

**University of Tennessee Health Science Center  
Office of Research  
Bridge Funding Guidelines**

**Purpose**

Bridge Funding (BF) is an internal, competition-based program, managed by the Office of Research, providing interim funding to University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) faculty whose renewal application for an expiring grant that was not funded. It is intended to provide temporary, reduced support (up to \$75K total, to be used for up to 2 years) in order to retain key personnel and continue laboratory or research operations, while full support is being sought from outside agencies.

**Eligibility**

1. Any non-adjunct UTHSC faculty member who is a Principal Investigator (PI) on a grant or project which has been funded by a national funding agency with a bona fide scientific peer-review (e.g., NIH, NSF, American Heart Assoc.) **for at least three consecutive years, and** whose competitive renewal application from that agency has not been funded, **is eligible**.
2. The unfunded renewal application must be a direct continuation of the previously funded grant.
3. Unscored competitive renewal grants **are eligible**.
4. A faculty PI with two or more grants **is eligible** for BF when one of the grants is not funded, provided all other eligibility criteria are met. However, PIs with only one extramurally funded project receive priority.
5. Any UTHSC faculty member who holds a VA appointment **is eligible** for BF **if**: (1) the expired grant was funded by a national funding agency with a bona fide scientific peer review; and (2) UTHSC is the applicant institution.
6. As they are non-renewable, expired R21 or R03 applications **are not eligible**.
7. If the expired grant's funding ran out without a rejection for continued funding, the PI is **not eligible**. Applying for additional funding is a central requirement for receiving BF. All applicants should have submitted a competitive renewal application during the final year of their expiring grant (or no-cost extension). *Delays in submission of a competitive renewal application must be fully justified.*
8. BF is intended to provide limited support for individual grants, not for large grants such as program projects or SCOR grants. However, individual investigators of these types of grants **are eligible** to apply for BF support, provided they meet all eligibility requirements.
9. An individual grant is eligible to receive BF **one (1) time only**.
10. If a PI's first BF application is not awarded, the PI is eligible to apply for BF a second time. PIs are eligible to apply for BF for the same grant **two (2) times only**.

*\*\*If you are unsure if your grant is eligible for BF, please contact the Office of Research Development. (See contact information located after the application format section.)*

**Amount and Period of Support**

1. The maximum allowable amount for a BF request is \$75,000. If awarded, the BF funds can be used for up to two (2) years.
2. BF funds **can** be used for:
  - salary, fringe benefits and longevity pay (if applicable), for individuals whose salaries are supported by the interrupted grant, i.e., non-tenure track staff members (including post-doctoral fellows, limited term or part-time faculty members), and exempt and non-exempt staff
  - research supplies
  - equipment costs, such as service contracts and maintenance (large equipment purchases are **not allowed**)
  - travel funds (\$1,500 limit), to attend a national scientific meeting
  - publication costs

3. BF funds **cannot** be used to support the salary of any tenured, tenure-track, regular, or affiliated faculty member, or cover graduate student stipends (if supported by the graduate college).
4. Within the limits of the BF guidelines, PIs are free to allocate awarded BF funds as deemed appropriate.
5. Willful misrepresentation of the budget, misuse of funds, or not notifying the Office of Research of new extramural funding will result in loss of current and/or future eligibility.

### **Application Evaluation Process**

1. Each BF application will be assessed by a minimum of three (3) members of an institutional, cross-college reviewer pool, made up of faculty members at the Associate or Full Professor level, who have received some form of extramural grant funding in the last five (5) years.
2. Evaluation Process:
  - Applications that meet eligibility requirements will be reviewed using the following criteria: (1) granting agency critique of the unfunded grant; (2) the PI's proposed response to the critique; (3) probability of future funding of the grant; (4) current and past productivity; (5) budgetary request.  
*\*The highest priority will be given to those requests that are deemed most promising to receive extramural funding.*
  - Since the evaluation of applications is based upon the factors noted above, in-depth comments relative to the application's science will not be provided. However, reviewers may provide brief comments that can be forwarded to the PI.
  - Funding decisions will be made by the Vice Chancellor for Research based on reviewer assessments. However, in cases where the application may represent a conflict of interest or present some problem in its evaluation, the Vice Chancellor for Research will ask the reviewers for further assessment or approval.
3. Evaluation is expected to be completed within a month of the application submission deadline.

