

## Flash Grant Proposal Guidelines & Instructions

### Deadline for Application

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#### Cycle 2 Deadline:

**Wednesday, April 3, 2019 (noon)**

*Solicitation: Open only to digital, precision, and data-driven life science technologies (see page 2 for details)*

Application materials can be found on the Flash Grant webpage at [www.ncbiotech.org/Flash](http://www.ncbiotech.org/Flash)

### Who May Apply

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#### Eligible Institutions

Any North Carolina university or non-profit research organization may apply.

#### Principal Investigator Eligibility

At the time of submission, the Principal Investigator (PI) must hold a full-time, tenure-track or tenured faculty appointment, or an appointment as full-time research faculty with a dedicated independent lab at the applicant institution.

- ⊗ *The PI may have no more than two active awards from the North Carolina Biotechnology Center at the same time.*

**IMPORTANT:** Flash Grant proposals are submitted using an online application system. The submitting PI must register for an account at least 5 business days before submission of the proposal. See Step 7, page 6 for details.

***If you have applied for a grant using the online funding portal previously (for any NCBiotech funding program), you do not need to register again.***

Read these Flash Grant Program Guidelines & Instructions thoroughly prior to submitting an application. If you have any questions about the program, use the contact information at the end of this document.

### Purpose

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NCBiotech's Flash Grant program was created to identify and energize the most creative ideas that exhibit early indications of exceptional commercial potential. Like a flash of inspiration, Flash Grants infuse a quick jolt of funding at a critical early point when a small, targeted influx of funds can be crucial to shaping innovative research ideas into high potential life science technologies.

Flash Grants support short, tightly-focused research projects in these two categories:

1. To obtain crucial proof-of-concept or feasibility testing data necessary to suggest the disruptive\* potential of a life science technology
- and/or**
2. To conduct the final experiment(s) needed to advance a basic life science research program into the translational research phase\* of development

These micro-grants are intended to provide funding for projects not currently supported by traditional NIH, NSF, and foundational grants. *Proposals that simply extend, supplement, or defray the costs of research that is already ongoing will not be considered for funding.*

Flash Grant projects are expected to lead, to follow-on funding, intellectual property filings, licenses, and startup company formation.

\* See the Flash Grant FAQ page for definitions ([www.ncbiotech.org/flashFAQ](http://www.ncbiotech.org/flashFAQ))

## Proposal Requirements

The Cycle 2 Flash Grant deadline is open **only to digital, precision, and data-driven life science technologies.**

Digital Health/Life Science is any form of human, animal, agricultural, industrial, and/or environmental engagement, assessment, or management solution where the main technology enabled is through digital means.

Precision Health combines data about an individual's genes, environment, and lifestyle with innovation and drivers partnerships to more precisely predict and diagnose disease, target therapies, and personalize health and wellness plans.

Data-driven life science technologies include but are not limited to:

- FAIR Data Practices
  - Indexing
  - Metadata capture
  - Security, privacy, consenting, and IP protection
- Computational Biology
  - Bioinformatics
  - Macromolecular structures
  - Genome sequences
  - Functional genetics
  - Macromolecular geometry
  - Phylogenetic tree construction
  - Protein structure/function
  - Gene finding
  - Expression data analysis
- Biostatistics
  - Genome-wide association studies
  - Transcriptome-wide association studies
- Data Science
  - Cloud computing
  - Machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI)
  - Lab automation

All projects must meet the following requirements:

- Project outcome(s) clearly advances a line of research or application that has the

potential to lead to the creation of a disruptive technology and/or will advance the research into the translational research phase of development

- Directly addresses a recognized unmet need
- Describes a well-defined technical and/or commercial business case development project whose aims are achievable within the requested budget and timeline
- Involves high-risk, high-impact research

## Compelling Proposals

Priority consideration will be given to projects relating to technology sectors of current strategic interest to the NC Biotechnology Center and North Carolina, including agriculture, biodefense, medical devices, etc.

