

News from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS)¹

WHAT PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS ARE CURRENTLY OPEN AT THE NIGMS? WHO ARE THE CONTACT PEOPLE? HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Several months ago (see *Pharmaceutical Research* 13:185, 1996) this column addressed the differences between Program Announcements (PAs) and Requests for Applications (RFAs). In general, the NIGMS favors the PA mechanism. Recently, there have been inquiries in regard to which PAs are currently open at the NIGMS. Following is a listing of the PAs in scientific areas that are presently available:

Factors that Determine Therapeutic Drug Bioavailability, PA-95-001

The purpose of this PA is to encourage basic research in the areas that are fundamental to understanding the factors that determine therapeutic drug bioavailability, with emphasis on the oral route of delivery. The NIGMS wants to encourage research in several different areas in order to optimize the bioavailability of newly designed therapeutic entities, and to develop strategies to predict how a drug candidate will perform based on its chemical structure. Mechanistic research is encouraged in the areas that determine the physiological, pharmacological, and chemical processes that contribute to drug absorption, metabolism, transport, and clearance. Contact person at NIGMS is Rochelle M. Long, Ph.D., (301) 594-1826, longr@gml.nigms.nih.gov.

Metabolic Engineering, PA-95-087

The purpose of this PA is to encourage research that will expand the conceptual and experimental basis of metabolic engineering. Basic research that contributes to a quantitative understanding of the integration and control of genetic, catalytic, and transport processes that comprise metabolism is encouraged, as is research to create techniques that facilitate the exploitation of metabolic processes for biomedical uses. Contact people at NIGMS are Warren C. Jones, Ph.D., (301) 594-5938, jonesw@gml.nigms.nih.gov, and James A. Anderson, Ph.D., (301) 594-0943, andersoj@gml.nigms.nih.gov; this PA is a joint announcement with NIDDK.

Structural Biology of Membrane Proteins, PA-95-035

This PA is a solicitation for the application of x-ray, electron, and neutron diffraction methods, NMR spectroscopy, and other suitable techniques to studies of membrane proteins. It also emphasizes the need for research on the over-express-

sion, purification, reconstitution, and stabilization of membrane proteins in sufficient quantities for biophysical studies. A major aim is to stimulate collaborations between investigators with expertise in the handling of specific membrane proteins and researchers with expertise in methods capable of generating atomic-resolution data. Contact people at NIGMS are Peter C. Preusch, Ph.D., (301) 594-1832, preuschp@gml.nigms.nih.gov, and James C. Cassatt, Ph.D., (301) 594-0828, cassattj@gml.nigms.nih.gov; this PA is a joint announcement with NIDDK.

Molecular Pharmacology of Anesthetic Action, PA-96-026

The purpose of this PA is to develop hypotheses that might explain the relationship between the molecular actions and physiological effects of general and local anesthetics. The ability to incorporate recent methodological and conceptual developments into anesthesia research offers possibilities of gaining new insights. There are no limiting features to the types of approaches that may be proposed to answer questions relative to anesthetic action, as long as those approaches emphasize clarification of the molecular aspects of anesthetic pharmacodynamics. Contact person at NIGMS is Alison E. Cole, Ph.D., (301) 594-1826, colea@gml.nigms.nih.gov.

Basic Research in Support of Treatments for AIDS, PA-94-014

The purpose of this PA is to encourage research in areas fundamental to the development of treatments for AIDS and associated opportunistic infections. Despite all that is known about fundamental biological processes, particularly at the molecular level, and the application of this knowledge to understanding the structure and replication of HIV, there are still gaps in the understanding of basic biology that must be filled before a rational approach to the treatment of HIV infection and associated secondary infections can be accomplished. Contact person at NIGMS is James C. Cassatt, Ph.D., (301) 594-7800, cassattj@gml.nigms.nih.gov; this PA is a joint announcement with NIAID and NIDDK.

NIGMS is the "basic science Institute" of the NIH and remains committed to accepting primarily investigator-initiated, non-disease targeted research grant applications. Investigators are always encouraged to submit their own research ideas. Nevertheless, occasionally there are reasons to stimulate research in particular scientific areas, and to communicate to potential applicants the Institute's interest in these specific fields. Generally, the PAs are developed following the recommendations generated by a scientific meeting or workshop, where leaders in the field can discuss the issues and advise NIGMS staff. Complete text for each of these PAs and other announcements of interest can be found on the NIGMS home

¹ Future topics for this column: training opportunities at the NIH, research grants to women, program project grants at the NIGMS, and your suggestions. Send comments on this column to: longr@gml.nigms.nih.gov; NIGMS home page: <http://www.nih.gov/nigms/>

page (http://www.nih.gov/nigms/funding_info/pa/). Consult with the listed staff members to learn more about the particular PAs described above and to obtain updates of NIGMS' current and future activities in these areas.

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