

RFA # 1411031008  
NYS Grants Gateway # DOH01-CARTID-2015

**New York State Department of Health  
and the  
New York State Spinal Cord Injury Research Board  
Request for Applications**

Collaborations to Accelerate Research Translation (CART) and  
Innovative, Developmental or Exploratory Activities (IDEA)  
in Spinal Cord Injury

<b>RELEASE DATE:</b>	<b>1/20/15</b>
<b>LETTER OF INTENT DUE (Strongly encouraged):</b>	<b>1/29/15</b>
<b>Applicant Conference Registration Due:</b>	<b>1/27/15</b>
<b>APPLICANT CONFERENCE:</b>	<b>1/29/15 at 10:30 AM</b> By telephone conference call at: 1-866-394-2346 Meeting ID # 9100872194
<b>QUESTIONS DUE:</b>	<b>2/3/15</b>
<b>QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND UPDATES POSTED:</b>	<b>2/13/15</b>
<b>APPLICATIONS DUE:</b>	<b>3/5/15 by 6:00 PM</b>

**DOH CONTACT NAME AND ADDRESS:**

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## **I. Introduction**

### **A. Background**

Approximately 1,000 New York residents suffer a traumatic spinal cord injury (SCI) each year, joining the estimated six million people in the United States who are living with paralysis and other effects of SCI. The personal and economic costs to these persons, their families and to society are immense. Since 1998, the New York State Spinal Cord Injury Research Board (SCIRB) advises the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), Spinal Cord Injury Research Program (Program) regarding research focused on cures for SCI and SCI-induced paralysis.

The SCIRB's mission is to stimulate high-quality, innovative SCI research that will help promote treatment and cure for SCI, including methods for reversing paralysis or restoring function caused by injury, or for minimizing or preventing damage occurring during acute phases of injury. To achieve this mission, the Program offers a program of competitive research awards to support the New York State scientists and their collaborators from a variety of biomedical disciplines in initiating and pursuing such efforts. Information about the Program and SCIRB can be found at: <http://www.wadsworth.org/extramural/spinalcord.htm>.

### **B. Purpose of the Funds**

The SCIRB wishes to stimulate the growth of inter-disciplinary and collaborative approaches to SCI research and to accelerate the pace with which basic (preclinical) findings are translated into clinical benefits for spinal cord-injured persons. In addition, SCIRB wishes to fill fundamental gaps in knowledge that are barriers to scientific advances in SCI research.

The SCIRB welcomes basic, translational and clinical neurological research applications on topics bearing on its mission. Although the SCIRB has not formally developed a list of research priorities, projects targeting tissue regeneration, repair, or restoration of function through biomedical and bioengineering research are of strongest interest, as are the under-studied areas of bowel and bladder function.

### **C. Available Funds**

Projects will be supported by State funds. Approximately \$6.9 million is available to support these awards. The amount of funds awarded will be contingent upon the quality of applications submitted. In determining final awards, the Department reserves the right to allocate funds between the two funding mechanisms offered within this RFA as it deems appropriate. Eligible institutions are invited to submit applications for the following funding mechanisms:

#### **1. Collaborations to Achieve Research Translation (CART)**

- Contract term will be up to three years; and
- Total direct costs in Year 1 are capped at \$483,333
- Total direct costs in Years 2 and 3 are each capped at \$275,000.

#### **2. Innovative, Developmental or Exploratory Activities (IDEA)**

- Contract term will be up to two years; and
- Total direct costs in Year 1 are capped at \$233,333
- Total direct costs in Year 2 are capped at \$150,000.

The Year 1 budget for each funding mechanism includes the **opportunity to apply for additional one-time-use funds** (additional direct costs of up to \$208,833 for CARTs and up to \$83,333 for IDEAs) so that researchers have the opportunity to “jump start” the research program that is the subject of the application. The Department will award these additional funds, subject to availability, after funding meritorious CART and IDEA applications. **If awarded, it is likely that these funds will need to be expended by March 31, 2016; please plan accordingly (see specific instructions in RFA Attachment 2).**

## II. Who May Apply

**The applicant must be a not-for-profit organization or governmental organization in New York State.** Awarded organizations will be expected to monitor the use of funds, maintain individual accounts and fulfill other fiscal management criteria. Subcontracting and collaborating organizations may include public, not-for-profit and for-profit entities within or outside of New York State.

The eligible Principal Investigator (PI) is designated by the application organization, has the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to carry out the proposed Workplan, and is not a postdoctoral fellow or other dependent research staff. At the time of application and award acceptance, the PI must not be restricted from receiving Public Health Service (PHS) funding or debarred by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or any other federal or New York State government entity.

An eligible organization is not limited to the number of applications it can submit in response to this RFA. However, the eligible PI may submit only one application per funding mechanism in response to this RFA, regardless of the organization under which (s)he submits the applications. **If a PI submits more than one application for an IDEA award and/or more than one application for a CART award, all applications from that PI for that funding mechanism will be disqualified and will not be forwarded to peer review.**

Submission of an application certifies that the applicant organization and the PI meet the eligibility criteria stated here.

## III. Project Narrative/Workplan Outcomes

For those applicants that propose subcontracting, it is preferable to identify subcontracting agencies during the application process. Applicants that plan to subcontract are expected to state in the application the specific components of the scope of work to be performed through subcontracts. Applicants should note that the lead organization (contractor) will have overall responsibility for all contract activities, including those performed by subcontractors, and will be the primary contact for the DOH. All subcontractors should be approved by the Department of Health.

### A. Collaborations to Accelerate Research Translation (CART) Award

The intent of the CART award is to foster the translation of results from basic (preclinical) research into the next research phase by supporting synergistic inter-disciplinary partnerships. CART awards are expected to contribute to rapid movement of findings to potential therapeutic applications or treatment strategies.

The collaborative partnership should be inter-disciplinary and facilitate expansion of the body of knowledge/expertise applied to research problems in SCI. The CART mechanism supports interactions and cooperation among experts from diverse fields to study and develop creative

solutions to intractable problems in SCI treatment that have a **clear translational path to clinical application**.

Possible collaborations include those between:

- An experienced SCI investigator and an investigator new to the field from a discipline whose perspective has not yet been fully applied to SCI research;
- Pairs or teams of investigators new to SCI research who provide compelling evidence that their partnership will propel part of the field forward;
- Basic scientists and clinicians with relevant expertise in spinal cord or related traumatic injuries;
- Outstanding junior investigators new to the field with more senior scientists.

The CART mechanism is designed to investigate a well-developed problem or research hypothesis focusing on cures for SCI paralysis or the prevention of paralysis following trauma. Proposed projects should be cohesive and sharply focused. Translational aspects of the study may involve either animal or human studies. The research may be applied or may integrate fundamental and applied approaches. Applications that seek to apply knowledge gleaned from lower order mammals to appropriate non-human primate models are also eligible. The application will include at least one translational aim/goal, and should explicitly state how results will inform and enable the next research stage, (e.g., preclinical or clinical research).

