SPORE Best Practices

HDFCCC leadership and administration want to ensure strong SPORE applications that align with HDFCCC strategic goals, avoid competing with other HDFCCC SPORE grants at the time of NCI review if possible, and receive adequate pre-award support. In order to obtain the required institutional commitment and letter of support from the HDFCCC Director, prospective SPORE leaders must meet the milestones listed below. Each step represents a go/no-go decision point from HDFCCC and SPORE leadership.

Minimum requirements for any potential SPORE application

1) One year prior to submission: Schedule an exploratory pre-application meeting with Alan Ashworth, Eric Small, Kate Shumate, and Erin Bank. This meeting is required to review these guidelines and to secure institutional support. Prepare a high-level outline of proposed themes, projects, investigators, and cores to be discussed.

2) Six months prior: Convene an external advisory committee to review potential projects. HDFCCC leadership (Ashworth, Small, Shumate, and Bank) should be involved in this review process.

3) Four months prior: Meet with the NCI to discuss requirements, feasibility, and proposed projects and cores.

4) Three months prior: HDFCCC Leadership will convene an internal review panel. Preliminary written versions of the projects will need to be available for review, and SPORE leaders and project leaders should be available for an in-person review meeting.

5) One month prior: Near-final grant proposal circulated to HDFCCC Leadership, along with draft letter of support, for Director sign-off.

6) In general, HDFCCC leadership (Ashworth, Small, Shumate, and Bank) should be included in planning meetings, EAB meetings, NCI correspondence, etc. Provide regular (at least monthly) updates to HDFCCC point person identified in the pre-application meeting.

Pre-award Guidance

Knowledge of the funding mechanism

☐ Read the current FOA ([PAR-18-313](PAR-18-313))

☐ Arrange a pre-application consultation with NCI Program Officer (required 4-6 months before application due date)

> *We suggest multiple conversations with the PO to determine eligibility, likelihood of success, current funding environment and pay lines, etc.*

Building your team

☐ Establish a mechanism to select projects that involves internal and external review, is open HDFCCC-wide, and is transparent

> *We suggest an early meeting with the EAB to review potential projects, and a later meeting after projects have been selected and are being polished*

> *Calls for projects must be accessible to the broader HDFCCC community*

☐ Develop an IAB and EAB that will meet once before application deadline and at least annually post-award

We suggest including either Dr. Ashworth or Dr. Small, and any of the HDFCCC Associate Directors, in addition to other relevant UCSF faculty.

Identify synergies with UCSF HDFCCC

☐ Develop a mechanism and funding source to fund pilots before the SPORE is funded, which can be adopted into the Developmental Research Program/Career Enhancement Program

We suggest running these competitions through RAP, when applicable, or through central HDFCCC admin

☐ Meet with Scott VandenBerg, Director of the HDFCCC Tissue Core Facility, to discuss the required Biospecimen/Pathology Core

Get feedback from the experts

☐ Consult with current SPORE PIs (Shannon, Grandis, Berger) or previous applicants (Small, Tempero)

Pre-award support

☐ Contact the Research Development Office's Large Grant Development Program to request their support

☐ Work with Erin Bank to coordinate internal review, alignment with HDFCCC goals and timelines, institutional commitment discussions, and budget review; understand scope of HDFCCC support during the application process; and obtain support to supplement what is offered by RDO