TREC Investigator Exchange Program (IEP) – Year 4

Notice of Availability of Funds for Transdisciplinary Investigator Exchange Activities in
Transdisciplinary Research on Energetics and Cancer (TREC)

Release Date: May 7, 2014
RFA: TREC IEP Year 4 (funds must be used June 1, 2014 – May 31, 2015)
Application Due Date: on or before April 1, 2015
Send application to: Renee Miciek at rmiciek@hshp.harvard.edu for signature.
The applicant then submits the signed application to the TREC Coordination Center at trec-cc@fhcrc.org

Background
A mission of the TREC initiative is to provide opportunities for meaningful collaboration across geographically separate sites, for the purpose of promoting transdisciplinary research. In support of this mission, the TREC Coordination Center (CC) established a $6,400 per annum TREC Investigator Exchange Program (IEP), to be shared equally between two of the four TREC Research Centers each year (i.e., $3,200 for each TREC Center). The IEP funds create a mechanism to exchange TREC investigators among the four TREC Research Centers. One or more investigators per year, from each of the two TREC Centers, will have the opportunity to visit another TREC Center for up to one week in order to broaden his/her knowledge in transdisciplinary research of energetics and cancer by observing and participating in TREC-focused research that a) is of a different discipline than his/her area of expertise and/or b) provides training in a specific research technique that is new to the investigator.

For the TREC Investigator Exchange Program (IEP), TREC ‘trainees’ and established TREC investigators may apply. TREC ‘trainees’ includes students and individuals at the post-doctoral level who are early in their scientific career (e.g., new assistant professors who have not yet received their own R01). For applications of equal training merit, priority will be given to TREC ‘trainees’.

Definition of TREC Trainees: Pre-doctoral students and early career investigators. Priority for funds will be given to trainees who qualify under one of the following two categories*:

1. Students, specifically doctoral candidates in an academic program that is relevant to transdisciplinary research in energetics and cancer, or
2. Early Career Investigators (ECIs). Specifically, those who are at the post-doctoral level and early in their scientific career. Eligible ECIs are those who have received their doctoral degrees within the last 5 years, are currently working in an early career position, such as a post-doctoral fellow or assistant professor, in association with one or more senior investigator members of TREC, and have not yet received their own R01. Other types of awards are acceptable (e.g., K Awards, P30s, foundation grants). One example of an ECI would be a new assistant professor who has not yet been awarded an R01.

*Established TREC investigators may also apply for IEP funds. However, if a trainee applies, the above definition applies.

TREC IEP funds may be used to travel a TREC investigator to a TREC affiliate site. However, to maximize benefit to TREC, priority should be given to visiting a TREC Research Center.

See Appendix A for a Promotional Flyer which provides examples of previously awarded exchange experiences.

Policy
Eligibility: TREC investigators (defined above) are eligible to apply for IEP funds administered through the CC.

Guidelines:
• Financial support totaling up to $3,200 for each of two TREC Research Centers for investigator exchanges will be funded annually through the CC’s TREC IEP Program. The total $3,200 allotted to each eligible TREC Center may be allocated for one or more investigator exchange experience.
• In June 2012, the CC randomly allocated opportunities for investigator exchanges to the TREC Centers as follows:
  ○ Harvard and UCSD were allocated opportunities for investigator exchanges in Years 2 & 4.
TREC Investigator Exchange Program (IEP) Application

- **Penn and WUSTL** were allocated opportunities for investigator exchanges in **Years 3 & 5**.

- Investigator exchanges, including commensurate travel to/from the exchange location, must be completed by May 31, 2015.³

- For end of year exchanges, receipt of reimbursement requests and disbursement of funds by the CC may extend into June, 2015, if necessary. IEP funds must be used by May 31 of the budget year in which they are available. The funds do not carry over into the next budget year.³

- A TREC Center may elect to use their allocated opportunity or may trade opportunities, if desired. Opportunities may be traded only if the trade is agreeable to both Centers. Centers agreeing to a trade must inform the CC.

- IEP funds must be used by May 31st of the budget year for which the proposal is available. The funds do not carry over into the next budget year.³

- Establishing financial guidelines for IEP award recipients is the responsibility of the CC and following these guidelines is the responsibility of the IEP award recipients. IEP award recipients will be **reimbursed for expenses after the exchange experience has occurred, up to the amount specified in the approved proposal**. (See procedures below.)

- IEP award recipients prepare a brief (1-page) summary of their exchange experience. (See procedures below.)

³ Exchanges which span the end of May and beginning of June will be considered. In such cases, please contact the TREC CC Program Manager, Diana Lowry (dlowry@fhcrc.org), for potential approval prior to submitting the relevant IEP application.

**Procedures**

**Announcement:** The CC announces the availability of TREC IEP funds in April for the coming budget year (6/1 – 5/31).

**Trades:** Any trading of opportunities should be communicated to the CC as soon as the trade is negotiated. Trades should be negotiated as early as possible to be sure that IEP funds for a given year are not underutilized.