In order to be compelling and competitive, Flash Grant proposals should demonstrate several of the following features:

- Promotes new collaborations
- Leverages investments and research funding from NC-based sources
- Has strong potential for creating protectable intellectual property
- Has strong potential to lead to follow-on funding from public or private sources

## Program Details

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### Amount and Period of Funding

A maximum of \$24,000 may be requested for periods of up to nine months. There is no match requirement for the Flash Grant Program.

### Funding Decisions and Payments

Funding decisions will typically be announced within 30-45 business days of submission. The awards selection process is competitive. Award funding is subject to availability of funds and partial funding may be awarded.

If awarded, grant funds will be disbursed as a one-time payment at the start of the funding period.

## Resubmissions

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No resubmissions of previously considered Flash Grant proposals are allowed.

## Review Process

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- Examination by Biotechnology Center staff and outside subject matter experts to ensure the proposed project meets program requirements and goals and evaluate the potential for success.
- Final approval by the Biotechnology Center's senior management.

## Evaluation Criteria

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Each proposal will be scored on the specific project task(s) and/or deliverable(s). The project should have at least one major outcome or success criterion identified at the start that is to be definitively addressed upon completion.

The clarity and specificity of the rationale/statement of need, the study design, and the deliverable(s) will be strongly considered during evaluation. Proposals must also present a realistic budget and timeline.

Proposals will also be assessed on the degree of disruption anticipated in the commercial markets or likelihood of success in transitioning to the translational research phase of development.

## Post-award Reporting

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A post-award final report that describes the outcomes and impact of funded activities is required. A final financial statement indicating how the funds were spent is also required. More information on reporting requirements will be provided on request or if a grant is awarded.

After a grant is closed, participation is expected in periodic surveys to track information on subsequent funding, patents, publications, jobs, companies created, licenses executed, etc. that are a direct result

of the award. This information will be used to demonstrate the impact of our programs and may be collected for up to 10 years.

Grantees will notify the NC Biotechnology Center if subsequent grants are received as a result of Flash Grant funding.

Grantees will acknowledge the NC Biotechnology Center in publications resulting from Flash Grant support.

## Information Release

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The North Carolina Biotechnology Center announces its awards through press releases and other publications. These communications typically include the Project Title and Public Information Summary. The Public Information Summary is provided by the applicant with the online application and should be written for a lay audience. No information is released on declined proposals.

## Confidentiality

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As part of our grants review process, the Biotechnology Center routinely shares the contents of grant applications with both internal and/or external experts to assess the merits of each application. The Biotechnology Center will endeavor to maintain the confidentiality of all information provided by the applicant. While measures are in place to assure the appropriate handling of all information provided, the applicant is responsible for limiting the disclosure of any sensitive information that should not be shared outside of the Biotechnology Center.

We encourage applicants to consult with their institution's technology transfer office or intellectual property professional for more specific counsel as necessary.

## Application Instructions

Application materials are located on the Flash Grant webpage at [www.ncbiotech.org/Flash](http://www.ncbiotech.org/Flash).

A complete Flash proposal is comprised of a completed application form and four documents:

1. Coversheet signed by the PI and a representative of the institution's sponsored research office
2. Flash proposal
3. Budget form
4. Supporting documentation

## Step 1: Read the Guidelines & Instructions

Read these Flash Grant Program Guidelines & Instructions thoroughly prior to submitting an application. If you have any questions about the program, use the contact information at the end of this document.

- *Applications that do not include the signature of a representative of your institution's Sponsored Research Office (or an authorized official) on the coversheet will be administratively declined.*
- *Applications that do not follow all requirements and instructions may be administratively declined without review.*

## General Proposal Formatting Guidelines

- Use standard font (such as Times New Roman, Calibri, or Cambria) no smaller than 11 point.
- Page set-up should be for single-spacing on 8½"x11" paper.
- Number each page.
- Margins should be ¾" to 1".
- Do not use logos or letterhead on any pages of the proposal except for support letters.