### **Expectations of Bridge Funding Recipients**

1. The PI must agree to continue reapplying for extramural funding in the same or new research area within the next year.
2. If extramural grant funding is obtained during the BF award period, the PI is **required** to notify the Office of Research and return the unexpended BF funds upon receipt of the new grant funding.
3. The PI must submit a one-page progress report on the status of the BF support to the VC for Research at the end of each twelve-month period.

### **Submission Deadlines**

Every year on January 31, April 30, August 31

### **Application Format for Bridge Funding**

All interested PIs meeting the above criteria should submit a BF application to the Office of Research.

**\*\*Applications are accepted via the UTHSC InfoReady Review portal at <https://uthsc.infoready4.com/> and must include the following:**

- A signed letter (on UTHSC letterhead) addressed to Steven R. Goodman, Ph.D., Vice Chancellor for Research, requesting BF support (one pdf)
- Specific Aims of **both** the expired grant **and** the unfunded renewal. Clearly label these Specific Aims as "*Original SAs*" and "*Renewal SAs*" (one pdf)
- Summary Statement of unfunded continuation grant with reviewer critiques and score
- PI's proposed response to the Summary Statement critique (2 pp. limit, 11 pt. font min., one pdf)
- Budget (on template and saved as a pdf)
- Budget Justification
- Grant-Related publications by the PI
- PI's full CV
- Letter from PI's Chair confirming information provided is correct, to the best of his/her knowledge, and outlining their opinion of possibility of future funding on this project

**If you have any questions regarding Bridge Funding or InfoReady Review, please contact:**

Jamie Whartenby, MPA  
Director of Research Development  
Office of Research  
University of Tennessee Health Science Center  
910 Madison, Suite 608  
Memphis, TN 38163  
Tel: 901-448-1277  
Fax: 901-448-7133  
Email: [jwharten@uthsc.edu](mailto:jwharten@uthsc.edu)  
<https://www.uthsc.edu/research/development/index.php>

**To Apply for Bridge Funding via InfoReady Review (IRR)**

1. Review guidelines and required application materials above. Guidelines & required materials are also found at <https://www.uthsc.edu/research/development/intramural-funding/documents/bridge-funding-guidelines.pdf>
2. Review the Bridge Funding Checklist at <https://www.uthsc.edu/research/development/intramural-funding/documents/bridge-funding-checklist.pdf>
3. Submit your application with all required material via the UTHSC InfoReady Review (IRR) portal at <https://uthsc.infoready4.com/>. **Please read all of the directions below regarding login, choosing a primary organization, and applying before clicking on the InfoReady Review link.**

**IRR Log-In Information**

- a. Click [HERE](#) to access the UTHSC IRR homepage.
- b. Click **"Log In"** in the upper right corner of the screen (in the green area).
- c. On the next screen, click the blue box labeled **"University of Tennessee Health Science Center Login"**.
- d. Log in using your UTHSC Net ID and Password.
- e. **First time IRR users must next select their primary department.** **Returning users who have already chosen their Primary Department can proceed to "6" below.**
  - a. After logging in, click on your name (upper right corner). You'll be re-directed to your *User Profile*.
  - b. Scroll down to *Department Levels*, and click **"Add Primary Department"**.
  - c. Choose your affiliation from the drop-down menu. (The menu drills down to departmental level.)
  - d. Click **"Save and Close"**.
  - e. Click **"Save Changes"** at the bottom of User Profile page.
  - f. Click **"Home"** (in the upper left under the green bar in orange writing) to return to the home page.
- f. Once on the homepage, click competition title you want to apply to at the bottom of the page.
- g. Click **"Apply"** in right column.
- h. Enter all required information in fields that are marked with an asterisk (\*). **You will not be able to submit your application without filling out all asterisk-marked fields.** If a required field(\*) does not apply to you, please enter "n/a" in the field.
- i. Once you have filled in all required fields and uploaded your application materials, be sure to click **"Submit Application"**.
- j. Upon submission of your application, you will receive an immediate, automated email confirmation. If you do not receive this confirmation, please contact Jamie Whartenby at [jwharten@uthsc.edu](mailto:jwharten@uthsc.edu).