Research centers, Phase III clinical trials and expansion of enrollment to an ongoing clinical trial are **ineligible for CART support**. Other applications considered non-responsive to this RFA include those lacking a specific and attainable translational or clinical goal (i.e., completion of the workplan cannot lead to another basic research grant application). **Non-responsive applications will not be reviewed.**

## **B. Innovative, Developmental or Exploratory Activities (IDEA) Award**

The intent of the IDEA award is to provide initial support for:

- preliminary testing of novel or high-risk hypotheses
- applying novel approaches and methods
- challenging existing paradigms or developing new paradigms
- considering an existing problem from a new perspective.

The IDEA mechanism provides researchers the opportunity to try new methods and approaches to investigate the problems associated with SCI. IDEA projects are self-contained research projects. They are not intended to fund smaller components of larger research projects, solely for data collection, for incremental or correlative research aims, or for compression of a larger project into a smaller time frame. Responsive applications include the following projects:

- highly speculative, exploratory, or high-risk – may not have pilot data, but have the potential for high scientific payoff
- application or development of state-of-the-art technologies, tools or resources for SCI research
- innovative or developmental – focus on exceptionally promising topics and have some pilot data, but not yet sufficiently mature to compete successfully for funding for a full-scale study
- testing new hypotheses based on research grounded in a non-SCI research area

The SCIRB seeks to fund research projects in which there is a high likelihood that the results will yield the opportunity to apply for future funding from other sources.

## IV. Administrative Requirements

### A. Issuing Agency

This RFA is issued by the New York State Department of Health (Department), Wadsworth Center, Spinal Cord Injury Research Program. The Department is responsible for the requirements specified herein and for the evaluation of all applications.

### B. Question and Answer Phase

All substantive questions must be submitted in writing to:

Bonnie Jo Brautigam  
Extramural Grants Administration  
[scirb@health.ny.gov](mailto:scirb@health.ny.gov)

To the degree possible, each inquiry should cite the RFA section and paragraph to which it refers. Written questions will be accepted until the date posted on the cover of this RFA.

Questions of a technical nature can be addressed in writing or via telephone by calling Bonnie Brautigam at (518) 474-7002. **Questions are of a technical nature if they are limited to how to prepare the application (e.g., formatting) rather than relating to the substance of the application.**

Some helpful links for questions of a technical nature are below. Questions regarding specific opportunities or applications should be directed to the DOH contact listed on the cover of this RFA.

- [www.grantsreform.ny.gov/grantees](http://www.grantsreform.ny.gov/grantees)
- Grants Reform Videos (includes a document vault tutorial and an application tutorial) on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYnWskVc7B3ajjOVfOHL6UA>
- Agate Technical Support Help Desk  
Phone: 1-800-820-1890  
Hours: Monday thru Friday 8am to 8pm  
Email: [helpdesk@agatesoftware.com](mailto:helpdesk@agatesoftware.com)  
(Technical questions)
- Grants Team Email: [Grantsreform@budget.ny.gov](mailto:Grantsreform@budget.ny.gov)  
Prospective applicants should note that all clarifications and exceptions, including those relating to the terms and conditions of the contract, are to be raised prior to the submission of an application.

This RFA has been posted on the Department of Health's public website at <http://www.health.ny.gov/funding> and the NYS Grants Gateway website at: [https://www.grantsgateway.ny.gov/IntelliGrants\\_NYSGG/module/nysgg/goportal.aspx](https://www.grantsgateway.ny.gov/IntelliGrants_NYSGG/module/nysgg/goportal.aspx). Questions and answers, as well as any updates and/or modifications, will also be posted on these websites. All such updates will be posted by the date identified on the cover sheet of this RFA.

### C. Letter of Intent

The prospective applicant institution is **strongly encouraged** to complete and submit a Letter of Intent (see Attachment 1). This form will be used to develop the review panel in a timely manner. Letters of Intent should be submitted via the Grants Gateway in the Pre-Submission Uploads section of the online application. The file name should include applicant organization and PI names. A copy must also be e-mailed to [scirb@health.ny.gov](mailto:scirb@health.ny.gov). Please ensure that the RFA number, organization name and PI name are noted in the e-mail subject line. Submit the Letter of Intent via both formats by the date posted on the cover of the RFA.

Submission of a Letter of Intent is not a requirement or obligation upon the applicant to submit an application in response to this RFA. Applications may be submitted without first having submitted a Letter of Intent.

### D. Applicant Conference

**An applicant conference will be held** to give potential applicants the opportunity to receive an overview of the RFA and ask specific questions. The conference will be held via telephone conference call only on the date and time posted on the cover sheet of this RFA. The Department requests that potential applicants register for this conference by calling (518) 474-7002 to ensure a sufficient number of conference phone lines. The deadline for reservations is posted on the cover page of this RFA. Failure to attend the applicant conference will not preclude the submission of an application.

### E. How to Complete and File an Application

Applications must be submitted online via the Grants Gateway by the date and time posted on the cover of this RFA. Tutorials (training videos) for use of the Grants Gateway are available at the following web address (and upon user log in):  
[https://www.grantsgateway.ny.gov/IntelliGrants\\_NYSGG/module/nysgg/goportal.aspx](https://www.grantsgateway.ny.gov/IntelliGrants_NYSGG/module/nysgg/goportal.aspx).

To apply, log into the Grants Gateway and click on the View Opportunities button under View Available Opportunities. To get started, in the Search Criteria, enter the Grant Opportunity name listed on the cover page and select the Department of Health as the Funding Agency and hit the Search button. Click on the name of the Grant Opportunity from the search results grid and then click on the APPLY FOR GRANT OPPORTUNITY button located bottom left of the Main page of the Grant Opportunity.

In order to access the online application and other required documents such as the attachments, you **MUST** be registered and logged into the NYS Grants Gateway system in the user role of either a "Grantee" or a "Grantee Contract Signatory".

The following table provides a snapshot of which roles are allowed to Initiate, Complete, and Submit the Grant Application(s) in the Grants Gateway.

Role	Create and Maintain User Roles	Initiate Application	Complete Application	Submit Application	Only View the Application
Delegated Admin	X				
Grantee		X	X		
Grantee Contract Signatory		X	X	X	
Grantee Payment Signatory		X	X		
Grantee System Administrator		X	X	X	
Grantee View Only					X

For further information on how to apply, please access the Grantee Quick Start Guide under the Pre-Submission Upload Properties for this opportunity.

