

M. J. MURDOCK CHARITABLE TRUST
Murdock College Research Program
for Life Sciences

G U I D E L I N E S

The Murdock College Research Program for Life Sciences supports research in the life sciences in private predominantly undergraduate colleges and universities. Proposals that describe original research in the life sciences will be evaluated on the basis of their scientific merit, the scientific qualifications of the investigator or the investigators that are proposing the research, and the feasibility of the work. Involvement of undergraduate students in the research is also considered important. After proposals are sent to outside experts for review, they will be evaluated by a committee of life scientists assembled to advise the Trust. Upon action of the Board of Trustees, all awards are made to the submitting college or university on behalf of the investigator(s).

Goals

The goals of this program are several. Primary among these goals is the development of excellent faculty and undergraduate students in life sciences. Faculty and students are encouraged to work together in the pursuit of the knowledge and understanding of the basic principles underlying the function of living systems. It is anticipated that such research will be strongly educational in itself, but that it will also catalyze improvements in traditional science courses through inquiry-based teaching.

The primary criterion that will be used that will be used in evaluating proposals will be the perceived scientific quality of the research as measured by its likelihood to contribute significantly to fundamental knowledge in the field. A clear commitment of the college or university to support the research will also strengthen a proposal, as will substantial participation of undergraduate students as research associates, rather than merely as technical assistants.

Eligibility

Eligible institutions are private predominantly undergraduate colleges and universities in the five-state region of the Pacific Northwest: Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. To be eligible, the institution must offer the baccalaureate degree, but no doctoral degree in the sciences. The principal investigator must hold a faculty appointment in a department of biology, or in a department identified by a traditional subfield of biology. Faculty members in departments of biochemistry are not eligible. Only one proposal from an investigator will be considered at a given time; there is no limit on the number of proposals that may be submitted by each institution.

Both new faculty and established faculty are eligible in this program. In both cases, however, the intent of the program is to support research initiation, and ongoing projects previously supported by other external funding agencies will not be competitive. (An exception to this will be projects previously supported as part of a block grant to the institution within the Murdock College Science Research Program; such projects will be fully competitive unless they also receive ongoing support from other external sources.)

New faculty may apply, through their institutions, as soon as they receive an appointment of at least two years duration, as well as approval of the necessary institutional support. If sufficient funds to perform the research should be received from other sources while the Trust is evaluating a proposal, the proposal to the Trust should be withdrawn from further consideration.



Duration and Renewal

Awards will be made to support research periods of one or two years. However, because it is the intent of this program to provide initial support of research that will be ongoing, it is expected that most proposals will request two-year support. A single request for a renewal grant for up to two additional years may be submitted; no other subsequent applications by the same faculty person(s) will be accepted in this program. The submission and evaluation procedure for such a renewal is the same as for the initial grant, except that progress during the first award period will also be considered in the evaluation, as will attempts and plans to secure funding from other external sources.

Budget Considerations

Only funding for direct costs for the proposed research may be requested; indirect costs are expected to be borne by the institution. An added institutional contribution to the direct costs will strengthen a proposal; institutional cost-sharing on equipment purchases is required. Grants given in this program provide funding primarily for summer research activity; it is expected, however, that research will continue during the academic year, albeit with reduced intensity. The budget for each proposal should clearly reflect the needs of that particular project. Funds that have been awarded that cannot be used by the principal investigator for the proposed research must be returned to the Trust.

Eligible costs:

- (Minor) equipment and supplies needed for the research; institutional cost sharing is expected for equipment.
- Student summer stipends, up to \$3,500 per student per summer, for ten weeks of full-time participation. Institutions may strengthen their requests by offering room and board, if needed.
- Faculty summer stipends, up to \$7,500 for up to ten weeks full-time participation in the research. For shorter periods, the stipend should be prorated. If stipend support is also being paid from other sources, a prorated reduction in this proposal is also appropriate.
- Travel costs, only if such travel is required for the performance of the research; for example: for use of facilities not available on the home campus.
- Special and unusual expenses, not listed above, that are essential in the performance of the research.
- The institutional portion of FICA and Workman's Compensation on stipends may be requested. (Institutional support to this cost may, however, constitute part of an institution's direct support for the research.)

Ineligible costs:

- Faculty and student academic year stipends; postdoctoral stipends; graduate student stipends.
- Indirect costs and fringe benefits, except as noted above.
- Secretarial assistance, telephone, routine office supplies.
- Publication costs, books, and journals.
- Service or use charges for equipment housed at the home institution.
- Travel expenses to scientific meetings



Deadlines and Application Information

There is one proposal cycle per year. Completed proposals received on or before October 1 will be considered for an award announcement early the following March. Submitted proposals should conform to Program guidelines and be consistent with application forms provided by the Murdock Trust. (Institutions may scan the application forms for ease of preparation, but organization of the requested information on each page as well as space limitations for each item must be followed strictly. Application forms may also be downloaded, but electronic submission of applications is not permitted at this time.)

Requests for application materials, other correspondence, and completed applications should be sent to:

Murdock College Research Program for Life Sciences
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P.O. Box 1618
Vancouver, WA 98668

Telephone: 360-694-8415
Fax: 360-694-1819

