

NOTE: This funding opportunity is now closed. Information on the SAB’s evaluation process and the projects that were awarded funding can be found [here](#). Please continue to check back for updates on future funding opportunities.

Funding Opportunity For Innovative Translational Research on Concussion and Comorbid Conditions

Program Description: Executive Summary

The National Football League (the “NFL”) has developed a funding program (this “Program”) for the purposes of inviting research proposals and providing funding for innovative translational research being conducted by investigative teams related to the diagnosis and treatment of concussion (mild traumatic brain injury) and associated comorbid conditions including chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), as well as the natural history of concussion and associated comorbid conditions.

The goal of this Program is to provide funding support for research proposals from leading investigative teams in the field of concussion and associated comorbid conditions. This Program’s funding opportunity is intended to facilitate the translation of original, ongoing and existing research products into clear clinical end points, such as progressing findings to diagnostics, drugs, devices and treatments that advantage the patient, as well as advancing understanding of the short-term and long-term effects of concussion(s) and associated comorbid conditions.

The NFL’s intent through this Program is to demonstrate the potential for translational breakthroughs by leveraging emerging science, current data sets and archival material on concussion and associated comorbid conditions. This Program is designed to support multidisciplinary investigative teams with strong track records of collaboration and accomplishment in the field.

Funding Opportunity

The maximum amount that the NFL anticipates to be funded on any one proposal is \$20 million, to be distributed over the next three to five years (on a schedule determined by the NFL). The number of winning investigative teams, and the total amount to be funded, will be determined based on recommendations from the SAB (as defined below) and the quality of the proposals submitted. The NFL anticipates that it will fund research through this Program, which may include additional funding rounds, until set-aside funds have been awarded.

Scientific Advisory Board

The NFL has established a Scientific Advisory Board (the “SAB”), consisting of leading independent experts, doctors, scientists and clinicians. The SAB will evaluate all Submissions (as

defined below) and make funding recommendations (both the best investigative teams and amounts to be funded) to the NFL.

[LEARN MORE HERE](#)

Proposal Submission and Review Process

Below outlines the submission (each such proposal submitted, a “Submission”; each such investigative team, a “Submitter”) and review processes and how funding for investigative teams will be determined:

1. **Pre-Proposal:** Each Submitter shall submit a short executive summary (“Pre-Proposal”) that outlines the general goals of the research project, the qualifications of the team members, research progress made to date, anticipated and clear clinical endpoints, and an anticipated timeline with expected milestones. Pre-Proposals must be submitted both by e-mail to nflsab@onemind.org and by mail to NFL SAB c/o One Mind 120 Lakeside Ave, Suite 200 Seattle, WA 98122 and must be postmarked between September 12, 2017 at 12:01 A.M. (Eastern Time) and October 31, 2017 at 6:00 P.M. (Eastern Time). Limit one (1) Pre-Proposal per investigative team. Further details regarding the submission process for Pre-Proposals can be found below.
2. **Formal Proposal and Oral Presentation:** The SAB shall evaluate each Pre-Proposal and shall, based on the National Institute of Health’s Scoring Guidance (available at https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/review/rev_prep/scoring.htm), invite certain Submitters to submit a more detailed proposal and present such proposal orally at an SAB meeting expected to be held in January 2018. The more detailed proposal (the “Formal Proposal”) shall include a budget (inclusive of the specific request and use of NFL funding); biosketches of team members; specific aims; background and significance section; experimental design, including methods and statistical analyses; and an investigative team management plan. The requirements for submitting a Formal Proposal and the requirements and limitations (e.g., time limitations) of the oral presentation of such Formal Proposal (the “Oral Presentation”) shall be provided to the invited Submitters when the SAB invites them to submit their Formal Proposal.
3. **Funded Proposals:** The SAB shall review and score all Formal Proposals and Oral Presentations using the National Institute of Health’s Scoring Guidance, and shall recommend to the NFL certain of the Formal Proposals for funding and the recommended amount of funding. Based on those recommendations, the NFL shall determine which, if any, of the recommended Formal Proposals shall receive funding (the “Funded Proposals”).

Investigators leading the Funded Proposals shall be required to attend an annual conference to report their findings and progress as it pertains to the milestones outlined in their Formal Proposal.

Timeline

(subject to change by the NFL and/or the SAB)

Date(s)	Deadline
September 12 – October 31, 2017	Submission window for Pre-Proposals
November 1 – November 30, 2017	The SAB will review all Pre-Proposals
December 1, 2017	Selected Submitters will be notified of their invitation to submit a Formal Proposal and attend Oral Presentation
December 31, 2017	Submission deadline for Formal Presentations
Week of January 15, 2018	Oral Presentations to be held

Official Rules

All investigative teams shall be required to adhere to the official rules available on the Program Website (as defined below) and shall be required to agree to certain terms available in a [participation agreement](#) required for entry.

Pre-Proposal Format

All Pre-Proposal submissions must be on 8 ½" x 11" paper, using Times New Roman, 12-point font, single spaced, with 1" margins. Pre-Proposals should have the following sections, each of which is limited as set forth below:

- a. Cover page
- b. Technical research project summary short paragraph (300-word limit)
- c. Lay research project summary and big picture impact short paragraph (300-word limit)
- d. Research project description (two (2) page limit)*

*References are not included in the page count of the project description. Up to 5 figures are permitted. The figures must be included in an appendix, and will not count towards the page count. Technical project milestones are encouraged and should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

- e. Bio-sketch (one (1) paragraph for each researcher, total limit of two (2) pages for all researchers)
- f. Facilities and leverage (half (1/2) page limit)**

**The term leverage is used in regards to the utilization of any resource/data set/ongoing research to further the proposed research. Such a resource could be physical (equipment, a unique product/reagent, tissue line, etc.) or theoretical (expertise, people, skills, new results etc.) in nature.

- g. Related prior and current grants (one (1) page limit)
- h. Budget – summary budget only, reflecting total cost with breakdown of major categories (salary support, materials, equipment, etc.), and anticipated uses of funding from NFL (one (1) page limit)

In connection with this Program, no more than ten percent (10%) of any amounts funded by the NFL to any investigative team may be allocated for indirect costs (e.g., overhead costs) of institutions to which investigative teams belong or are with which they are affiliated.

Example Proposal Topics

Investigative teams with research related to innovative translational research on concussion and comorbid conditions are encouraged to submit a proposal. Example study objectives suggested, but are not limited to:

1. Define gold standard diagnosis and outcome measures. These studies will enhance acute identification of concussion, provide techniques to track recovery, provide methods to predict concussion recovery and/or identify individual differences in response to concussion.
2. Develop and employ objective measures to provide evidence based medicine and practice approaches for concussion management and treatment. These studies will provide opportunities to understand the short and long-term longitudinal effects of concussion. Studies may also define at risk sub-populations for concussion related comorbidities for targeted treatment and efficacy measurements.
3. Define meaningful sub-concussive changes that would affect the evaluation of an athlete's health and neurocognitive abilities in the short and/or long-term. These studies may enhance clinical decisions regarding return to play and/or retirement.