Reference materials and videos are available for Grantees applying to funding opportunities on the NYS Grants Gateway. Please visit the Grants Reform website at the following web address: <http://grantsreform.ny.gov/Grantees> and select the “Grantee Quick Start Guide” from the menu. There is also a more detailed “Grantee User Guide” available on this page as well.

Applicants should submit their applications, **at a minimum**, one (1) hour prior to the submission deadline. The system will perform an application error check and all identified issues must be resolved before the application is successfully submitted. Failure to leave adequate time to address issues identified during this process may jeopardize an applicant’s ability to submit their application. The Grants Gateway will notify applicants of successful submission.

Late applications will not be accepted. **Applications will not be accepted via fax, e-mail, hard copy or hand delivery.**

#### F. Department of Health Reserved Rights

The Department of Health reserves the right to:

1. Reject any or all applications received in response to this RFA.
2. Withdraw the RFA at any time, at the Department’s sole discretion.
3. Make an award under the RFA in whole or in part.
4. Disqualify any applicant whose conduct and/or proposal fails to conform to the requirements of the RFA.
5. Seek clarifications and revisions of applications.
6. Use application information obtained through site visits, management interviews and the state’s investigation of an applicant’s qualifications, experience, ability or financial standing, and any material or information submitted by the applicant in response to the agency’s request for clarifying information in the course of evaluation and/or selection under the RFA.
7. Prior to application opening, amend the RFA specifications to correct errors or oversights, or to supply additional information, as it becomes available.



8. Prior to application opening, direct applicants to submit proposal modifications addressing subsequent RFA amendments.
9. Change any of the scheduled dates.
10. Waive any requirements that are not material.
11. Award more than one contract resulting from this RFA.
12. Conduct contract negotiations with the next responsible applicant, should the Department be unsuccessful in negotiating with the selected applicant.
13. Utilize any and all ideas submitted with the applications received.
14. Unless otherwise specified in the RFA, every offer is firm and not revocable for a period of 60 days from the bid opening.
15. Waive or modify minor irregularities in applications received after prior notification to the applicant.
16. Require clarification at any time during the procurement process and/or require correction of arithmetic or other apparent errors for the purpose of assuring a full and complete understanding of an offerer's application and/or to determine an offerer's compliance with the requirements of the RFA.
17. Negotiate with successful applicants within the scope of the RFA in the best interests of the State.
18. Eliminate any mandatory, non-material specifications that cannot be complied with by all applicants.
19. Award grants based on geographic or regional considerations to serve the best interests of the State.

#### **G. Term of Contract**

Any contract(s) resulting from this RFA will be effective only upon approval by the New York State Office of the State Comptroller.

It is expected that contracts resulting from this RFA will begin on October 1, 2015 for a term of up to three years for CART awards and up to two years for IDEA awards. Contracts will not be renewable.

Continued funding throughout this period is contingent upon availability of funding and state budget appropriations. The Department also reserves the right to revise the award amount as necessary due to changes in the availability of funding.

#### **H. Payment and Reporting Requirements**

1. No advances will be allowed for contracts resulting from this procurement.
2. The grant contractor will be required to submit quarterly invoices and required reports of expenditures through the Grants Gateway to the State's designated payment office:

New York State Department of Health  
Wadsworth Center  
Extramural Grants Administration  
Empire State Plaza, Room C345  
PO Box 509  
Albany, NY 12201-0509

Grant contractors must provide complete and accurate billing invoices to the Department's designated payment office in order to receive payment. Billing invoices submitted to the Department must contain all information and supporting documentation required by the Contract, the Department and the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). Payment for invoices submitted by the CONTRACTOR shall only be rendered electronically unless payment by paper check is expressly authorized by the Commissioner, in the Commissioner's sole discretion, due to extenuating circumstances. Such electronic payment shall be made in accordance with OSC's procedures and practices. The CONTRACTOR shall comply with the State Comptroller's procedures to authorize electronic payments. Authorization forms are available at OSC's website at: <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/epay/index.htm>, by email at: [epayments@osc.state.ny.us](mailto:epayments@osc.state.ny.us) or by telephone at 855-233-8363. CONTRACTOR acknowledges that it will not receive payment on any claims for reimbursement submitted under this contract if it does not comply with OSC's electronic payment procedures, except where the Commissioner has expressly authorized payment by paper as set forth above.

Payment of such claims for reimbursement by the State (NYS Department of Health) shall be made in accordance with Article XI-A of the New York State Finance Law.

Payment terms will be:

- The contractor will be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred as allowed in the Contract Budget and Workplan.
  - All claims for payment submitted by the contractor pursuant to this agreement shall be submitted to the State no later than 30 days after the end of the quarter for which reimbursement is being claimed.
  - Quarterly claims for payment will not be paid until all required progress reports for that period are submitted and deemed acceptable by Spinal Cord Injury Research Program staff.
  - The final claim for payment will be paid following the acceptance and approval of the final progress report.
  - In no event shall the amount received by the contractor exceed the amount approved by the State.
3. The grant contractor will be required to submit the following progress reports:
- Written progress reports in accordance with the forms and formats provided by the SCI Research Program, no later than 30 days after the end of each reporting period.
  - A final cumulative progress report in accordance with the forms and formats provided by the SCI Research Program, no later than 60 days after the end of the contract term.

All payment and reporting requirements will be detailed in Attachment D of the final NYS Master Grant Contract.

## **I. Minority & Woman-Owned Business Enterprise Requirements**

Pursuant to New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, the New York State Department of Health (“DOH”) recognizes its obligation to promote opportunities for maximum feasible participation of certified minority- and women-owned business enterprises and the employment of minority group members and women in the performance of DOH contracts.

In 2006, the State of New York commissioned a disparity study to evaluate whether minority and women-owned business enterprises had a full and fair opportunity to participate in state contracting. The findings of the study were published on April 29, 2010, under the title "The State of Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises: Evidence from New York" (“Disparity Study”). The report found evidence of statistically significant disparities between the level of participation of minority- and women-owned business enterprises in state procurement contracting versus the number of minority- and women-owned business enterprises that were ready, willing and able to participate in state procurements. As a result of these findings, the Disparity Study made recommendations concerning the implementation and operation of the statewide certified minority- and women-owned business enterprises program. The recommendations from the Disparity Study culminated in the enactment and the implementation of New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, which requires, among other things, that DOH establish goals for maximum feasible participation of New York State Certified minority- and women-owned business enterprises (“MWBE”) and the employment of minority groups members and women in the performance of New York State contracts.

