

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The Nancy R. Gelman Foundation (NRGF) announces its 2009 Seed Grant Program. We are extremely pleased to fund projects aimed at improving outcomes for women with breast cancer by promoting global improvement in services provided to women with or at risk of breast cancer. Applications should be submitted by email, to be received at [grants@nrgf.org](mailto:grants@nrgf.org) **on or before Wednesday, August 5, 2009**. Seed grant amounts will not exceed **\$1,500** to any one recipient.

**Please read these instructions carefully. By signing the application face page, you are certifying compliance with all project criteria and agreeing to the terms presented below.**

Projects for which a seed grant may be awarded must:

- Demonstrate a need for start-up, interim, or supplemental funding within the period of October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2010.
- Not already be funded by other sources (projects which represent a clear new initiative extending beyond the scope of a currently funded project are permissible).
- Prospectively state an objective outcome measure which will be used to gauge project success.

By applying for a seed grant, applicants agree that if such a grant is made, they will:

- Abide by all federal, state, local, and institutional laws and regulations (including IRB/IACUC guidelines where applicable) in all matters pertaining to the project and its conduct.
- Use funds responsibly, in accordance with the budget submitted with the grant application, and only in support of the proposed project.
- Prepare and submit to NRGF a project report within 90 days of project completion or by December 15, 2010, whichever is earlier.
- Make public their results in an appropriate form and within a reasonable time after project completion, in order to allow others to reproduce the results. (Examples: presentations to professional and/or community organizations, publications in the peer-reviewed press [for research] or lay press [for community projects]. Applicants are encouraged to indicate how their work will be publicized as part of their application.)
- Acknowledge funding from NRGF in all project-related publicity.
- Allow NRGF to use their names, likenesses, and information from project abstracts and reports in any medium, perpetually and worldwide, except to the extent that such disclosure would adversely affect eligibility for publication or patent protection.
- Be willing to sign the document entitled “Grant Agreement”, a sample of which is available at [http://www.nrgf.org/grants/Grant\\_Agreement.pdf](http://www.nrgf.org/grants/Grant_Agreement.pdf).



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Project proposals should be in single-spaced 11-point Times New Roman (or equivalent) font, with at least ½” margins on all sides of an 8½x11” page size.

This year's grant applications will be evaluated by our Medical Advisory Board using a study section process, in which applications with similar goals are compared to and rated against each other, benchmarked using an NIH-like systematic review template. Elements of the template include:

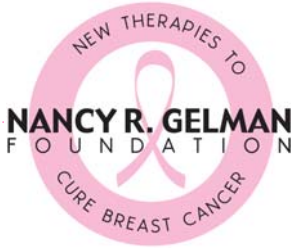
- **Significance** (how will this work lead to improved outcomes for patients with breast cancer?)
- **Approach** (are the methods proposed reasonable and likely to be fruitful?)
- **Innovation** (how is this work new, how likely is it to open up new opportunities for future work?)
- **Investigators** (is the applicant qualified to perform the work? This is primarily addressed by the biosketch and letters of support and does not need to be in the 4-page proposal)
- **Environment** (does the applicant have the resources available to succeed? This is primarily addressed by the letters of support and information need not be repeated in the 4-page proposal)
- **Multiplier effect** (how likely are the results from this project to attract further funding from other sources, and how likely are the results from this project to promote a change nationally or globally in the services provided to women with or at risk of breast cancer?)

A typical structure for the 4-page project proposal is:

- **Specific Aims** (suggest 1-2 paragraphs, max)
- **Background/Significance** (recommend 1 page, max)
- **Project plan**, including a plan for how results will be evaluated (recommend 2 pages, max)
- **Summary**, including an explanation of innovative characteristics about the project as well as multiplier effect, and specifying what this project will do in order to promote *global* improvement of practices or services to women with breast cancer (recommend 1 page, max)

Over the past three years, we have identified characteristics common to successful applications, as well as information that, when included, simplifies the process of evaluation. Applicants are strongly encouraged to include the following elements in their proposals.

