Dear Faculty,

The Max and Minnie Tomerlin Voelcker Fund has announced the 2019 Request for Proposals for the **Voelcker Fund Young Investigator Award**. These awards will provide **$150,000 per year for three years ($450,000)** to support early career scientists conducting basic and translational medical research in the areas of **cancer, arthritis, heart disease, muscular dystrophy, retinitis, and/or macular degeneration of the retina**. Up to 3 awards will be made in 2019.

Since its establishment in 2006, the Max and Minnie Tomerlin Voelcker Fund has granted over $23 million to the Health Science Center. The Voelcker Fund supports senior and young investigator awards, the Voelcker Biomedical Research Academy, the Voelcker Biomedical Teacher's Academy. In addition, the Health Science Center houses two Voelcker Fund Distinguished University Chair endowments held by Dr. Tim Huang and Dr. Amelie Ramirez.

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

This program is open to investigators at the assistant professor level (or equivalent position) that meet the eligibility criteria as detailed in the provided attachment.

**APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS**

**Stage One: Submission of Pre-Proposals**

Pre-proposals must be submitted by **November 9, 2018** to the Office of the VP for Research at [VPR@uthscsa.edu](mailto:VPR@uthscsa.edu). Submit the NIH biosketch/other support and proposed research project in a word file (.doc); all other required items may be submitted in .pdf format. Feedback will be provided to the applicants before submission to the Voelcker Fund by the VPR Office (**December 7, 2018**).

Pre-proposals should contain:

1. **Cover Page** (See attached) signed by the PI only; the Office of the VP for Research will obtain the Office of Sponsored Programs signature prior to submission to the Voelcker Fund. A Certificate of Proposal (COP) is not needed at this time.

2. **NIH Biosketch and Other Support** - nonfellowship format downloadable at [https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm)

3. **Proposed Research Project** (1-2 Pages) organized into 3 Sections:
a. Project Aim  
b. Rationale and Background for Project  
c. Experimental Approach  

4. **Letter of Support** from the applicant’s Mentor addressing:  
   The applicant's  
   - Potential as a future independent investigator  
   - Expertise in pursuing the chosen research project  
   - Career goals/objectives  
   The Mentor's:  
   - Willingness to serve as the applicant's mentor in research  
   - Previous experience as a research supervisor  

Pre-proposals will be reviewed by the Voelcker Fund’s Scientific Advisory Committee. The top ranked candidates will be invited to submit Full Proposals no later than **January 16, 2019**.

**Stage Two: Submission of Full Proposals**  
The invited applicants should submit a Full Proposal to the Voelcker Fund by **February 21, 2019**. Full Proposals will undergo a peer review process by national scientific experts in the relevant research areas. Please, refer to the provided attachment for further details.

**TIMELINE**

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<td>Finalists invited to submit full proposals</td>
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Please contact the Office of the VP for Research or your assigned proposal reviewer in Office of Sponsored Programs with any questions.

Sincerely,
Andrea Giuffrida, Ph.D.  
Vice President for Research  

The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio  
Office of the Vice President for Research - MC 7763
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FROM YOUNG INVESTIGATORS CONDUCTING BASIC AND TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH TO PREVENT OR CURE CANCER, ARTHRITIS, HEART DISEASE, MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY, RETINITIS AND/OR MACULAR DEGENERATION

The Max and Minnie Tomerlin Voelcker Fund seeks proposals for the Voelcker Fund Young Investigator Award program from young researchers working in the areas of cancer, arthritis, heart disease, muscular dystrophy, retinitis and/or macular degeneration. Awards will provide up to $450,000 over a three-year period to enable investigators to innovate and develop data that might generate follow-on funding from other funders. Up to 3 such awards, for a total of commitment of $1,350,000 may be made in 2019.

Program Background

The mission of the Max and Minnie Tomerlin Voelcker Fund is to advance medical research with emphasis given to research to find cures for cancer, heart disease, arthritis, muscular dystrophy, retinitis, and/or macular degeneration of the retina.

Recognizing that a vibrant biomedical research community requires a pipeline of talented biomedical researchers, the Voelcker Fund Young Investigator Award program targets scientists at the assistant professorial level or equivalent position from San Antonio institutions conducting research relevant to cancer, heart disease, arthritis, muscular dystrophy, retinitis and/or macular degeneration.

APPLICANT GUIDELINES & ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

This program is open to investigators at the assistant professor level or equivalent position at University Texas Health, San Antonio, Texas, University of Texas, San Antonio, Texas, the Texas Biomedical Research Institute, San Antonio Children’s Hospital and the Retina Foundation of the Southwest.

Candidates should:

- Hold a tenure track or equivalent position at the time of application.
- Have a PhD, MD, or MD PhD degree, or equivalent.
- Be citizens or permanent residents of the United States at the time of application.
- Have received their undergraduate degree within twenty five years of application for the Voelcker Fund Young Investigator Award.
- Be able to allocate at least 50% of their time to research.
- Have a mentor.

The sponsoring institution must demonstrate that it can provide the environment necessary for successful research as well as appropriate mentors.
THE APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

The Application and Selection Process is as follows:

Step One: Submission of Pre-Proposals (see timeline below)

1. Cover sheet - signed by the PI only; the Office of the VP for Research will obtain the Office of Sponsored Programs signature prior to submission to the Voelcker Fund. A Certificate of Proposal (COP) is not needed at this time.
2. NIH Biosketch and Other Support using the NIH biosketch (nonfellowship) format downloadable at: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm
3. A Brief Description (1-2 Pages) of the Proposed Research Organized into 3 Sections:
   a. Project Aims
   b. Rationale and Background for Project
   c. Experimental Approach
4. Letter of Support from Mentor

Electronic submissions in PDF format are encouraged to voelckerfund@scs-law.com. Pre-proposals will be reviewed by the Voelcker Fund’s Scientific Advisory Committee. The top ranked candidates will be notified that they are invited to submit Full Proposals no later than January 16, 2019.

Stage Two: Submission of Full Proposals

The top ranked pre-proposal candidates will be invited to submit a Full Proposal by February 21, 2019. Application forms and instructions for submitting Full Proposals will be consistent with prior year’s applications, will be emailed to all advancing candidates, and available for download from the Voelcker Fund website. Full Proposals will be subject to a peer review process by scientific experts in the relevant research areas.

During this stage of the competition, proposals will be score primarily for the quality and originality of the research, the methodology used and the research plan, and its potential to advance knowledge in and/or clinical care for cancer, heart disease, arthritis, muscular dystrophy, macular degeneration and retinitis. Proposals that contain novel ideas and new approaches for probing difficult problems will be considered more competitive. The track record of the candidate and his or her potential to carry out the research also will be assessed as well as the mentor’s support and scientific environment of the sponsoring institution.

Written critiques of unfunded proposals will not be provided.
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*(all proposals will be submitted by the VPR Office)*

Please contact the VPR Office at [VPR@uthscsa.edu](mailto:VPR@uthscsa.edu) or your assigned proposal reviewer in Office of Sponsored Programs with any questions.

[http://research.uthscsa.edu/osp/forms/ProposalAssignments.xls](http://research.uthscsa.edu/osp/forms/ProposalAssignments.xls)