### **Business Participation Opportunities for MWBEs**

For purposes of this solicitation, the New York State Department of Health hereby establishes a goal of **20%** on any subcontracted labor or services, equipment, materials, or any combined purchase of the foregoing greater than \$25,000 under a contract awarded from this solicitation. The goal on the eligible portion of this contract will be **10%** for Minority-Owned Business Enterprises (“MBE”) participation and **10%** for Women-Owned Business Enterprises (“WBE”) participation (based on the current availability of qualified MBEs and WBEs and outreach efforts to certified MWBE firms). A contractor (“Contractor”) on the subject contract (“Contract”) must document good faith efforts to provide meaningful participation by MWBEs as subcontractors or suppliers in the performance of the Contract and Contractor agrees that DOH may withhold payment pending receipt of the required MWBE documentation. For guidance on how DOH will determine “good faith efforts,” refer to 5 NYCRR §142.8.

The directory of New York State Certified MWBEs can be viewed at: <https://ny.newnycontracts.com>. The directory is found in the upper right hand side of the webpage under “Search for Certified Firms” and accessed by clicking on the link entitled “MWBE Directory”. Engaging with firms found in the directory with like product(s) and/or service(s) is strongly encouraged and all communication efforts and responses should be well documented.

By submitting an application, a grantee agrees to complete an MWBE Utilization plan as directed in **Attachment 7** of this RFA. DOH will review the submitted MWBE Utilization Plan. If the plan is not accepted, DOH may issue a notice of deficiency. If a notice of deficiency is issued, Grantee agrees that it shall respond to the notice of deficiency within seven (7) business days of receipt. DOH may disqualify a Grantee as being non-responsive under the following circumstances:

- a) If a Grantee fails to submit a MWBE Utilization Plan;
- b) If a Grantee fails to submit a written remedy to a notice of deficiency;

- c) If a Grantee fails to submit a request for waiver (if applicable); or
- d) If DOH determines that the Grantee has failed to document good-faith efforts to meet the established DOH MWBE participation goals for the procurement.

In addition, successful awardees will be required to certify they have an acceptable Equal Employment Opportunity policy statement.

#### **J. Limits on Administrative Expenses and Executive Compensation**

On July 1, 2013, limitations on administrative expenses and executive compensation contained within Governor Cuomo's Executive Order #38 and related regulations published by the Department (Part 1002 to 10 NYCRR – Limits on Administrative Expenses and Executive Compensation) went into effect. Applicants agree that all state funds dispersed under this procurement will, if applicable to them, be bound by the terms, conditions, obligations and regulations promulgated by the Department. To provide assistance with compliance regarding Executive Order #38 and the related regulations, please refer to the Executive Order #38 website at: <http://executiveorder38.ny.gov>.

#### **K. Vendor Identification Number**

Effective January 1, 2012, in order to do business with New York State, you must have a vendor identification number. As part of the Statewide Financial System (SFS), the Office of the State Comptroller's Bureau of State Expenditures has created a centralized vendor repository called the New York State Vendor File. In the event of an award and in order to initiate a contract with the New York State Department of Health, vendors must be registered in the New York State Vendor File and have a valid New York State Vendor ID.

If already enrolled in the Vendor File, please include the Vendor Identification number on the application cover sheet. If not enrolled, to request assignment of a Vendor Identification number, please submit a New York State Office of the State Comptroller Substitute Form W-9, which can be found on-line at: [http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendor\\_management/issues\\_guidance.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendor_management/issues_guidance.htm).

Additional information concerning the New York State Vendor File can be obtained on-line at: [http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendor\\_management/index.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendor_management/index.htm), by contacting the SFS Help Desk at 855-233-8363 or by emailing at [helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov).

#### **L. Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire**

The New York State Department of Health recommends that vendors file the required Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire online via the New York State VendRep System. To enroll in and use the New York State VendRep System, see the VendRep System Instructions available at [http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep/vendor\\_index.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep/vendor_index.htm) or go directly to the VendRep system online at <https://portal.osc.state.ny.us>.

Vendors must provide their New York State Vendor Identification Number when enrolling. To request assignment of a Vendor ID or for VendRep System assistance, contact the Office of the State Comptroller's Help Desk at 866-370-4672 or 518-408-4672 or by email at [ciohelpdesk@osc.state.ny.us](mailto:ciohelpdesk@osc.state.ny.us).

Vendors opting to complete and submit a paper questionnaire can obtain the appropriate questionnaire from the VendRep website at: [http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep/forms\\_vendor.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep/forms_vendor.htm) or may contact the Office of the State Comptroller's Help Desk for a copy of the paper form.

Applicants should complete and submit the Vendor Responsibility Attestation (**see RFA Attachment 6**).

## **M. Vendor Prequalification for Not-for-Profits**

All not-for-profit vendors subject to prequalification are required to prequalify prior to grant application and execution of contracts.

Pursuant to the New York State Division of Budget Bulletin H-1032, dated June 7, 2013, New York State has instituted key reform initiatives to the grant contract process which requires not-for-profits to register in the Grants Gateway and complete the Vendor Prequalification process in order for applications to be evaluated. Information on these initiatives can be found on the [Grants Reform Website](#).

**Applications received from not-for-profit applicants that have not Registered and are not Prequalified in the Grants Gateway on the application due date listed on the cover of this RFA cannot be evaluated. Such applications will be disqualified from further consideration.**

Below is a summary of the steps that must be completed to meet registration and prequalification requirements. The [Vendor Prequalification Manual](#) on the Grants Reform Website details the requirements and an [online tutorial](#) are available to walk users through the process.

### **1) Register for the Grants Gateway**

- On the Grants Reform Website, download a copy of the [Registration Form for Administrator](#). A signed, notarized original form must be sent to the Division of Budget at the address provided in the instructions. You will be provided with a Username and Password allowing you to access the Grants Gateway.

If you have previously registered and do not know your Username, please email [grantsreform@budget.ny.gov](mailto:grantsreform@budget.ny.gov). If you do not know your Password, please click the [Forgot Password](#) link from the main log in page and follow the prompts.

### **2) Complete your Prequalification Application**

- Log in to the [Grants Gateway](#). **If this is your first time logging in**, you will be prompted to change your password at the bottom of your Profile page. Enter a new password and click SAVE.
- Click the *Organization(s)* link at the top of the page and complete the required fields including selecting the State agency you have the most grants with. This page should be completed in its entirety before you SAVE. A *Document Vault* link will become available near the top of the page. Click this link to access the main Document Vault page.
- Answer the questions in the *Required Forms* and upload *Required Documents*. This constitutes your Prequalification Application. Optional Documents are not required unless specified in this Request for Application.
- Specific questions about the prequalification process should be referred to your agency representative or to the Grants Reform Team at [grantsreform@budget.ny.gov](mailto:grantsreform@budget.ny.gov).

### 3) Submit Your Prequalification Application

- After completing your Prequalification Application, click the **Submit Document Vault** Link located below the Required Documents section to submit your Prequalification Application for State agency review. Once submitted the status of the Document Vault will change to *In Review*.
- If your Prequalification reviewer has questions or requests changes you will receive email notification from the Gateway system.
- Once your Prequalification Application has been approved, you will receive a Gateway notification that you are now prequalified to do business with New York State.

