

TO: Oregon Academic Department Chairs/Institute Directors

DATE: May 16, 2016

RE: Medical Research Foundation Letter of Support for a New Investigator Grant

The Medical Research Foundation (MRF) awards grants specifically to support research in Oregon. One of the primary goals of this funding mechanism is to enable new faculty members to improve their likelihood of obtaining national support (e.g., NIH, NSF). In this way, MRF funding can encourage the establishment of outstanding investigators based at Oregon academic centers. Eligibility for MRF funding of new investigators is based on these principles.

Applicants are expected to be members of the faculty of an academic department/institute and to have strong support from their department/institute. In particular, the relevant academic unit must be committed to fostering the success of the applicant as a long-term member of the faculty. In this spirit, postdoctoral fellows, other trainees, visiting scientists, and other investigators not appointed with the expectation of long-term departmental/institutional support are not eligible. The new investigator's development must have reached a point at which he/she has the long-term support of the department/institute. The department/institute letter of support is the primary yardstick by which that commitment is judged.

The letter of support from the department chair/institute director that accompanies a new investigator's MRF application is essential and must clearly attest to the level of commitment offered to the applicant. Examples of commitment include the assignment of individual and independent space, departmental/institute salary and/or research support, voting privileges in faculty forums, appointment as the result of a national search, tenure, etc. Of greatest importance are a faculty appointment and the provision of tangible, stable support (e.g., space, salary) that demonstrates a clear commitment to the applicant's long-term development as an independent investigator in Oregon. *Uncertainty as to the level of this support can lessen enthusiasm for the funding request during its review.*

For general questions about the MRF or application process, please contact mrsubmit@ohsu.edu.