For basic science (research) proposals:

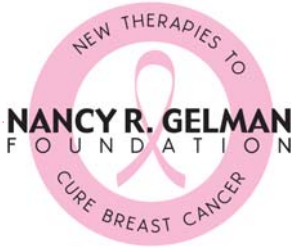


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- Describe in detail the research to be undertaken, its specific aims, and hypotheses to be tested. Relate the work to improving outcomes for women with breast cancer. The work described should be reasonably achievable by the personnel assigned to the project, within the time frame allotted.
- Cite appropriate published or unpublished precedents, and distinguish how the current research represents an advance or innovation. Reference list may not exceed 1 page and is not included in the page limit for the proposal.
- Clearly distinguish experiments that will be supported by the NRGF grant from those supported by other funding. Proposals for a clearly delineated project, where a seed grant of up to \$1,500 will either have a clear effect or provide “keystone” funding that will make the difference between a project being pursued or not, tend to be more persuasive. Projects likely to be pursued regardless of funding, or requests for fractional support for a project with a much larger budget, are less likely to be funded.
- Enumerate line items on the budget report to a reasonable extent, including any indirect or overhead costs. Salary support tends to be less persuasive unless it represents clearly protected time to focus on the NRGF project. Similarly, once high-cost line-items (over 20% of total request) are cited, "supplies" may be broken down on a per-time basis according to usual costs for similar research.
- Describe existing institutional infrastructure (hardware and/or personnel) that will be used to support the project.
- Describe objective measures by which the success of the research will be determined, and plans to publicize the results (e.g., peer-reviewed journal publications, presentations at scholarly meetings, etc.)
- Describe (one paragraph) the next phase of the project if successful, and sources from which further funding will be sought based on results of this project.

### For community-based proposals:

- Describe in detail the intervention to be undertaken, and its specific goals, or the information to be gathered (for projects designed to gather information).
- For interventional projects, describe and numerically estimate the target population of the intervention. For population-based projects, this could involve using statistics from census or public health department sources or from online sources, such as the Wolfram Alpha knowledge search engine. For health organization-based projects, organizational statistics on how many women are diagnosed with or treated for breast cancer per year may be available. For smaller focus or support groups, the size of the group should be estimated.
- For interventional projects, describe the desired outcome of the intervention and how it will be measured.



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- Some outcomes may be measured objectively based on available statistics (e.g., an increase in the number of mammograms performed in the organization's catchment area). Other outcomes may need more active measurements that could require human-subjects approval (e.g., improved mood and coping skills among a group of breast cancer survivors). Numerical goals for outcomes, in light of the size of the target population, are encouraged.
- Because the focus of these grants is “to improve outcomes,” it is critical to measure the most “downstream” outcome accessible within the time frame of the project. For example, although a change in overall survival might not be seen within the one-year time frame, an increase in the number of clinical breast exams performed at a local clinic, or the number of cases of breast cancer diagnosed, could be measurable.
- Because underserved communities often have worse outcomes at baseline, it may be easier to see gains in these populations than in others.
- Describe similar interventions that have been undertaken in the past by your organization or by others, and describe how the current project is new or different from what has been done before, or how it seeks to reproduce or verify earlier results. For screening and outreach interventions, we expect you to show familiarity with relevant health communication literature and explain why your approach is more likely than alternatives to be successful.
- Describe how outcomes will be measured, and how you will disseminate the results of your work so that others may try to duplicate your success or compare their results to yours. This might include presentations to other organizations or to other chapters if your organization is chapter-based or part of a network, or publication of your results and materials online or in print.
- Ultimately, the largest “multiplier effect” for interventional projects comes from making improvements that can be put into practice in many communities. For example, direct funding for mammograms might not be as effective as training outreach workers using a curriculum that could then be adapted easily for other communities. A more compelling grant proposal will demonstrate how you are doing something in a new way, which could then be used to encourage other organizations to adopt your new way, leading to a change in practice on a larger scale.