**Vendors are strongly encouraged to begin the process as soon as possible in order to participate in this opportunity.**

### N. General Specifications

1. By submitting the "Application Form" each applicant attests to its express authority to sign on behalf of the applicant.
2. Contractors will possess, at no cost to the State, all qualifications, licenses and permits to engage in the required business as may be required within the jurisdiction where the work specified is to be performed. Workers to be employed in the performance of this contract will possess the qualifications, training, licenses and permits as may be required within such jurisdiction.
3. Submission of an application indicates the applicant's acceptance of all conditions and terms contained in this RFA, including the terms and conditions of the contract. Any exceptions allowed by the Department during the Question and Answer Phase (Section IV.B.) must be clearly noted in a cover letter attached to the application.
4. An applicant may be disqualified from receiving awards if such applicant or any subsidiary, affiliate, partner, officer, agent or principal thereof, or anyone in its employ, has previously failed to perform satisfactorily in connection with public bidding or contracts.
5. Provisions Upon Default
  - a. The services to be performed by the Applicant shall be at all times subject to the direction and control of the Department as to all matters arising in connection with or relating to the contract resulting from this RFA.
  - b. In the event that the Applicant, through any cause, fails to perform any of the terms, covenants or promises of any contract resulting from this RFA, the Department acting for and on behalf of the State, shall thereupon have the right to terminate the contract by giving notice in writing of the fact and date of such termination to the Applicant.
  - c. If, in the judgment of the Department, the Applicant acts in such a way which is likely to or does impair or prejudice the interests of the State, the Department acting on behalf of the State, shall thereupon have the right to terminate any contract resulting from this RFA by giving notice in writing of the fact and date of such termination to the Contractor. In such case the Contractor shall receive equitable compensation for such services as shall, in the judgment of the State Comptroller, have been satisfactorily performed by the Contractor up

to the date of the termination of this agreement, which such compensation shall not exceed the total cost incurred for the work which the Contractor was engaged in at the time of such termination, subject to audit by the State Comptroller.

## V. Application Review and Award Process

### A. Application Acceptance

Applications will first be examined against mandatory Pass/Fail requirements by SCI Research Program staff (**see RFA Attachment 2**). Applications that do not meet the mandatory requirements will not be considered for review, and the applicant organization and PI will be notified.

### B. Freedom of Information Law

All applications may be disclosed or used by DOH to the extent permitted by law. DOH may disclose an application to any person for the purpose of assisting in evaluating the application or for any other lawful purpose. All applications will become State agency records, which will be available to the public in accordance with the Freedom of Information Law. **Any portion of the application that an applicant believes constitutes proprietary information entitled to confidential handling, as an exception to the Freedom of Information Law, must be clearly and specifically designated in the application.** If DOH agrees with the proprietary claim, the designated portion of the application will be withheld from public disclosure. Blanket assertions of proprietary material will not be accepted, and failure to specifically designate proprietary material may be deemed a waiver of any right to confidential handling of such material.

### C. Review and Scoring

The Department contracts with an independent peer review organization to develop and coordinate the review and scoring of applications. Each eligible application will be evaluated by an Independent Peer Review Panel (the Review Panel) assigned by the Peer Review Contractor. The Review Panel members will be selected from among non-New York State experts in the fields appropriate to the nature of the applications received. The Peer Review Contractor has established a standing Review Panel to which expertise is added to evaluate the merit of actual applications submitted in response to the RFA.

Applications will be reviewed based on the criteria specified in Section V.E. without regard to the one-time-use funds. The Review Panel will use an established combination of processes to evaluate each application:

1. pre-meeting review with adjectival scoring (see table below)
2. on-line conferral among assigned reviewers
3. triage based on adjectival scores of assigned reviewers for one criterion (see Section V.E below)
4. panel meeting discussion via teleconference, videoconference or in-person (review method chosen at the discretion of the Department) with numerical scoring (see table below).

Applications that are not triaged prior to panel meeting discussion will receive numerical scores from each participating panel member for each evaluation criterion using an integer scale that equates to adjectival scores, where 1 equates to highest merit and 9 equates to lowest merit. The numerical score given each criterion will be multiplied by that criterion's weight. Each panel member's weighted scores for each criterion will be added together to give their individual total score. Review

Panel members' individual total scores will be added together and divided by the number of Review Panel members who scored the application to give an overall panel score for the application.

Numerical Score	Adjectival Score
1	Exceptional
2	Outstanding
3	Excellent
4	Very Good
5	Good
6	Satisfactory
7	Fair
8	Marginal
9	Poor

Applications that are triaged (receive an adjectival score of Very Good or worse from each assigned reviewer for the criterion identified in Section V.E) will receive only the adjectival scores of the assigned reviewers. No integers or weighting will be applied, and the application will not be further reviewed for compliance penalties. The one-time-use funds for triaged applications will not be reviewed.

The one-time use funds for applications that are not triaged will then be evaluated by the Review Panel (see evaluation criteria for one-time-use funds in Section E. below). A separate numerical score (see above) will be given for the one-time-use funds. Review Panel members' individual scores will be added together and divided by the number of Review Panel members who scored the one-time-use funds.

The Review Panel will comment on the responsiveness of the application, including the one-time-use funds, to the funding mechanism as described in Section III above. The Review Panel will identify potential overlap with other resources. Additionally, the Review Panel will comment on the application with regard to the Contract Policy Statements and Conditions (NYS Master Grant Contract Attachment A-1 Part B). The Review Panel may recommend the reduction of one-time-use funds and/or administrative review and resolution prior to contract execution. Award recommendations made by the SCIRB may be contingent upon the applicant's acceptance of reductions or required revisions.

The primary reviewer will prepare a written overall evaluation of each assigned application that is discussed by the Review Panel. Each assigned reviewer will provide a written critique of the application based on the established evaluation criteria.

#### **D. Application Penalties and Summary Statements**

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all materials to be included in the application have been properly prepared and submitted. ALL APPLICATIONS SHOULD CONFORM TO THE FORMAT/CONTENT PRESCRIBED IN RFA **ATTACHMENT 2**. The Peer Review Contractor will assess a penalty of 0.1 point for any application that is not triaged, scores between 1.0 and 3.9 and deviates from the instructions (**see Checklist, RFA Attachment 2**).



The Peer Review Contractor will calculate final scores for the research project and separate scores for the one-time-use funds and compile a Summary Statement for each application for SCIRB. The Summary Statements will document the merit evaluation and serve as the primary basis for the panel recommendation for the applications.

