continuation or discontinuation;
- iv) That bridge funding will be reimbursed at the earliest possible future date, in accordance with a repayment schedule that will be developed by Research Service, with input from the Investigator;
- v) That no additional bridge funding will be extended for any reason until the original balance has been repaid; and
- vi) That any publications must acknowledge the bridge funding support.

5. **REFERENCES:**

None

6. **R&D COMMITTEE APPROVAL:** 02 August 2016

7. **REVISIONS:** None - This is a new SOP.

8. **EXPIRATION DATE:** N/A

9. **FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY:** Research and Development (R&D) Committee