

NEOMED RESEARCH POLICY	Policy No: 3349-R-676
RESEARCH POLICY TITLE: Bridge Funding for Sponsored Programs	EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/1/2023
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENTS: Vice President for Research, Department Chairs, Deans	Approval Authority: Responsible Office:

(A) PURPOSE

The purpose of Bridge Funding is to assist Principal Investigators (PI) to sustain research projects that have lost extramural funding to re-establish external funding. Bridge support is intended only for those PIs who have experienced a significant reduction from extramural sources and have a demonstrated likelihood of continued external funding pending resubmission. A funding reduction or shortfall is insufficient by itself to establish eligibility. Bridge Funding is designed to provide partial funding to maintain the operations of a laboratory for a finite period, with the goal of strengthening future funding applications.

(B) SCOPE

Only full-time, tenure-track faculty funded by external sources with primary research-intensive appointments are eligible to apply. Applications from the following are not accepted: postdoctoral fellows, faculty without a demonstrated history of external funding or investigative independence, faculty who are currently or will be on faculty improvement leave during the Bridge Funded project, and faculty whose appointment will not continue at the University. Applications from part-time faculty who have been full-time, tenure-track in the last five years will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with application approval from Department Chair, Dean, and Vice President for Research (VPR).

(C) DEFINITIONS

All terms used herein are as defined in the Bylaws of the Faculty and related Appendices.

(D) POLICY STATEMENT

(1) Program Specifications

- (a) Bridge Funding is based on the requirement that applicants seek to renew or replace their external funding in a timely manner. Applications for Bridge Funding must include copies of the most recent summary

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review statements for a funding request from the sponsoring agency. The proposal must have received a score (for NIH) or show comparable indications of a favorable review.

- (b) Awards will be made to maintain projects over a short duration (one year or less). Funding beyond a duration of one year will be considered only in exceptional circumstances.
- (c) Approved projects will be funded by equal contributions from the Office of the Vice President for Research (Office of VPR), the College, and the Department. The maximum award is \$100,000 but should relate to the level of funding of the previous external award. Proposals that are not funded at an institutional level will be returned to the College and/or Department for consideration of reduced funding.
- (d) All funds in All PIs' accounts must be spent first, down to an unobligated balance of \$10,000.
- (e) Requests should be limited to the funding necessary to maintain a defined program over a short duration.
 - (i) Allowable expenses for funding support:
 - (a) Salary/fringes of postdoctoral or other research staff,
 - (b) Consumable supplies,
 - (c) Per diem costs for animals, and
 - (d) Essential services for the maintenance of biological specimens and/or critical data.
 - (ii) Expenses not allowed for funding support:
 - (a) Salary and fringes for the PI,

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- (b) Graduate student costs,
 - (c) Administrative or secretarial support, unless provided by lapsed funding,
 - (d) Travel, seminar, or conference registration fees, and
 - (e) Budget reductions in existing awards from external sponsors or cost overruns from previous cycles.
- (f) Applications should demonstrate a bridge between the existing research efforts and proposed applications, rather than requesting funding for a project repeatedly denied support, or one with no existing foundation from which a bridge to eventual external funding could be built.
- (g) If external funding is received during the Bridge Funding period, the unspent Bridge Funding remainder will be returned on a proportional basis to the department, college, and Office of VPR.
- (h) Bridge Funding is an exceptional mechanism that should be used sparingly. Faculty who received Bridge Funding should demonstrate a significant period of extramural funding prior to a subsequent request.
- (i) Projects funded with Bridge Funding should acknowledge the contributing sources in publications.
- (2) Submission Process
- The PI will apply to the respective primary Department Chair who will review the application for strategic importance and for funding necessity. If the Department Chair approves, the application will be forwarded, with a recommendation, to the Dean.

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Application materials should be submitted in a single PDF in the order listed below.

- (a) Recommendation letter from Department Chair to the Dean
- (b) Bridge Funding Proposal Summary should include the following:
 - (i) Proposal Summary Page (or equivalent),
 - (ii) Specific Aims page, and
 - (iii) Budget request page and narrative that fully explains the relationship of costs to the proposed activity and the basis for cost estimates (not to exceed two pages).
- (c) The PI shall also supply the following:
 - (i) The PI's NIH-style biosketch (not to exceed four (4) pages), documentation of all recent productivity, and a summary of recent, current, and pending support.
 - (ii) Other support (not to exceed two pages). For the PI and all co-investigators on the project, all sources of internal and external support available for all research efforts at the current time or within the next six (6) months, including a listing of all submitted proposals (title, budget requested, timeline). Include all department funds (including discretionary and start-up funds). Indicate how you intend to spend these available funds. Clarify the relationship between the proposed project and all currently funded activities.
 - (iii) Copy of review panel/study section summary statements and score for all proposals submitted in the prior eighteen (18) months.

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(iv) Plans for future submissions.

(3) Review Process

Multiple levels of support require multiple levels of review:

- (a) The Department Chair must review the request for strategic importance, funding necessity and budget availability.
- (b) The Dean must review the request for alignment with the collegiate research strategy and budget availability. If appropriate, the Dean may request reviews from other senior researchers who, in the judgement of the Dean, do not have a conflict of interest with the PI.
- (c) If approved by the Dean, it will be forwarded with a recommendation to the VPR who will review the application for alignment with the overall university research strategic goals and budget availability. The VPR may consult with the University Research Council.

(4) Funding Levels

Full awards will be funded by equal contributions from the Office of the VP for Research, College, and Department. Awards will be made to maintain projects over a short duration. The maximum award is \$100,000 but should relate to the level of funding of the previous external award.

(5) Bridge Funding Report

Successful applicants for Bridge Funding are required to submit a final written report to the VPR, Dean, and Department Chair.

- (a) Final Report within one month following the end of the Bridge Funding period. Unless funding extends beyond one year in which case a report at

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one year is due. The PI should submit a brief report describing the status of all current applications for funding and how funds were spent. This report should include:

- (i) Status of all submitted and planned applications for funding,
- (ii) Copies of all scores and reviews of external funding applications,
- (iii) Manuscripts published or submitted since the receipt of Bridge Funding,
- (iv) Other measures of research progress or productivity as appropriate, and
- (v) An accounting of all expenditures using Bridge Funding.