## **E. Review Criteria**

The following evaluation criteria will be considered by the Independent Scientific Merit Peer Review Panel:

### **1. CART Award**

#### ***Research Plan (45%) – triage criterion***

- The originality of the research question(s) and the approach taken in its investigation through a collaborative research effort
- The importance of the research questions and their basis in the scientific literature
- The suitability of research design and methods to achieve the application's SCI-related aims
- The integration of an inter-disciplinary approach to a coherent hypothesis and specific aims
- The likelihood of successful completion of the study based on the research design, methods, background and experience of the investigators, the research environment and the availability of time and resources
- The appropriate use of human subjects and vertebrate animals to accomplish the overall goals of the project

#### ***Translational/Clinical Potential (20%)***

- The potential for the proposed work to contribute to therapeutic applications or treatment strategies and cures for SCI-induced paralysis or to prevent paralysis following acute injury

#### ***Inter-disciplinary Nature of the Research Team (15%)***

- The knowledge, skills, research tools, diversity and experiences of the research team in relation to the scientific, translational/clinical and innovative potential of the work
- The feasibility and inter-disciplinary nature of the collaboration
- The extent to which the inter-disciplinary composition of the team provides the potential for innovative research solutions and applications

#### ***Budget (20%)***

- The need for each budget item is explained
- Each budget line is justified as necessary for completion of the project
- Budgeted amounts are reasonable, cost-effective and appropriate to accomplish the research aims
- There are no excessive or unnecessary budget items

**Note:** the entire Panel will review and comment on, but not score, the Budget section.

Scores will be given by the assigned reviewers.

#### ***One-Time-Use Funds Proposed for Year One (ideally by 3/31/16)***

- The relatedness of the proposed Year One additions to the workplan and budget to the translational/clinical goals of the research project
- The extent to which the additional funds will enhance the research project and advance it to the clinic.

## 2. IDEA Award

### **Research Plan (60%) – triage criterion**

- The extent to which basic concept and hypotheses are speculative, exploratory, or develop new paradigms
- The extent to which the project applies or develops state-of-the-art technologies, methods, tools or resources for SCI research, or addresses important under- or unexplored areas
- The innovative and developmental potential of the project, with a focus on exceptionally promising topics
- The originality of the research question(s) and the approach taken in its investigation
- The importance of the research questions and their basis in the scientific literature
- The likelihood of successful completion of the study aims based on the research design, methods, background and experience of the investigators, the research environment and the availability of time and resources

### **Impact (20%)**

- The extent to which the project, if successfully completed, would make an original and important contribution to treatments and cures for SCI-induced paralysis or to prevent paralysis following acute injury (high-risk/high-reward)
- The likelihood the project will lead to further funding or be translated into practice

### **Budget (20%)**

- The need for each budget item is explained
- Each budget line is justified as necessary for completion of the project
- Budgeted amounts are reasonable, cost-effective and appropriate to accomplish the research aims
- There are no excessive or unnecessary budget items

**Note:** The entire Panel will review and comment on the Budget section. Numeric scores for the Budget criterion will be provided only by the assigned reviewers.

### **One-Time-Use Funds Proposed for Year One (ideally by 3/31/16)**

- The relatedness of the proposed Year One additions to the workplan and budget to the goals of the research project.
- The extent to which the additional funds will enhance the research project and, if successful, allow it to obtain subsequent support.

## F. Spinal Cord Injury Research Board Review

The SCIRB will consider research applications that receive a final score (after penalties are assessed) of 1.0 through 3.9. The SCIRB will not consider applications that receive a final score of 4.0 to 9. Similarly, the SCIRB will not consider one-time-use funds that score 4.0 to 9.

The SCIRB will discuss the application strengths and weaknesses, administrative and budget recommendations. When making funding recommendations, the SCIRB will consider responsiveness to the mission of the SCIRB, responsiveness to the RFA, programmatic balance and availability of funds. The SCIRB will vote on each application that scores 3.9 or better until available funds are exhausted and in compliance with SCIRB bylaws as well as applicable laws and regulations.

The SCIRB is not obligated to recommend funding for any application. In the event that the number of highly meritorious applications exceeds current estimates, the SCIRB may reduce the number

and/or amount of the one-time-use funds awarded to any or all applications. Scoring ties will be resolved on the basis of the above and with consideration of the score for “Research Plan” and among those applications involved in the tie. If an application for which there are available funds is not recommended for funding, the SCIRB will fully justify in writing why the application was not approved.

The SCIRB may elect, at its discretion, to continue making recommendations for possible funding of proposals beyond what is available for the funding mechanism and the RFA. These applications will be given the status “Approved but not funded.” “Approved but not funded” applications may be funded should additional funds become available.

The SCIRB will make recommendations for funding to the Commissioner of Health.

## **G. Award Decisions and Pre-Funding Requirements**

Following the Commissioner’s approval of awards, PIs and their applicant organizations will receive formal notification in writing.

Prior to contract execution, program administrators will require resolution/submission/ confirmation of the following items, as relevant to each application:

- Revisions to Workplan, project duration or budget
- Overlap
- Areas of possible concern with regard to Contract Policy Statements and Conditions (NYS Master Grant Contract Attachment A-1 Part B)
- Approved Facilities and Administrative Cost Rate

Once an award has been made, applicants may request a debriefing of their application. Please note the debriefing will be limited only to the strengths and weaknesses of the subject application and will not include any discussion of other applications. Requests must be received no later than ten (10) business days from date of award or non-award announcement.

In the event unsuccessful applicants wish to protest the award resulting from this RFA, applicants should follow the protest procedures established by the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). These procedures can be found on the OSC website at <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/agencies/guide/MyWebHelp>.

## **H. Award Announcements**

SCIRB makes public in press releases and annual reports to the Governor and Legislature, the project title, the PI(s), the name of the organization, total projects costs and duration. The project abstract and progress report abstracts may also be edited and made public.

## **VI. Attachments**

Please note that attachments can be accessed in the “Pre-Submission Uploads” section of an online application. In order to access the online application and other required documents such as the attachments, prospective applicants must be registered and logged into the NYS Grants Gateway in the user role of either a “Grantee” or a “Grantee Contract Signatory”.

Attachment 1: Letter of Intent

Attachment 2: Application Checklist and Instructions

Attachment 3: Application Forms 1, 1-S and 2-5

Attachment 4: Application Form 6

Attachment 5: Applications Forms 7-12

Attachment 6: Vendor Responsibility Attestation

Attachment 7: Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprise Requirement Forms

These attachments are located/included in the Pre Submission Upload section of the Grants Gateway on line application.