## Step 2: Prepare the Flash Proposal

The proposal should be no more than 3 pages in length and must include the sections listed below. Use the **headings** provided to identify the sections of the proposal.

### **Problem** (suggested 2 sentences)

Define the problem that this project will address.

### **Rationale and Statement of Need**

(suggested ½ page)

Explain the financial need to accomplish the task(s) proposed. Demonstrate how the funds will impact this project and what will be enabled with funding. Please be specific.

### **Current Status of Research** (suggested 1 brief paragraph)

Describe the work that has been done to date on this particular project. Indicate the source of preliminary funding for this project.

### **Tasks/Aims/Timeline** (suggested 2-4 sentences with 1 graphic)

Describe the specific task(s) or experiment(s) to be accomplished. A brief bulleted list is acceptable. Detail the possible outcomes for each task.

Provide a graphic that demonstrates a timeline for completing the project milestone(s).

### **Deliverables** (suggested bulleted list)

Projects should have at least one defined success/completion metric and should be milestone oriented with a clear objective or deliverable identified.

### **Next Steps** (suggested 1- 2 sentences)

Discuss the immediate next step(s) after completion of the project.

### **Roles and Responsibilities** (suggested one sentence per person)

Describe the specific roles and responsibilities for any key personnel conducting the work on this project.

- ⊗ *Inclusion of a to-be-determined postdoctoral fellow, research technician, or other staff member is not encouraged. Significant delays can be anticipated for the hiring and training of TBD personnel. A Flash Grant is a project-based grant and is not intended to support trainees or other newly hired individuals.*

**Budget Justification** (one sentence per line item)

Provide a one sentence explanation and justification for each line item of the budget.

**References** (optional; does not count toward page limit; one page maximum)

References may be included but are limited to a maximum of one page; hyperlinks are allowed.

### Step 3: Prepare the Budget

Prepare your budget using the Flash Budget Form provided on the Flash webpage. Please include the PI and title at the top of the form.

The Budget Form is provided in Excel format but should be converted to a PDF file for submission. Use of the Flash Budget form is required.

#### Budget Guidelines

A maximum of \$24,000 for project periods ranging up to 9 months may be requested.

There is no match required for a Flash Grant.

Funds can only be used for direct costs, to support PI/Co-PI/post-doc/technician salaries, or for instrument/equipment purchase not more than \$5,000.

**Allowable items as requested funds include, but are not limited to:**

- Laboratory and experimental supplies
- Equipment purchase less than \$5,000 (total)
- Contracted research services
- Contractual and consultant fees
- Salary support for digital projects where equipment and supply costs are minimal

and personnel are the primary expense critical to completion of the project

- Commissioning an independent professional assessment of the business case for technology development

All funds requested on the Budget Form must be justified in the Budget Justification section of your proposal (described above).

- ⊗ *Travel is not an allowable budget expense.*
- ⊗ *Biotechnology Center grants do not support any type of overhead or indirect costs.*
- ⊗ *Technical project activities cannot be subcontracted to any commercial firm with financial ties to the PI. These arrangements carry the risk that the project may appear as subsidized R&D for a company, which is not consistent with program objectives.*

**Unallowable items as requested funds include:**

- Graduate student stipends, tuition, or fees
- Legal fees including licensing or litigation fees
- Patenting and publication costs
- Indirect costs/overhead/facilities and administrative (F&A) costs
- Travel expenses

### Step 4: Prepare the Supporting Documentation

Combine the following Supporting Documents into a single PDF file.

**A. Bio Sketch for the PI (Required)**

Use the form provided on the webpage; limited to a maximum of one page.

**B. Letters of support from university representatives, partners, or other stakeholders (Optional, but encouraged)**

A maximum of three letters may be submitted. Include letters of support that demonstrate enthusiasm for the proposed project.

### **C. Price quotes (Required if applicable)**

If applicable, provide quotes for services such as compound library licensing, contracted research, core facility fees, commercialization research costs, business case development costs, etc. Limit quotes to a maximum of 3 pages each.

