



## **1<sup>ST</sup> JOINT CALL FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS (2017) 'Accelerate the discovery of therapies for Wolfram syndrome' LAUNCH DOCUMENT**

### **CONTENTS**

1. Call
2. Applications
3. Eligibility
4. Awards
5. Application procedures
6. Evaluation process
7. Legal

### **1. CALL**

Association syndrome de Wolfram, Eye Hope Foundation and Snow Foundation (hereinafter, the 'WS-organizations') are pleased to announce their 1<sup>st</sup> international joint call for Wolfram syndrome research proposals.

This new Call for Wolfram syndrome projects will be open to any research project (those of a collaborative nature are encouraged) aimed at finding a therapy for Wolfram syndrome (WS). Priority will be given to projects concentrating on approaches for therapy of WS (classical pharmacological approaches, gene therapy, cell therapy and any other innovative therapies). However, projects addressing bottlenecks impairing rapid translation from basic research to clinical trials may also be considered, including: innovative outcome measures & endpoints, appropriate methodology to follow disease progression and treatment effect.

The overall goal of this Joint Call is to help the dedicated international scientific and medical community in its search for therapies for WS. Time being critical for people with WS, preferences will be given to projects that have the greatest potential to accelerate the identification of effective treatments.

The total Call budget for two years will not exceed **200,000 € (approx. 210,000 USD)**. One to two projects will be funded.

### **2. APPLICATIONS**

The application deadline for projects is **June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017**.

Three types of research grants can be awarded for a maximum of two years:

- a) Operating grants
- b) Post-doctoral fellowships
- c) PhD Fellowships (fellowship to complete training)

It is anticipated that notification of awards will be made in the third quarter of 2017 with funding to commence as soon as possible thereafter, subject to contracts being agreed between the relevant parties. It is recognized that time lines will be affected by project specifics.

Grant applications should be made in the currency in which the applicant's institution would like to receive the grant, together with an equivalent amount in Euros. Payments to subsidiary institutions involved in the research must be

made by the institution to which the grant award is made. Association syndrome de Wolfram, Eye Hope Foundation and Snow Foundation cannot enter into contracts and agreements with partners involved in a project.

### 3. ELIGIBILITY

#### a) Operating grants

To be eligible as principal investigator to apply for an operating grant, an individual should have the skills, knowledge and resources to carry out the proposed project and coordinate a multi-team project.

A principal investigator must:

- Be a professional or faculty member at an appropriate educational, medical or research institution or SME (small or medium enterprise) biotech and be qualified to conduct and supervise a program of original research,
- Have access to institutional resources necessary to conduct the proposed research project,
- Hold a Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Science or equivalent degree,
- Have a track record of collaboration with others.

#### b) Post-doctoral fellowship

To be eligible to apply for a post-doctoral fellowship, an applicant must:

- Be a member of a research team in the laboratory of a senior investigator under whose guidance the applicant will conduct the research project,
- Hold a Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Science or equivalent degree and demonstrate an intended commitment to WS research in the long term.

#### c) PhD fellowship

CAUTION: This PhD fellowship is aimed at helping PhD students complete their training. It will be awarded for 1 year and may exceptionally be renewed if appropriately justified.

To be eligible to apply for a post-doctoral fellowship, an applicant must:

- Be a member of a research team in the laboratory of a senior investigator under whose guidance the applicant will conduct the research project,
- Hold an appropriate degree and demonstrate an intended commitment to WS research in the long term.

### 4. AWARDS

**Awards are up to two years.**

It is important to note that **funding for a second year will be strictly dependent on receiving a detailed and satisfactory annual report, latest by month 11**, for consideration by members of the Boards and Scientific Councils of Association syndrome de Wolfram, Eye Hope Foundation and Snow Foundation.

**Grants will not exceed 100,000 € per year.**

The grant for PhD or post-doctoral fellowship must be within Continental European or North American norms. Advice will be sought over appropriate levels where grants are made in countries outside Europe and North America.