**RFA # 1411031008**  
**Grants Gateway # DOH01-CARTID-2015**

**Collaborations to Accelerate Research Translation (CART) & Innovative,  
Developmental or Exploratory Activities (IDEA) in Spinal Cord Injury Research**

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**January 20 – February 3, 2015**  
**Including an applicant conference on January 29, 2015**

Letter of Intent and Pre-application

1. When is the Letter of Intent due?
  - A. The Letter of Intent form (Attachment 1) is not mandatory but is strongly encouraged; it will assist in developing the peer review panel. Letters of Intent should be received by the due date (January 29, 2015). See Section IV.C. of the RFA for submission instructions. Letters of Intent will be accepted after the deadline.
2. I attempted to upload a completed Letter of Intent to the NYS Grants Gateway and was unable to do so. What should I do?
  - A. RFA Section IV.C. directs that a copy of the Letter of Intent form should also be emailed to: [scirb@health.ny.gov](mailto:scirb@health.ny.gov) as directed in the RFA. If you are unable to upload the Letter of Intent, please be sure the email copy is provided.
3. Do we need to include any information (e.g., the title of the proposed project) in addition to the Letter of Intent form?
  - A. Submit only the information requested on the form. No additional information will be considered. We are not permitted to receive any scientific content prior to application submission. So we rely on title, key words and names to help identify potential peer reviewers.
4. Who should we list on the Letter of Intent form?
  - A. Identify all participants involved in the proposed project, both internal and external to your organization. It is understood that these names may change; they are used as a preliminary screening for conflict of interest among potential peer reviewers. Sections may be added, if necessary, to list all participants.
5. Can a PI submit additional or fewer IDEA and CART applications than indicated on the Letter(s) of Intent?
  - A. Yes, provided a PI does not submit more than one application for a CART and more than one application for an IDEA. If a PI submits more than one CART and/or more than one

IDEA application, **all** of the PI's applications will be disqualified. Also see the section on Eligibility, below.

6. What should I put on my Letter of Intent if I know I will submit one application but haven't yet decided whether to submit an IDEA or a CART application?
  - A. Indicate the mechanism that is most likely (IDEA or CART) on the Letter of Intent form; applicants are not held to this mechanism.
7. To what extent does the Letter of Intent commit the title and research proposed in the application?
  - A. There is no commitment inferred by the submission of a Letter of Intent.
8. What is the purpose of the applicant conference? Do I have to attend if I plan to submit an application?
  - A. The applicant conference is described in Section IV.D of the RFA. It is an opportunity to receive an overview of the RFA and ask specific questions that might facilitate completion of the application forms or the competitiveness of the application itself. Prospective applicants do not have to attend in order to apply but it is recommended.

#### Eligibility (Section II of the RFA)

9. Can I apply for both an IDEA and a CART award?
  - A. Yes, as long as they are separate projects.
10. Can I submit two CART applications, one as PI and the other as Co-PI?

Yes, as long as they are separate projects. You can be a PI on one CART application and a Co-PI on a different CART application. You cannot be a PI on two CART applications. The same is true of IDEA applications.
11. Can I be a PI on one application and a Co-PI on a different application?
  - A. Yes, as long as they are separate projects.
12. I am a business owner. Can my company apply for funding under this RFA?
  - A. No, not directly. Eligible institutions are not-for-profit or governmental organizations in New York State. A for-profit organization may be a subcontractor in collaboration with an eligible organization.
13. I am a postdoctoral fellow. Am I eligible to apply or do I have to be tenured?
  - A. Postdoctoral fellows are not eligible to apply to this RFA. Section II of the RFA states, "The eligible Principal Investigator (PI) is designated by the application organization, has the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to carry out the proposed Workplan, and **is not a postdoctoral fellow or other dependent research staff** [emphasis added]."

14. What is the definition of “dependent research staff?”

- A. Dependent research staff are not granted independent status by their employer, regardless of their title. Dependent research staff do not have a responsibility to seek external funding, do not have designated laboratory space, equipment or other items committed to them by the institution, and do not have full access to shared/core facilities and other benefits provided to Principal Investigators. A dependent researcher’s studies are generally mentored, guided, supervised and/or funded by another more experienced individual.

15. Can the research be done in other states or only in New York State?

- A. Applicants wishing to receive funding from this RFA must be New York State institutions. However, those institutions are permitted to subcontract with collaborators world-wide. Please note that all research done outside of NYS must be performed in accordance with New York State laws, regulations and applicable contract provisions.

16. What are the differences between the CART and IDEA funding mechanisms?

- A. RFA Sections Available Funds (I.C.) and Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes (III.) address the major differences between these two funding mechanisms. The four major differences are: length of contract time; annual direct cost limits; requirements for a clear translational path to clinical application for CART awards; and absolute requirement for a hypothesis-driven application for IDEA awards.

#### PIs, Co-PIs, Co-Investigators and Collaborators

17. Does my application stand a better chance of funding if the PI is more senior?

- A. Not necessarily. See RFA Section V.E. for the review criteria and the weights applied to each criterion for CART and IDEA applications.

18. What’s the difference between a co-investigator and a Co-PI?

- A. A Co-PI is designated by the PI as an individual who has equal responsibility and authority for ensuring the completion of the entire project. A co-investigator may be responsible for a specific component of the research project. The PI is the point of contact for all aspects of the contract.

19. What if my Co-PI is from a different institution?

- A. That is fine. Just be sure that each subcontracted institution has its own face page (Form 1-S).

20. Is joint Co-PI leadership from the same institution allowed?

- A. No. One individual from the applicant institution must be designated as the PI. If one or more Co-PIs are also designated, those individuals may or may not be from the applicant institution. For definitions of the terms "PI, Co-PI and Co-I" please see instructions for the completion of the Applicant Face Page (Form 1).

21. Is there a difference between a Multiple-PI and a Co-PI?

A. The program does not recognize or allow Multiple-PI's because the award is a contract and we need a single point of contact, the PI, to serve as the liaison between the awarded organization and Extramural Grants Administration (EGA). The PI is responsible for fulfilling all technical reporting requirements and submitting any revised budgets (co-signed by authorized organizational representative).

22. In an application that includes Co-PIs, is a leadership plan required?

A. No, however, the submitted work plans should have sufficient detail regarding collaborations, data sharing and time lines. Also see RFA Section V.E. for the review criteria related to the assembled investigators and staff.

23. I have more than one Co-PI from my institution. How do I list all Co-PI's on the application?

A. Application Form 1 – Applicant Face Page – allows only one Co-PI to be listed. Use the work plan narrative to designate the other Co-PI's. NOTE: Application Form 2 – Staff, Collaborators, Consultants and Contributors – requires all investigators to be listed and does not provide a selection for PI or Co-PI., instead select Research Scientist.

24. Is there a required percentage of effort for the PI and/or Co-PI?

A. No.

25. Will participating in more than one application impact the score of an application?

A. It could. The peer review panel is charged with identifying potential overlap (see RFA Section V.C). If scientific, budgetary or time commitment overlap among the pending and active research is of potential concern, the applicant should clearly delineate the differences among the projects using Application Form 9 – Other Support. Section V.E. of the RFA outlines the specific evaluation criteria and weights; the criteria do include assessment of the availability of time and resources to accomplish the project.