**Call for Proposals:** Each TREC Center Principal Investigator determines the process for requesting applications for TREC IEP funds at his/her TREC Center, taking into account the deadlines outlined below. For example, the TREC Center Principal Investigator may use a formal or informal call for proposals.

**Submission:** Applicants submit proposals to their TREC Center Principal Investigator for consideration. To be sure that all proposals include consistent and adequate information about the planned experience, applicants must complete the **TREC IEP Application** regardless of whether the TREC Center Principal Investigator uses a formal or informal process to call for proposals. A Word version of the application can be downloaded from the TREC secure website (see Policies & Procedures/Manual of Operations) at www.trecscience.org.

**Review:** The TREC Research Center reviews the submitted proposals for relevance and benefit to TREC as well as specific scientific growth to the applicant.

- For each opportunity, the TREC Research Center selects candidate(s) to receive the TREC IEP funds.
- The TREC Research Center forwards the selected proposal to the CC (trec-cc@fhcrc.org).
  - Proposals should be forwarded to the CC at least **eight weeks** in advance of the exchange experience. For urgent consideration of an experience occurring in less than eight weeks, please contact the TREC CC Program Manager, Diana Lowry (dlowry@fhcrc.org).
  - Ideally, proposals for a given budget year should be forwarded to the CC during the first half of the budget year (~June – November). Generally, the latest date to forward a proposal to the Coordination Center for a given budget year is **April 1st** of that budget year.

**Approval:** The CC reviews the candidate proposals and determines final approval. Generally, this occurs within one week of receipt at the CC.
Notification: The next business day following the approval of the proposal, the CC notifies the applicant (and TREC Center Principal Investigator) via email regarding the status of the application (approved/not approved). The TREC Steering Committee is notified of IEP approvals and summary report submissions on a regular basis.

Exchange Experience: Once notified that his/her proposal has been approved, the IEP award recipient completes the exchange experience as outlined in the approved proposal.

Expense Accounting & Reimbursement: IEP award recipients receive reimbursement for expenses after the exchange experience has occurred, up to the amount specified in the approved proposal. Funds recipients are expected to comply with the following guidelines:

1. If a traveler adds personal travel to a business trip, the traveler will be responsible for any additional costs incurred above the lowest reasonable fare available to and from the business destination.

2. Itemized paper receipts are required. Retain all original receipts related to the exchange experience.

3. Complete and sign the TREC IEP Reimbursement Form (sent to IEP award recipients via email) using the format and guidelines specified in the form and example. A Word version of the reimbursement form can be downloaded from the TREC secure website (see Policies & Procedures/Manual of Operations) at www.trecscience.org.

4. Obtain TREC Center approval of the expenses. The TREC Center Principal Investigator (or designee) is responsible for:
   - Reviewing receipts and TREC IEP Reimbursement Form for completeness and accuracy.
   - Confirming that the reimbursement request does not exceed the amount specified in the approved proposal.
   - Approving the reimbursement request by signing and dating the TREC IEP Reimbursement Form.

5. Complete a W-9 form (sent to IEP award recipients via email). Provide your name, address, social security number, and signature. This form is necessary for Hutchinson Center accounting purposes and is required for reimbursement. (Non-US citizens, please contact TREC CC Program Assistant, Lori Schumacher (lschumac@fredhutch.org), for alternate documentation.)

6. Make a copy of the receipts, approved TREC IEP Reimbursement Form, and completed W-9 form for your records.

7. Send the original receipts, approved TREC IEP Reimbursement Form, and completed W-9 form to the CC no later than two weeks after the exchange experience.
   - Send to:
     TREC Coordination Center (Attn: Lori Schumacher, TREC CC Program Assistant)
     Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
     1100 Fairview Ave. N., M3-A306
     Seattle, WA 98109
   - Use Fed-Ex to ensure package tracking.
   - Notify the Coordination Center (trec-cc@fhcrc.org) to expect the package.

Upon receipt, the CC processes the reimbursement request. The CC may request clarification or further documentation from the traveler if necessary. The CC then submits the reimbursement request to FHcrc accounting. Upon receipt of the check from accounting, the CC then forwards the check to the individual named on the TREC IEP Reimbursement Form, or to the TREC Center Program Manager (PM) in the event that the shipment contains checks for multiple recipients. Shipment usually occurs within 10 business days of receipt of the check from FHcrc accounting. The Coordination Center notifies the award recipient and Center PM that the check has been shipped, providing the Fed-Ex airbill number for tracking.

Reporting: IEP award recipients prepare a brief summary of the exchange experience within two months of completing the experience. A summary report template is provided by the CC to the award recipient for this purpose.

1. Prepare a 1-page summary that outlines knowledge and skills acquired, how they will be used in the future, the benefit to TREC, and how the IEP experience will add value to or influence the recipient's future scientific career.

2. Send the summary to the TREC Center Principal Investigator for review (optional per TREC Center Principal Investigator discretion).
3. Send the summary to the CC via email (trec-cc@fhcrc.org) for distribution to the Steering Committee.

If applicable, the Steering Committee may have the IEP award recipient share their experience with the TREC membership in the form of a presentation or poster session at a TREC Scientific Meeting, or other.