

Questions from the January 10th Pre-Submission Webinar

Topic	Question/Answer	Campus
Eligibility	<p><b>Q: Are faculty at the Instructor level-eligible to apply?</b></p> <p><b>If so what kind of support letter do I have to get from the Department Chair (i.e., he will be promoted to Assistant Professor).</b></p> <p>A: An investigator who is within four years of appointment to his/her career-track academic position (i.e., whose career-track appointments began no earlier than January 1, 2013). In general these are faculty appointments with significant expectations regarding research, and/or teaching, and/or clinical activities and may be tenure-track or non-tenure track. For purposes of determining eligibility, post-doctoral appointments, residencies and courtesy instructor titles are not considered careertrack academic appointments. However, you must identify any of these exceptions in your biosketch, and fully and clearly state the nature of the appointment.</p> <p><u>University of Colorado Qualifying Titles:</u> Investigators within ten years of completing their medical residency can now apply. In addition to tenure track appointments, non-tenure track research and clinical faculty are eligible to apply, assuming they meet all other eligibility requirements. Qualified “career-track academic appointments” based on the faculty titles [Regents policy 5-L] are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tenure and Tenure Track: <b>Assistant Professor</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Non-tenure Track: <b>Instructor, Senior Instructor</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Clinical Teaching Track: <b>Instructor, Senior Instructor, Assistant Professor</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Clinical Faculty: <b>Assistant Professor</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research Faculty: [Research Professor Series] <b>Assistant Professor, Senior Instructor, Instructor</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research Faculty: [Research Associate Series] <b>Research Associate, Senior Research Associate, Faculty Research Associate</b></li> </ul> <p>A signed letter of offer is acceptable documentation for appointment to a career track academic position.</p>	Unknown
Eligibility	<p><b>Q: I received my terminal degree in 6/2016 but took a one year medical leave from academia after receiving my terminal degree. I applied for and received an extension of early investigator status from the NIH.</b></p> <p><b>Are there any exceptions to the post Jan 1, 2017 2007 terminal degree date?</b></p> <p>A: In general, the ECI will have received a terminal degree or completed his/her medical residency within the 10 years preceding the application; however, individual institutions can accommodate exceptions on a case-by-case basis – following review and consultation (if needed) with the Boettcher Foundation.</p>	CU Boulder

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	<p>However, we'd need documentation to make or support any exception. For example: letters from NIH for extensions of early investigator status; explanations for any time taken off for family commitments, maternity, working outside of academia or research, part-time work, etc.</p> <p>In this case, a copy of the extension letter from NIH would be ideal.</p>	
Eligibility	<p><b>Q:</b> Is it possible to submit, in advance, information to CU internal reviewers about a previously received research grant award to see if it qualifies as "independent" level for purposes of eligibility for this Webb-Waring opportunity?</p> <p><b>A:</b> Yes. If the campus can't decide on independence, we can review with Boettcher.</p>	CU Denver
Co-PI	<p><b>Q: Can you explain rules or limitations around submitting as Co-PI or multi-investigator proposals?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> The purpose of the grant is to provide a non-mentored opportunity for an early career investigator (ECI). A co-investigator who does not also qualify under the grant requirements is discouraged. Two investigators who both qualify as an ECI may collaborate on one application; however the review committee will be left with the task of assessing the value of the proposed research as it advances both careers, which could place the proposal at some disadvantage. The best option is for one ECI to apply and include services (salary expense) from the second investigator in your budget.</p>	CU Denver
Eligibility	<p><b>Q: You said fellowship does not count towards terminal degree consideration. Is there any consideration if you were working outside of research for a period of time and are now back in the academic community?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> In general, the ECI will have received a terminal degree or completed his/her medical residency within the 10 years preceding the application; however, individual institutions can accommodate exceptions on a case-by-case basis – following review and consultation (if needed) with the Boettcher Foundation.</p> <p>However, we'd need documentation to make or support any exception. For example: letters from NIH for extensions of early investigator status; explanations for any time taken off for family commitments, maternity, working outside of academia or research, part-time work, etc.</p> <p><i>In this case, we would want to review your CV to confirm eligibility.</i></p>	CU Denver
Eligibility	<p><b>Q: Terminal degree is mentioned on the website and the date recorded was on or after 2007. However, it was said during the webinar that it is before 2007.</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> An investigator who will have received a terminal degree or completed his/her medical residency within the ten years preceding the application (i.e. on or <u>after</u> January 1, 2007).</p>	CU Denver