#### Subcontractors in the Application

26. Is there a limit to the percentage of work or the amount of funding that can be subcontracted to out of state collaborators?

A. No limit is specifically imposed by the RFA.

27. Are we required to provide a copy of the subcontract, or the subcontract indirect cost rate, as part of the application or at any time after award?

A. Yes. Draft subcontracts in excess of \$100,000 are likely to be requested at time of award. If requested, the subcontract must be reviewed and approved prior to its execution. See the NYS Master Grant Contract Section IV.B.

28. Do sub-applicants/subcontractors need to be registered in the Gateway, be pre-qualified and have an SFS Vendor ID number?



- A. Sub-applicants are not required to do so. However, at time of award, the State may require the applicant/sub-applicant to provide information the State needs to determine whether a proposed subcontractor is a responsible vendor. See the NYS Master Grant Contract Section IV.B.

### Submitting the Application

29. Are there instructions about how to complete the online portions of the application, workplan and budget?
- A. Yes. See the Grantee User Guide, videos and training materials on the Grants Reform website at: [www.grantsreform.ny.gov](http://www.grantsreform.ny.gov).
30. Does our institution have an “SFS Vendor Identification Number?”
- A. Your grants administration or fiscal office should know whether your organization has obtained an SFS Vendor Identification Number. If it does not, the organization must submit a New York State Office of the State Comptroller Substitute Form W-9, which can be found at: [http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep/vendor\\_index.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep/vendor_index.htm). Refer to RFA Section IV.K.
31. What is the application due date and time?
- A. The application must be successfully uploaded, found to be error-free and accepted through the New York State Grants Gateway by 6pm on March 5, 2015.
32. What is to be submitted by the application due date?
- A. Refer to RFA Section IV.E. How to Complete and File an Application. An application package response to this RFA may only be submitted through the NYS Grants Gateway; no paper, facsimile or any other type of electronic submissions will be accepted.
33. If there are multiple errors uploading completed application forms to the NYS Grants Gateway, will the applicant be notified of all errors at once, or only one at a time?
- A. A single list of global errors will be produced. Questions about how the NYS Grants Gateway functions should be directed to the Gateway Help Desk which can be reached Monday-Friday from 8am – 8pm at 1-800-820-1890 or [helpdesk@agatesoftware.com](mailto:helpdesk@agatesoftware.com). Applicants should also refer to the Grants Reform website at: [www.grantsreform.ny.gov](http://www.grantsreform.ny.gov). There are several user guides, videos, trainings, etc. to assist with application completion.
34. Who can submit an application in the NYS Grants Gateway?
- A. Only individuals with a designated role of “Grantee Contract Signatory” or “Grantee System Administrator” can submit an application in the Gateway. Roles are assigned by the Grants Gateway Delegated Administrator within your organization. There is a role reference table in Section IV.E. of the RFA. We strongly encourage everyone to watch the training videos provided on the NYS Grants Gateway web site.

35. The upload time for forms and documents can be lengthy. How could this impact a timely submission of my application?

A. Applicants are strongly encouraged to start completing an application in the NYS Grants Gateway no less than seven days before the due date. The application should be submitted more than an hour before it is due in case there are technical problems or global errors with the submission.

36. Why is spell check turned off on some of the application forms and why can't we cut and paste into them?

A. Forms 1-5 are set up as protected fillable forms so the data can be exported to databases used to facilitate peer review and award processes. Spell checking is disabled in the fillable form fields. You must type, cut and paste inside the gray boxes on these forms. The other application forms are not protected; spell check will work on these forms.

37. Are Minority and Woman-Owned Business Enterprise Requirement forms required to be submitted with the application?

A. Yes. A completed Form 1 or Form 2 must be included in the application submission. See RFA Section IV.I. and Attachment 7.

### Workplans

38. Why are there two workplans in the application?

A. The Workplan Narrative – Form 10, will be used by the peer reviewers to understand the full context and details of your research plan. Page limits are established for each funding mechanism (CART and IDEA) for sections a-d of this document. The NYS Grants Gateway Online Workplan will be included in the system-generated contract using this standardized format. The content of both Workplans must be identical. See the Application Completion Instructions in Attachment 2 of the RFA.

39. How do I take advantage of the Year 1 one-time-use funds?

A. The purpose of these funds is to “jump start” and enhance the proposed research project. The award of these funds is not guaranteed. In fact, they will be evaluated and scored separately from the research project itself (see RFA Sections V.C. and V.E.) Further, if awarded, it is likely that these funds will need to be expended by March 31, 2016. Therefore, it is important that the research application be able to “stand on its own” in terms of feasibility and approach. The Instructions for Completion of the Application (Attachment 2 to the RFA) require the applicant to clearly delineate the work that will be completed (supplemented or enhanced) with one-time-use funds.

### Budgeting

40. Can we pay for graduate students and others on the project budget?

A. Yes. Staff your project appropriate to what you will need to complete the proposed project.

41. Are there salary limits for PIs, postdocs or graduate students?
- A. The maximum salary is limited to \$199,700 per person in each budget year and is not adjustable as the federal salary cap changes.
42. Can funds be spent on patent fees?
- A. No direct costs can be spent on patent or legal support.
43. Can we budget for travel/registration for meetings?
- A. Yes, with sufficient justification. Please plan to attend annual SCIRB-sponsored meetings to be held in either New York City or Albany. Travel that is not specified and approved at the time of contract must be requested in advance.
44. I am planning to use the one-time-use funds in Year 1 to buy equipment necessary for my research. What if I am awarded a grant but not the one-time use funds for Year 1?
- A. RFA Attachment 2 Application Checklist and Instructions, addresses this issue as follows:
- “**NOTE:** Because these one-time funds may not be awarded, be sure to include all items necessary for completion of the research project in the “base budget.” For one-time-use funds in Year 1 (ideally expended by 3/31/16), request funds appropriate and clearly related to enhancement of the proposed project. Use a separate line for each one-time-use entry and type an asterisk (\*) on each one-time-use line to distinguish it from those essential to complete the project.”
45. Do we have to submit a budget for the first year or all years? Do we need to have budgets for sub-applicants?
- A. Detailed line item budgets and justifications for applicants and sub-applicants must be submitted for the entire length of the contract. Year 1 is entered directly into the NYS Grants Gateway and subsequent years are entered to an Excel file that also must be saved as a PDF file. (Excel file is located under Pre-Submission Uploads-Attachment 4; Completed Excel file should be uploaded under Program Specific Question #3.)
46. How much budget justification is necessary?
- A. Justify the budget lines for each year. For each budget line, provide sufficient detail to demonstrate that specific uses and amounts of funding have been carefully considered.

**There are no modifications to this RFA.**