### 5. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Applicant must fill the APPLICATION FORM.

**The application form is available upon request by writing to the Call secretary: [vpicard.asw@orange.fr](mailto:vpicard.asw@orange.fr)**

**The application form is also available on the following websites:**

- Association syndrome de Wolfram (France): <http://www.association-du-syndrome-de-wolfram.org/>

1st joint call for Wolfram syndrome research proposals

- Eye Hope Foundation (Belgium): <http://eyehopefoundation.org/en>
- Snow Foundation (USA): <http://thesnowfoundation.org/>

The duly filled Application forms, when finalized, will be sent to the Call secretary at the following address: [vpicard.asw@orange.fr](mailto:vpicard.asw@orange.fr).

## 6. EVALUATION PROCESS

The Call secretary will forward all the applications to the representatives of each participating WS-organization for individual evaluation procedures:

- Association syndrome de Wolfram: Virginie Picard (Scientific Project Manager)
- Eye Hope Foundation : Lode Carnel (Founder)
- Snow Foundation : Stephanie Snow (Founder and President)

The projects will be **assessed by the Boards and reviewers of each participating WS-organization individually**. After a maximum of three weeks, all reviews collected by each organization will be shared by the WS-organizations. A meeting will subsequently be organized between the three WS-organizations, to go through the projects and their evaluations. At this occasion, a vote will be organized to select the project(s) to be funded.

Each project will be peer-reviewed according to the following criteria:

- **PROJECT RELEVANCE:** Does this project address the issues set by the call for project? Does it propose new means of developing new treatments?
- **PROJECT QUALITY:** Is the proposed methodology adapted to the project objectives? Is the project design sound? Are the methods and techniques to be used well developed and already well in hand? Are the preliminary data robust? Is the approach well justified and documented?
- **PROJECT FEASIBILITY:** Is the project feasible in reasonable time? Is the development plan adapted?
- **THERAPEUTIC INNOVATIONS:** Will this project allow therapeutic breakthrough against Wolfram syndrome?
- **CLINICAL FEASIBILITY OF THE PROJECT:** Will clinical translation of the project be feasible?
- **PROJECT TIMELINES:** Are the proposed timelines reasonable according to the project objectives?
- **PROJECT BUDGET:** Is the proposed budget well justified?
- **QUALITY OF THE CV:** what is the quality of the applicant's CV?
- **QUALITY OF THE RESEARCH LABORATORY:** is the laboratory specialized in the filed covered in the project? Is the track record in agreement with the project subject? Is the skill of the team sufficient for the project to be carried out?
- **ETHICAL ISSUES:** If any, do the applicants propose appropriate measures concerning ethical issues?

The written reviews of WS-organizations' scientific counsels are an important element in the decision making process, but these are not the sole criteria for deciding the success or failure of an application. In practice, only projects which attract the best scores are likely to be successful. We expect to provide feedback to both successful and unsuccessful applicants in the form of reviewers' comments plus any relevant points arising from the WS-organizations' meeting when feasible.

We shall endeavor to ensure that the process is as open and transparent as possible and that we maintain the best possible communications with all our applicants.

## 7. LEGAL

After the grant is awarded and the actual funds have to be distributed, the legal obligations of the WS- organizations and the researchers concerned will have to be laid down in an agreement.

Instead of signing a joint research funding agreement, all participating WS-organizations will enter into a separate research funding agreement with respect to the amount of funds the relevant WS-organizations will provide. All research funding agreements will be joined in an umbrella document, which will be provided to the relevant researcher(s).

**A standard research funding agreement is available upon request at [vpicard.asw@orange.fr](mailto:vpicard.asw@orange.fr).**

When applying, the applicants have to agree upfront with the terms of this model of research agreement by ticking the appropriate boxes in the Application Form (FUNDING AGREEMENT section, page 2). This will help us save negotiation time when grants are awarded, as there are multiple organizations involved.

For any queries, please contact Virginie Picard, the Call secretary:  
[vpicard.asw@orange.fr](mailto:vpicard.asw@orange.fr)