



# Rosamund Stone Zander Translational Neuroscience Center

## RSZ TNC Pilot Research Grant

### Instructions for Applicants

#### 2024 Cycle

#### Deadlines

Letter of Intent: May 31, 2024  
Final applications: August 1, 2024  
Funds available: November 1, 2024

Please submit LOI and application to [TNC@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:TNC@childrens.harvard.edu).

#### Our Mission

The mission of the Rosamund Stone Zander Translational Neuroscience Center (RSZ TNC) is to improve the lives of children with brain disorders via timely and efficient translation of scientific research through collaboration among Boston Children's Hospital's exceptional investigators and in partnership with the external research community. To fulfill the goal of "timely and efficient translation," the RSZ TNC Pilot Research Grant is intended to support translational research on neurodevelopmental disorders within the domains of:

1. **Preclinical Research**, encompassing basic science research directed towards linking disease models to the clinical population (human genetics, patient tissue, iPSC, humanized animal models).
2. **Drug Discovery**, focused on novel disease modifying small molecules.
3. **Therapeutic Development**, focused on advancing disease modifying modalities (e.g. gene therapies, drugs) by utilizing in vitro and/or in vivo preclinical models.
4. **Translational Biomarkers** at either the preclinical or clinical stage that support diagnosis, pharmacodynamic response, prognostication, safety or endpoint development.
5. **Gene-based Clinical Research and Trials** that empower therapeutic development through natural history characterization, endpoint development and validation, and safety, proof of concept or efficacy assessment.

Projects that include **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and Community Engagement** initiatives will be prioritized such as inclusion of diverse populations and intentional reduction of linguistic, cultural, and economic barriers to research participation.

#### Guidelines for Applicants

1. **Purpose of grants:** Proposed research projects must be related to the mission of the RSZ TNC. The RSZ TNC focus is on the discovery pipeline from the identification of therapeutic targets and development of potential therapeutic agents to patient selection, clinical trial design and execution for Phase I and Phase II clinical trials. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit proposals for



projects which meaningfully engage with patient communities and which are inclusive of diverse ethnic, racial, socio-demographic and/or neurodiverse populations.

2. **Description of grants:**

- 1) New research proposals: These grants are for one year of support. The maximum allowable budget (direct costs only, no indirect costs allowed) is \$100,000 per year. The number of awardees will be determined by the quality of the proposals, the total amounts of the requested budgets of sufficiently meritorious proposals, and available funds. It is anticipated that 4 awards per year will be made. A second year of funding is possible; competing renewal applications for a second year of funding will be considered during next year's grant review cycle.
- 2) Research projects that partner with RSZ TNC services and facilities will be prioritized. The center's current services and facilities include a Human Neuron Core (HNC), Clinical Neurophysiology Research Core (CNRC), Clinical Research Operations Core, Human Neurobehavioral Core Service (HNBCS), Research Participant Registry, Biomarkers Unit, Translational Genomic Medicine (TGM) Core, Medicinal Chemistry Core, and Data Organization Collaboration Service (DoCS). More information about these core services can be found on our website at: <https://RSZTNC.org/cores>
- 3) Investigators of selected pilot projects will have collaborative consultations bi-yearly with RSZ TNC affiliated researchers for feedback and progress updates.

3. **Eligibility:** Applications will be accepted from all faculty of Boston Children's Hospital (employed by BCH or a BCH affiliated foundation) including Staff Scientists and Instructors (MD, PhD, MD-PhD, or equivalent).

4. **Process:** The initial application will consist of a 2-page Letter of Intent (LOI). The LOI will be screened to examine if the proposed research project supports the goals of the RSZ TNC. The screening process will be performed by a multidisciplinary committee representing established researchers at BCH and chaired by the Director of the RSZ Translational Neuroscience Center. Following the initial screening, an invitation will be sent by June 30, 2023 to selected investigators to submit the full application. Please state the domain of research to which your proposal pertains in both the letter of intent and application.

5. **Letter of intent:** For research proposals, the LOI consists of 1-2 pages of the hypothesis and specific aims. The aims should include a brief description of the research design and methods. All LOI applications must be submitted to [TNC@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:TNC@childrens.harvard.edu). An email confirmation of receipt will be returned to the applicant. The LOI must be received by 5 pm on June 2, 2023.

6. **Full applications must be invited** following review of LOI. Requests for full applications will be sent out by June 30, 2023.



Full applications must be submitted in single spaced text, one-half inch margins, and no smaller than an 11-point font. Arial or Helvetica typeface is preferred. The primary applicant's name must appear in the upper right-hand corner of each page. Proposal text must be limited to five pages (including figures but excluding references). Standard PHS 398 forms for budget, biosketch, other support, and resources may be used.

***Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit proposals for projects that are translatable across broad communities of patients and meaningfully engage with patient communities, and which are inclusive of diverse ethnic, racial, socio-demographic and/or neurodiverse populations.***

7. **Required format:** Applications must be submitted electronically. Send a single PDF file of assembled proposal to [TNC@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:TNC@childrens.harvard.edu).
8. **Composition of research proposal:** Invited research proposals and competing renewals should include to following elements:
  - 1) Cover page
  - 2) Abstracts (scientific and lay, 1 page limit)
  - 3) Budget (1 page limit)
  - 4) Budget Justification
  - 5) Biosketch(es) (include PI and co-investigator; NIH format)
  - 6) Other support page (list pending and current support only)
  - 7) Research Plan (5 page limit, not including references)
    - i. Hypothesis and Specific Aims
    - ii. Background and Significance
    - iii. Preliminary Results or, if 2nd year renewal, Progress Report
    - iv. Research Design and Methods
    - v. Statement of how proposal supports RSZ TNC mission and research priorities
    - vi. \*Statement of Commercialization Potential, including any issues of intellectual property (*\*optional*)
    - vii. Literature cited
  - 8) Letter of support from department/program chief
  - 9) \*Letters of support from collaborators or consultants, limit of 2 letters (*\*optional*)

## **Our Commitment**

***Learn more about The Rosamund Stone Zander Translational Neuroscience Center's commitment to [Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Belonging, and Anti-Racism](#). Our efforts are informed by and consistent with the goals of the Boston Children's Hospital [Declaration on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity](#).***

For more information, please visit <https://RSZTNC.org/pilot-grants> or contact [TNC@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:TNC@childrens.harvard.edu).