

## **Frequently Asked Questions About NYFIRST**

### **What is NYFIRST?**

The New York Fund for Innovation in Research and Scientific Talent (NYFIRST) is an Empire State Development-funded grant program designed to encourage recruitment and retention of exceptional life science researchers and world-class talent at the state's medical schools to accelerate Translational Research.

### **How can the grant monies be used?**

NYFIRST funds can be used to support the establishment or upgrading of laboratories for the recruited or retained researchers, for purchases of capital equipment and specialized supplies needed for their research, and as working capital to cover costs of professional staff (including staff scientists, postdoctoral fellows, and technicians, but excluding the recruited researcher) critical to the proposed research.

### **What is the maximum amount of funding that an applicant can receive?**

The maximum grant amount for any eligible applicant project is \$1 million.

### **Must the grantee match the funding in any way?**

Grantees are required to provide \$2 in matching funds for every \$1 of NYFIRST program assistance.

### **Are there any restrictions on how the matching funds are obtained?**

Matching funds may consist of cash, including federal assistance, or in-kind services. No financial assistance provided by ESD, or any other New York state agency or authority, may be included as part of the grantee's match.

### **What is the total amount of funding available for the NYFIRST Program?**

The total amount of funding available under the NYFIRST Program is \$15 million. To date, ten NYFIRST grants have been recommended.

### **Who can apply for a grant?**

Only medical schools in New York State are eligible to apply for NYFIRST grants.

### **Are there any restrictions on the area of research undertaken by the recruited Principal Investigator?**

There are no restrictions in terms of therapeutic area of research. The only requirements are that the research must offer an innovative solution to an unmet clinical need and have a clear path to commercialization and market use.

### **Must the Principal Investigator be recruited from out of state, or can the NYFIRST grant also be used to retain a Principal Investigator currently on the applicant school's faculty?**

Investigators may be recruited or retained, as long as they meet the program requirements. A recruited Principal Investigator must be employed by an institution or company outside New York State at the

time an offer of employment is made by the Applicant. In the case of a Principal Investigator the Applicant wishes to retain, the Investigator must have a verifiable offer from an institution located outside of New York State that would lead him/her to leave the state (see the Guidelines for specific requirements).

**How many grants will be made during each application cycle?**

There is no limit to the number of awards that can be made during any application cycle, as long as NYFIRST funds are not fully committed. ESD will make awards to as many qualifying medical schools as possible within New York State, assuming equivalent qualifying evaluation scores and taking into consideration regional balance, anticipated job creation and retention, and economic development benefits. ESD will make no more than one award per Applicant per year.

**Is there more than one opportunity to submit an application during the year?**

ESD intends to make NYFIRST grant awards through a competitive grant solicitation twice annually until funds under this program are fully committed. For each Application cycle, the period between application availability and application deadline shall be six months.

**How are the applications evaluated?**

A review panel of qualified individuals evaluates each application based on pre-determined criteria.

**What is meant by Life Sciences Economic Development Benefits?**

Life Sciences Economic Development Benefits refer to the creation, expansion, enhancement or acceleration of life sciences programs throughout the state leading to:

- Commercialization of life sciences
- Creation or retention of jobs in the life sciences industry
- Promotion of the life science ecosystem within a region or regions of the state
- New patents in life science
- Additional commercial laboratory space
- Additional venture capital money for life sciences entities in New York State

**Continue checking ESD's website for updates on when the next round of NYFIRST applications will be available.**