### **D. Documentation for projects involving animal or human studies (Required if applicable)**

1. Provide a power analysis indicating that the studies proposed have the correct number of human or animal subjects required to achieve an *a priori* confidence level of at least 80%.
2. Provide a letter from the IACUC/IRB attesting to protocol approval.

## **Step 5: Complete the Coversheet**

Use the Cover Sheet form provided on the Flash webpage.

The Cover Sheet must be signed by the PI and an authorized official of the Sponsored Research Office of the university or non-profit.

## **Step 6: Convert all of your proposal documents into PDF format**

Convert your four proposal documents directly into four PDF files.

- ⊗ *Do not print and scan the proposal into a PDF document as this increases the size of the file.*

## **Step 7: Complete the Online Application Form**

**Note: The Flash Grant application form will be available online early March 2019.**

### **IMPORTANT FIRST STEP:**

The PI for the Flash proposal must register for an account on the NCBiotech Funding Portal (<https://ncbiotech.fluxx.io>) at least five

days prior to the deadline in order to submit a proposal. Click [here](#) for more information on the registration and application process.

***If you have applied for a grant using the Funding Portal previously (for any NCBiotech funding program), you do not need to register again.***

*The PI must submit the proposal through her/his NCBiotech Funding Portal account. Proposals cannot be submitted through accounts belonging to OSR representatives.*

After the registration is completed, log into your Funding Portal account. The Flash application form will be located under the “Apply for Funding” folder at the left of the screen. Follow the instructions provided.

- ⊗ *Proposals sent by e-mail or hard copy will not be accepted.*

### **Principal Investigator and Organization information**

The contact information for the submitting PI and organization will be pre-populated on the application form.

### **Proposal Information**

Complete all other fields on the form project.

Additional information for the following fields:

- **Public Information Summary**  
A Public Information Summary is required and is entered directly into the application form. If your proposal is funded, this concise, easy-to-read summary may be used in Biotechnology Center press releases and other publications. This summary is intended for a general audience.

This summary should not include complex scientific terminology. The summary should convey to the citizens of North Carolina why the project is important. The maximum allowable length for this summary is 50 words.

- **Define your type of project** (see page 1)  
On the application form, you will see a drop down box to choose which category of Flash Grant project is being submitted:
  1. Disruptive technology proof-of-concept
  2. Transition to translational research
  3. Both

In the text box below the drop down box, please explain why your technology/discovery applies to either the disruptive category and/or the bridge to translational research category. The maximum allowable length for this summary is approximately 100 words.

### **Upload your four PDF documents**

Follow the instructions for attaching the required documents to the online application (Coversheet, Proposal, Budget Form, and Supporting Documentation).

**Important note: Only one of each of the proposal files may be attached to the application for a total of four attachments.**

## **Step 8: Review and Submit**

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Carefully review your application package then submit your Flash application prior to the Program Deadline.

Submission of your grant application indicates that:

1. You have read and understand the information and directions in this Application Package and agree to be bound by the conditions stated herein.
2. You release the North Carolina Biotechnology Center from any claim for

damages caused by:

- a. Disclosures required under the provisions of any North Carolina or United States law, statute, or regulation,
  - b. Disclosures made in connection with the North Carolina Biotechnology Center's funding review and approval process,
  - c. Disclosures required by rule or order of any court of competent jurisdiction, or
  - d. Any other non-negligent, inadvertent, unintentional, unknowing, or immaterial disclosure.
3. All research conducted during the proposed project is performed in accordance with established university policies and procedures, including—but not limited to—policies and procedures applicable to research involving human subjects, laboratory animals, or hazardous agents and materials.
  4. If the project proposed involves vertebrate animals, the project complies with federal guidelines for vertebrate animal care and experimentation

## **Submission Notification**

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You will receive a confirmation email notifying you that the Biotechnology Center has received your application.

## **Contact Information**

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