

**Massachusetts Consortium on Pathogen Readiness  
Evergrande COVID-19 Response Fund Awards  
Request for Proposals**

**Key Dates**

Request for Proposals Announced	March 17, 2020
Proposals Due	March 24, 2020
Funding Decisions Announced	April 2020
Anticipated Funding Start	April 2020

**Funding Purpose**

Harvard Medical School (HMS) is now accepting applications for the Evergrande COVID-19 Response Fund Awards, available through the Massachusetts Consortium on Pathogen Readiness (MassCPR). Initial funding to support the Consortium has been generously provided to HMS by the China Evergrande Group.

In December 2019, China began to experience an outbreak of a novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), responsible for COVID-19 disease. Since that time, the outbreak has spread to hundreds of thousands of people worldwide. HMS, in collaboration with the Guangzhou Institute for Respiratory Health (GIRH) in Guangzhou, China, has launched a response fund to address critical needs raised by this outbreak. These will involve research activities on all aspects of COVID-19 disease, including:

- Research to understand disease epidemiology and modeling (including analyses of acute public health responses)
- Research to elucidate the pathogenesis of the disease
- Research to develop rapid diagnostic tools (especially novel tools that are not currently represented in the world's diagnostics armamentarium)
- Research to develop small molecule and antibody therapeutics
- Research to develop vaccines
- Research to improve the clinical management of the disease

All research approaches will be considered, from classical laboratory approaches to artificial intelligence applications and more.

Preference will be given to projects that are directly applicable to address the current, urgent needs of the COVID-19 outbreak.

## **Community Resources**

Applicants are allowed to propose experiments that require the utilization of MassCPR community resources. Such resources could include, for example, access to a BSL-3 or BSL-4 facility in the Boston area. A complete list of these resources is still being compiled, and other such resources are under development. The current list of community resources is under development at this website: <https://masscpr.hms.harvard.edu/>.

## **Eligibility**

Tenure-track faculty members at the level of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Full Professor at Harvard University (HMS, FAS, HCSPH, HSDM, SEAS), MIT, Boston University School of Medicine, Tufts University School of Medicine, University of Massachusetts Medical School, and hospitals and research institutes affiliated with these four medical schools are eligible to apply as Lead PI. Proposals may include one or more Co-PI collaborators who will contribute to the intellectual development of the project, design studies or parts thereof, and be involved with the project throughout the term of funding. Eligibility requirements for Co-PIs are the same as for the Lead PI. Senior scientists from biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies who meet their firm's Principal Investigator eligibility criteria are also eligible as Co-PIs.

There can be a maximum of one Lead PI per proposal. A PI may serve as Lead PI on one proposal only, and can serve as a Co-PI on other proposals as well.

Instructors, Lecturers, and Trainees (e.g., students, clinical trainees, postdoctoral fellows, and clinical fellows) cannot serve as the Lead PI or Co-PI of an application, although they would be encouraged to participate as members of the research team.

## **Award Amount**

MassCPR anticipates awarding funding for multiple research projects. Applicants may submit proposals for a maximum two-year funding period, with a **total cost** budget (i.e., a total cost budget over the entire funding period) of \$50,000 to \$500,000 per project. We anticipate that there will be future RFP-based funding cycles.

## **Evaluation Criteria**

All submitted proposals will be reviewed by the MassCPR Proposal Selection Task Force. Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Potential scientific and/or clinical impact
- Potential to address the current, urgent needs of the COVID-19 outbreak
- Skills and experience of the Lead PI and any Co-PIs and their demonstrated ability to execute the project within the funding period

## **Application Format and Submission Deadline**

### ***Proposal (submission deadline: March 24, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. ET)***

Proposals must be received via email to **masscpr@hms.harvard.edu** by March 24, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. ET. Please type “MassCPR Proposal: Lead PI LastName\_FirstName” (for example, “MassCPR Proposal: Doe\_John”) in the subject line of the submitting email, and use the same name for the PDF document containing the proposal. Only one proposal per applicant (Lead PI) will be reviewed by the Proposal Selection Task Force

The Proposal shall include the following sections, and must be submitted as a single attachment that includes Sections 1, 2, and 3 combined into one PDF file:

#### ***Section 1: Cover Page (not included in page limit)***

- Lead PI and Organization/School
- Lead PI contact information
- Name of any Co-PIs and Organizations/Schools
- Co-PI contact information
- Project Title
- Focus Area of the Proposal (i.e., Epidemiology, Pathogenesis, Diagnostics, Therapeutics, Vaccines, Clinical Management, or a Combination)
- Estimated Total Budget Requested for Project Period of Performance
- Requested Period of Performance

#### ***Section 2: Proposal (no more than two pages)***

The proposal is limited to 2 pages, not including references. Please use Arial, black font color, and a font size of 11 point only. The proposal (covering the bulleted items below) should be single-spaced, with 0.7 inch margins. All figures and tables must be included in the body of the application and count toward page limits. References are limited to one additional page. Appendix material will not be accepted.

The proposal shall include:

- *Introduction and specific aims* – Briefly describe the context and impact of the proposed project. List the specific aims, hypothesis, and rationale, and briefly describe each.
- *Approach* – Provide detailed information about the work to be carried out in each specific aim.
- *Deliverables and timeline* – Provide an itemized list of deliverables that the project is anticipated to produce and a proposed timeline for their production.
- *Collaboration and communication* – Provide a short description of plans for collaboration and communication with members of the MassCPR.

***Section 3: Biographical Sketches (not included in page limit)***

- PHS 398 Biographical Sketches for the PI, Co-PIs, and significant collaborators.
- PHS 398 Form Page 4 and Page 5: Estimated budget for up to two years for the Prime Institution and each Subaward Institution, if any. Please use PHS 398 Form Page 4 for the estimated Year 1 budget and Page 5 for the estimated budget for the entire proposed project period (up to two years).
  - The award is a total costs award. Indirect costs may be budgeted up to a maximum rate of 38% of total direct costs and must be budgeted within the total costs requested. The total costs of each award, including directs and indirects, must be between \$50,000 and \$500,000.
  - All personnel on funded projects must commit time and effort appropriate to their roles on the project. Lead PIs and Co-PIs must ensure compliance with any PI effort policies implemented by their institutions.
  - **PLEASE NOTE: A SIGNATURE FROM AN INSTITUTIONAL AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL IS NOT REQUIRED AT THIS STAGE OF THE PROCESS. IF YOUR PROPOSAL IS PRIORITIZED FOR FUNDING, THE PI WILL WORK WITH THEIR GRANTS MANAGER TO PRESENT A FINAL BUDGET WITH INSTITUTIONAL ASSURANCES AND SIGNATURES.**
- Narrative Budget Justification for the Prime Institution and each Subaward Institution, if any.
- If IRB approval, IACUC approval, or both are required and have not been obtained, please indicate the status of, and the plans for obtaining, approval. Funds will not be released without assurance that the necessary IRB and IACUC approvals will be obtained prior to initiation of the covered activities.

**Contact**

Applicants may email inquiries regarding proposal submission, review, and selection to [masscpr@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:masscpr@hms.harvard.edu). More information can be found on the website: <https://masscpr.hms.harvard.edu/>.