

3. Characterize strains and/or the relationship between these strains using a variety of molecular and biochemical techniques, including, Pulsed Field Gel Electrophoresis (PFGE), Multi Locus Sub Typing (MLST), and Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) for virulence genes. Studies could include demonstrating the correlation of host response to disease and strain characteristics, or relative impact strain characteristics have on colonization or invasive disease.

F. Content

Letter of Intent (LOI)

An LOI is optional for this program. The Program Announcement title and number must appear in the LOI. The narrative should be no more than five pages, double-spaced, printed on one side, with one-inch margins, and un-reduced 12-point font. Your letter of intent will be used to estimate the potential reviewer workload and to avoid conflicts of interest during the peer review. It should include the following information: name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address of the Principal Investigator, the identities of other key personnel and participating institutions, and a narrative description of the proposed research project.

Applications

The Program Announcement title and number must appear in the application. Use the information in the Program Requirements, Other Requirements, and Evaluation Criteria sections to develop the application content. Your application will be evaluated on the criteria listed, so it is important to follow them in laying out your program plan. The narrative should be no more than 25 double-spaced pages, printed on one side, with one-inch margins, and un-reduced 12-point font.

The narrative should consist of, at a minimum, a detailed Research Plan, Objectives, Methods, an Evaluation Plan and Budget. The Research Plan should include activities to be conducted over the entire three year project period.

G. Submission and Deadline

Letter of Intent (LOI) Submission

On or before June 4, 2003, submit the LOI to the Grants Management Specialist identified in the "Where to Obtain Additional Information" section of this announcement.

Application Forms

Submit the signed original and two copies of PHS-398 (OMB Number 0925-0001) Adhere to the instructions on the

Errata Instruction Sheet (posted on the CDC Web site) for PHS 398. Forms are available at the following Internet address: <http://www.cdc.gov/od/pgo/forminfo.htm>.

If you do not have access to the Internet, or if you have difficulty accessing the forms on-line, you may contact the CDC Procurement and Grants Office Technical Information Management Section (PGO-TIM) at: 770-488-2700. Application forms can be mailed to you.

Submission Date, Time, and Address

The application must be received on or before 4 p.m. Eastern Time, June 19, 2003. Submit the application to: Technical Information Management—PA03120, CDC Procurement and Grants Office, 2920 Brandywine Road, Atlanta, GA 30341-4146.

Applications may not be submitted electronically.

CDC Acknowledgment of Application Receipt

A postcard will be mailed by PGO-TIM, notifying you that CDC has received your application.

Deadline

Letters of intent and applications shall be considered as meeting the deadline if they are received before 4 p.m. Eastern Time on the deadline date. Any applicant who sends their application by the United States Postal Service or commercial delivery services must ensure that the carrier will be able to guarantee delivery of the application by the closing date and time. If an application is received after closing due to (1) carrier error, when the carrier accepted the package with a guarantee for delivery by the closing date and time, or (2) significant weather delays or natural disasters, CDC will upon receipt of proper documentation, consider the application as having been received by the deadline.

Any application that does not meet the above criteria will not be eligible for competition and will be discarded. The applicant will be notified of their failure to meet submission requirements.

H. Evaluation Criteria

Applicants are required to provide measures of effectiveness that will demonstrate the accomplishment of the various identified objectives of the grant. Measures of effectiveness must relate to the performance goals as stated in purpose section of this announcement. Measures must be objective and quantitative and must measure the intended outcome. These measures of effectiveness shall be

submitted with the application and shall be an element of evaluation.

Upon receipt, applications will be reviewed for completeness and responsiveness jointly by PGO-TIM and the NCID Office of Extramural Research. Incomplete and/or non-responsive applications will be returned to the applicant without further consideration.

Dual-Level Peer Review: As part of the initial merit review, all applicants will receive a written critique based on the comments and recommendations of the scientific (peer) review group. The review of most research applications will also include a process in which only those applications deemed to have the highest scientific merit, generally the top half of the applications under review, will be discussed, assigned a priority score, and receive a second level review. The second level of review will be performed by either CDC senior staff or the NCID Board of Scientific Counselors. Senior staff or Board recommendations are based not only on considerations of scientific merit, as judged by the scientific (peer) review group, but also on the relevance of the proposed study to the Center's programs and priorities.

Review Criteria

The goal of this research is to prevent and control the emergence and spread of AR in the United States. In the written comments, reviewers will be asked to discuss the following aspects of the application in order to judge the likelihood that the proposed research will have a substantial impact on the pursuit of these goals:

- Significance
- Approach
- Innovation
- Investigator
- Environment

The peer review group will address and consider each of these criteria in assigning the application's overall score, weighting them as appropriate for each application. The application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have major scientific impact and thus deserve a high priority score. For example, an investigator may propose to carry out important work that by its nature is not innovative but is essential to move a field forward.

Significance: Does this study address an important problem? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge be advanced? What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts or methods that drive this field?

Approach: Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and