Additional pointers on grant proposal composition (answers to frequently asked questions):

- Executive summary paragraphs should be modeled after the descriptions of awardee and Honorable Mention projects below.
- Some proposals consist in large part of a description of the applying organization. Our board finds it easier to make decisions about the project if organizational information is focused on describing how the organization is well-qualified to



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execute the project, and the bulk of the proposal describes how the project will be carried out.

- Remember, the Seed Grant program does not fund operating costs, and the most persuasive proposals will describe how the project will become independent of NRGF funding (e.g., use evidence of seed grant project results to acquire funding from other sources for further development).
- A single individual should be identified as responsible for the overall conduct of the project, and should sign the face page as “applicant”. We will address our decision letter to the applicant, not necessarily to other personnel involved in grant writing. Individuals at an institution should have an institutional sponsor signature (by the writer of the institutional letter of support).
- Proposals involving human or animal research must be approved or declared exempt by an appropriate IRB or IACUC, respectively, before funding decisions are made in late February. Proposals under IRB/IACUC review at the time of submission should be accompanied by an IRB/IACUC letter giving the expected date of review, with a final approval/exemption letter required before funding is disbursed, ideally by **September 15, 2009**, but in extenuating circumstances a later date may be acceptable.
- Grants to institutions outside the U.S. should include an IRS certification that the institution is permitted to accept grants from U.S. 501(c)3 organizations. Many larger institutions will have such a letter on file with their development offices. Government entities are generally permitted to receive 501(c)3 grants.
- We are unable to provide grants to individuals for their breast cancer treatment.

The deadline for grant applications to be received by email at [grants@nrgf.org](mailto:grants@nrgf.org) and to be postmarked for receipt at NRGF’s offices is Wednesday, **August 5, 2009**.

The NRGF Medical Advisory Board expects to render its decisions regarding funding on or before Wednesday, September 30, 2009; NRGF officials may contact applicants with suggestions for revision of proposals, including budget revisions, at any time. The total amount disbursed in this or any given year will be determined by the strength of the overall applicant pool, but in past years up to two proposals have been funded, out of a total pool of 17 applications in 2008. An offer of either full or partial funding may be made.

Because of the very small number of proposals that are funded, the board first employs an initial streamlining step in which proposals with a reasonable likelihood of being funded are identified, and then these proposals receive full reviews and discussion among the study sections. For proposals receiving full reviews, copies of reviewer comments are provided to the applicant along with the score assigned and the cutoff score for funding. Honorable Mentions are awarded to unfunded proposals considered particularly meritorious.



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Finally, we are aware that our application process is more complex than for some other grants of similar magnitude. It is our firm belief that the process of compiling an NRGF seed grant application leads applicants to think more deeply about their projects and ultimately improves project quality. We are committed to providing feedback on as many applications as possible, while respecting the generous contributions of time from our Medical Advisory Board members, who review grants as unpaid volunteers.

Applications are accepted in **electronic format only – do not mail an application**. The application consists of a single PDF-format file containing all items but the photographs, in the order listed on the face page; numbering of pages begins with the executive summary. The scanned signed face page, letter(s) of support/reference, and any required institutional letters of approval should be incorporated into the PDF; letters of support/reference are **not** required to be sent under separate cover by the recommender. Due to email attachment size limitations, it is best if the two digital publicity photographs are sent via a free file-transfer service, such as [www.yousendit.com](http://www.yousendit.com), to [grants@nrgf.org](mailto:grants@nrgf.org).

Send by email one (1) copy of the complete application to [grants@nrgf.org](mailto:grants@nrgf.org). Please note that the telephone number below is in the Pacific Time Zone, and responses to telephone inquiries may take several days. Questions about the application process or requirements are best addressed to [grants@nrgf.org](mailto:grants@nrgf.org); responses to queries sent via email may be faster than telephone queries.

