REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS
Stanley Center Target Practice (2019)

SUMMARY
This Request for Applications (RFA) announces a funding mechanism for the research community with interests relevant to the development of therapies for psychiatric disease. The Stanley Center Target Practice program will fund projects designed to translate genetic discoveries on the basis of psychiatric disease into therapeutic approaches and ultimately new validated drug targets.

PURPOSE
An ever increasing number of genetic variants, both rare and common, are being associated with psychiatric disease. The Stanley Center initiated the Target Practice program to fund projects focused on translating these emerging genetics into novel mechanism-based therapeutic approaches. The following types of projects fall within this description, though additional studies will be considered:

- Identification of the biochemical pathways regulated by specific genes associated with disease to illuminate potential druggable interventions.
- Exploration of the pathways or circuitry associated with psychiatric disease for the identification of novel drug targets or other therapeutic intervention.
- Evaluation of a genetic model, probe molecule, or other technology (e.g., AAV) for the validation of a target for psychiatric disease drug discovery.

SCOPE OF FUNDED PROJECTS
- The proposed research project should be completed within one year. However, consistent with the goals of the program, the proposed project can be the start of a larger, more ambitious effort.
- Ordinarily, projects will have a maximum of $250,000 in total costs (direct + indirect capped at 20%). Exceptional cases requesting larger budgets may be considered, but cost-effectiveness is a criterion for evaluation.

ELIGIBILITY
- Target Practice awards are available to any researcher at a non-for-profit university or research center.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION
- Projects should be focused on genes, pathways, or disease mechanisms with a strong degree of genetic validation for a role in psychiatric disease.
- Proposals should have high potential impact on translation towards therapeutic approaches. High-risk/high-reward projects, as well as ideas that lack significant preliminary data, are welcome, although feasibility and cost-effectiveness are considerations.
APPLICATION PROCESS

Proposals will be received on a rolling basis. Applicants should submit a letter of intent to sctargetpractice@broadinstitute.org. The letter should include a short (1–2 paragraph) description of the project, the potential impact of the work, and why it is appropriate as a Stanley Center Target Practice proposal.

Feedback meetings: All applicants who submit letters of intent will have the opportunity to discuss proposals idea with the scientific coordinators of the Target Practice program. Applicants are strongly encouraged to incorporate this feedback before submitting their final applications. The letter of intent is not binding and ideas presented in the final application can significantly differ from the ideas presented in the letter of intent.

FINAL PROPOSALS

Final applications should be submitted to sctargetpractice@broadinstitute.org.

The final selection of proposals for funding will be made based on potential impact, feasibility, and innovation of the proposed research by the Target Practice Group, comprised of neuroscientists, translational researchers, and drug discovery experts. The PI for each proposal will be asked to attend in person or via phone to discuss the details and merits of the application.

By applying, candidates agree to provide a progress report at the end of the funding period and potential inclusion in a Target Practice symposium to share their results with the Stanley Center and Broad Institute communities.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please email sctargetpractice@broadinstitute.org with questions.