The Stanford Institute for Immunity, Transplantation and Infection (ITI) & Center for Human Systems Immunology (CHSI) with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is soliciting applications for PILOT PROJECTS ON COVID-19 RESEARCH

We are calling for proposals to address critical questions with the potential to deliver first results over the next 3-6 months – in time to inform phase I/II clinical trials. Projects are expected to start as soon as possible after Stanford University and IRB/APB clearance, ideally within 2-3 weeks.

Investigators will be invited to provide monthly progress updates in virtual ITI / BMGF meetings for rapid sharing of results.

With this RFP we want to address following key questions:

1. What is driving lung organ damage in SARS-CoV-2 infection, and can this be targeted for therapeutics/ host directed therapy? How does the host response develop over time, and what drives subsequent progression to systemic inflammation and multi-organ failure in a subset of patients as opposed to resolution?

2. Vaccine candidates in the pipeline aim to drive high (and ideally durable) neutralizing antibody titers. How can we understand which adjuvants are best for this?

3. What role do T cells play in effective viral/disease control in naïve humans? What about re-infection?

4. The potential for antibody-enhanced disease and vaccine-enhanced disease weighs heavily on those trying to develop vaccines and biologics. What are the other immunological features that are important to have or avoid? Will we know disease-enhancement when we see it? Do we know how to avoid it? What have we learned from autoimmunity and allergy that could be put to good use here?

5. If antibody titer and viral neutralization aren’t a sufficient correlate of protection, what else is important to measure in early vaccine studies?

6. What is driving the age difference in morbidity/mortality if it isn’t the underlying conditions?

7. Why do some individuals remain asymptomatic?

Please note that this RFP is not intended to support establishing of patient cohorts or clinical sample collection.

Amount of funding: Successful applicants will receive $50 - $100K (total direct) for 6-12 months with the possibility to apply for follow-up funding, contingent upon progress and scientific needs to address the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic.

Eligibility: Stanford faculty with PI eligibility and CE faculty.

Timeline and selection process: Please submit your proposal here by Friday May 1st, 2020. Proposals will be reviewed by a Stanford – BMGF committee within one week and funding will be made available by mid May 2020.
COVID-19 PILOT PROJECT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Please upload the following on our submission portal by FRIDAY MAY 1, 2020:

File name: Last name_ITI_COVID19.docx

2-page proposal:
- Header: Institute for Immunity, Transplantation and Infection | Center for Human Systems Immunology COVID-19 Pilot Project
- Project Title
- PI and Co-PI name, title/rank, department, address, phone number, email address
- Briefly describe the proposal with key question(s) (see above) addressed, hypothesis, rationale and approach.
- If clinical samples are needed for your research, please include how you will obtain them, and which collaborations, biosafety and IRB approvals you already have in place or need to prepare.
- Timeline estimate for your project.
- Format: Arial font size 11, single spaced, 1/2-inch margin; submit in word format (no PDFs please).
- One paragraph budget summary at the bottom of your proposal: Please list the total direct amount of funding requested with details on amount for personnel and % support, supplies and other support. No detailed budget requested for submission. No NIH salary cap applies. Indirect rate is 10%.
- Please include other pertinent support and potential leveraging.
- Name and e-mail address of your task/finance manager (to be contacted for further details upon approval of your application).
- Not required: Preliminary data, CV, budget justification.

Institutional representative: not applicable. This RFP is considered an internal Stanford funding opportunity. Therefore, you do not need to submit your proposals through your RPM/RMG or CGO/OSR for institutional approval.

For inquiries, please contact Gerlinde Obermoser, Project Director, Center for Human Systems Immunology Gerlinde.Obermoser@Stanford.edu.