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Example executive summary paragraphs (taken from the NRGF website descriptions of funded projects):

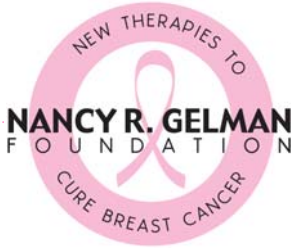
**Dr. Mark P. Rubinstein, PhD, University of California, San Diego**

Mark Rubinstein, a postdoctoral researcher at UCSD, has identified a pair of proteins that stimulate the natural immune response. Immunotherapy for cancer has been hindered so far by two limitations: side effects of the drugs that stimulate the immune system, and the activation of a "regulatory" response that limits immune system activation. The proteins identified by Dr. Rubinstein have shown promise in cell culture, but nothing is known about how well they will work against a whole tumor.

With a 2007 Seed Grant from NRGF, Dr. Rubinstein and his colleagues will conduct a pilot study of this protein complex in mice. He will be able to study the effect of these proteins both on the primary tumor and on metastasis, and hopes to demonstrate that mice treated shortly after their cancers become detectable will have smaller tumors and will show a more active anti-cancer immune response. He also hopes to demonstrate that the treatment will reduce the degree of metastasis to the lungs.

Success in this project would open the door to a new way to stimulate the immune system to fight cancer. Results from these pilot experiments could lead to sustainable funding for Dr. Rubinstein's future academic career and to a new weapon in the arsenal against breast cancer.

**Clark Family Breast Cancer Services**



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Maria Clark and her family, having lost several relatives to breast cancer, formed the Clark Family Breast Cancer Services in October 2005 to serve the uninsured and underinsured women of Camden County, NJ, with outreach and support both before and after diagnosis. While national breast cancer screening rates hover around 75%, among the uninsured women of Camden County the rate is less than 10%. As a result, these women lose the benefit of early detection of their breast cancer and are at greater risk of dying from it.

With a 2007 Seed Grant from NRGF, Clark Family Breast Cancer Services will adapt an evidence-based intervention, the "Witness Project," which was originally developed for use in African-American churches. They will modify the program, which makes use of role models discussing their experiences with breast cancer as well as health advocates who can discuss the details of screening, to make it culturally acceptable to a broader range of the diverse uninsured population of Camden County. They will measure how many uninsured women are connected with screening as a result of their intervention. Success in this project could broaden the application of the Witness Project model and allow for better outreach to broader underserved populations nationwide.

**Vista Community Clinic, Vista, CA**  
**Breast Cancer Survivor Program**  
**Natasha Riley, Program Manager**

Like many communities, North San Diego County has a significant population of low-income, minority breast cancer survivors. Vista Community Clinic, which focuses on removing economic, social, and cultural barriers to health care, has already been successful in increasing breast cancer screening rates among this at-risk population. So far, however, they have not been able to provide structured support services to survivors.

With a 2006 Seed Grant from NRGF, Vista will conduct a focus group of low-income, underserved breast cancer survivors, and use the data to develop a resource list and a support group curriculum for these survivors. Natasha Riley, the University of New Orleans-trained manager of the VCC Breast Health Program, will direct the development of the support group materials.

Vista will measure how their intervention affects the survivors' knowledge of breast cancer survivorship resources and issues, as well as their quality of life. Vista plans to disseminate the results of their project at conferences and through their network of existing contacts. Success in this project should lead to further funding for the support group, as well as attempts to replicate it in other underserved communities.

**Alliance Community Services, Salt Lake City, UT**  
**"Triunfadoras"**  
**Jorge J. Arce-Larreta, Program Director**

Alliance Community Services project is aimed at improving outcomes for women with breast cancer. With a 2006 Seed Grant from NRGF, Alliance will improve its community-based effort to promote breast cancer awareness and early detection among populations at increased risk.

The project will consist of the development of information materials to encourage appropriate screening and to help guide newly diagnosed patients, or those whose cancer has recurred, through the challenging maze of treatment options. Alliance will publish an educational and inspirational bilingual booklet titled "Triunfadoras" as an enduring testament to our survivors in their daily fight against breast cancer to be used for educational and prevention purposes among the Hispanic community in Utah.



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With a 2006 Seed Grant from NRGF, Alliance plans to reach at least 600 Hispanic women residing in Salt Lake and adjacent counties to receive information and education regarding the importance of early detection examinations by April 2007.