

March 16, 2021

**The Paul G. Allen Frontiers Group
Letters of Intent (LOI)
Allen Distinguished Investigator (ADI) Program
Micropeptides – 2021**

LOI release date: March 17, 2021

LOI submission deadline: April 15, 2021

Purpose

We request letters of intent for Allen Distinguished Investigator proposals in micropeptides and small proteins research, to advance our understanding of their role in the immune system. There will be up to four awards made for up to \$6M in total research funding (no indirect costs supported). Awards will be \$1,500,000 for 3 years, at the rate of \$500,000 per year.

Topic Details

A source of speculation and contention, the existence of micropeptides and small proteins are increasingly confirmed by sophisticated bioinformatics tools but their role in cells and systems remains largely unelucidated. **We seek innovative proposals that could shed light on this new ‘dark matter’ (microproteins) in immune biological process, surfacing the role(s) of these “proteins” and what they can do through comparative studies in the immune system.**

Projects of interest may include comparisons of micropeptides and small proteins’ existence and behavior (1) across species, (2) across immune cell types, (3) in different stages of development and aging, and/or (4) between healthy and disease states. Projects focusing on or including *in vivo* work are preferred. Top LOIs might include software, spatial imaging and/or other tool building efforts, but would be primarily focused on elucidating broad biological mechanisms, fundamental roles and/or “rules” for their activity. Multidisciplinary teams (*e.g.*, consisting of immunologists, biochemists, engineers, bioinformaticians, *etc.*) are particularly welcome.

Program Goals

The Allen Distinguished Investigator program supports early-stage research with the potential to reinvent entire fields. The program seeks to have a lasting impact on the direction of research, aiming to serve as a catalyst upon which future research is founded. This program seeks to enable scientists to take risks with new ideas and approaches, and strongly believes in interdisciplinary approaches that allow scientists to look beyond their own disciplines, and to explore approaches with colleagues in other disciplines in order to bring new perspectives to challenging problems where traditional approaches within a discipline may be ‘stuck.’ The program is especially interested in approaches that are unlikely to receive funding from traditional government sources, including methodological and technological advances that are often necessary complements to scientific advance and often difficult to fund through traditional sources. This program encourages and supports researchers including novel methodological, theoretical and technological elements in their proposals.

Eligibility Requirements

US or international scientists associated with nonprofit research organizations and pursuing independent research (e.g., tenured or tenure-track faculty or similar positions) are eligible to apply. We ask that, if awarded, the leader commit a minimum of 20% effort to the ADI research activities. We believe that diverse perspectives are vital to science and welcome LOIs from researchers who are members of underrepresented groups and/or have followed less-traditional career paths.

LOI Format

We request that all submissions be in English on 8 ½ x 11-inch paper size, using Arial, 11-point font, single spaced, with 1-inch margins top, bottom, left, and right. Submissions consist of the following information:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| a) Cover page | Project title, PIs and contact information |
| b) Project description* | 1-page limit |
| c) PI biography** | 1-page limit (for each PI) |

*Up to five references are allowed; references are not included in the page limit of the project description. Up to one figure is permitted and not included in the 1-page limit. Please place references and figure, if any, at the end of the project description.

**Provide a biography of each PI. Please feel free to tell us anything that the PI would like reviewers to know about themselves.

LOI Submission

LOIs are due by **11:59pm PDT on April 15, 2021** and should be submitted by upload [here](#).

The LOI must be submitted as a **single PDF** file with the following filename:

PI name (last name.first initial)_InstitutionName_2021ADIMicrop_LOI.pdf

Example: *Allen.P_AllenUniversity_2021ADIMicrop_LOI.pdf*

If the project includes more than one PI, please use when naming the PDF the name of the PI who will be serving as the technical point of contact for the application.

Questions

Answers to frequently asked questions can be found [here](#). Questions not on this list may be submitted to frontiers@alleninstitute.org. Please use “2021 Micropeptides Question” as the email subject.

We try to respond to all emails, but may not be able to due to the volume of questions received. Please note that LOI questions submitted after 11:59pm PDT on April 8, 2021 are unlikely to be answered.

Application Key Dates

Letter of Intent Due	April 15, 2021
Notification of LOI Outcome	by May 31, 2021*
Full Proposal Deadline	July 15, 2021*
Finalist Interviews	August 2021*
Notification of Award	September 2021*
Award Start	November 2021*

*Tentative date

Selection Process

Up to 30 LOIs will be invited to submit full proposals for consideration. Up to eight of the submitted proposals will be selected for finalist interviews, which will be held by videoconference. Up to four awards will be made.

LOIs and proposals are confidentially reviewed by a panel of experts tailored for the topic, and this panel will make recommendations to the Paul G. Allen Frontiers Group, a division of the Allen Institute, which acts as the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation's agent and subject matter expert, provides counsel and supports the administration of the awards. The Paul G. Allen Family Foundation has the final decision on the award.

Members of the panel of experts and any advisors serve anonymously. Their identities as well as correspondence, evaluations and deliberations are kept confidential. This policy enables advisors and evaluators to provide their honest impressions independent of outside influence. Past awardees may be asked to act as future evaluators and advisors.