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Eligibility	<p><b>Q: I received my terminal degree late 2006, but have taken some time for family commitments, may I still be eligible?</b></p> <p>A: In general, the ECI will have received a terminal degree or completed his/her medical residency within the 10 years preceding the application; however, individual institutions can accommodate exceptions on a case-by-case basis – following review and consultation (if needed) with the Boettcher Foundation.</p> <p>However, we’d need documentation to make or support any exception. For example: letters from NIH for extensions of early investigator status; explanations for any time taken off for family commitments, maternity, working outside of academia or research, part-time work, etc.</p> <p><i>In this case, we would want to review your CV to confirm eligibility.</i></p>	CU Denver
Eligibility	<p><b>Q: I completed my residency in 06/2007, however I had 2 maternity leaves and have worked part-time since 03/2014. The NIH has extended my ECI status based on these conditions, would Boettcher do the same?</b></p> <p>A: In general, the ECI will have received a terminal degree or completed his/her medical residency within the 10 years preceding the application; however, individual institutions can accommodate exceptions on a case-by-case basis – following review and consultation (if needed) with the Boettcher Foundation.</p> <p>However, we’d need documentation to make or support any exception. For example: letters from NIH for extensions of early investigator status; explanations for any time taken off for family commitments, maternity, working outside of academia or research, part-time work, etc.</p> <p><i>In this case, a copy of the extension letter from NIH would be ideal.</i></p>	CU Denver
Eligibility	<p><b>Q: Will you consider a candidate whose Early Stage Investigator status was prolonged by NIH?</b></p> <p>A: <b>(See audio – 48:15)</b> Yes, but we would require that you contact your campus specific contact and then have them work with us to make sure that we have a record of what the reason for that was, that would presumably be some sort of family leave type thing or something and that would be ok. (Thorburn)</p> <p>We’re trying to mimic the NIH early stage investigator’s status criteria as you can probably see. We would definitely take that into account but you would have to go through your campus. (Sokol)</p>	CU Denver
Eligibility	<p><b>Q: Does being a co-investigator on R-level grants effect eligibility?</b></p> <p>A: We would need more details about the grant to determine eligibility.</p>	CU Denver

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	<p><b>Q: With the NIH R01 deadlines being Feb. 5<sup>th</sup>, can the specific aims for the BFWW be similar to ones submitted during this NIH review cycle?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 53:20) Yes.</p>	CU Denver
Eligibility	<p><b>Q: I am co-PI on a grant that was in the amount of \$150,000. This is a shared grant, so I personally was not awarded more than \$125,000. Am I still eligible to apply?</b></p> <p>A: We would need more details about the grant to determine eligibility.</p>	CU Denver
Eligibility	<p><b>Q: Is a tenure track early career investigator more likely to get the award than a non-tenure research track early career investigator?</b></p> <p>A: No. Criteria to be considered by the review committee include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The scientific merit of the proposed work.</li> <li>▪ The extent to which the research has the promise to contribute directly to improving human health.</li> <li>▪ The preparation of the ECI and his/her ability to conduct independent research.</li> <li>▪ The likelihood that the ECI will be more competitive and move into an independent research career after conclusion of the grant.</li> <li>▪ The likelihood that the ECI will produce publications, be promoted or contribute new technology disclosures will be considered.</li> <li>▪ The reasonableness of the budget and the appropriateness of the timeframe proposed for the project.</li> <li>▪ Additionally, other criteria developed by the review committee that are commonly applied in a peer review process.</li> </ul>	CU Denver
Budget	<p><b>Q: Do you expect mentors to be included in the budget?</b></p> <p>A: No, since this is considered an independent grant. However, it is not precluded if it is needed to advance the research project.</p>	CU Denver
General	<p><b>Q: Does this award fund the investigator or fund the research? What is more important - your research plan or your potential for future career in investigative research?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio 29:45) Both are true... The review panel takes a very close look at your research proposal for its impact and for its potential to lead to future research. We also very carefully look at the potential of each individual, we go over the biosketches very thoroughly, we actually read every line of every letter and this gives us an impression of the potential of the individual, because the Boettcher Foundation is really interested in funding the leaders of the future in biomedical research. Both components of the grant, the information about you as a young investigator, and the information about the research plan are equally important and you should spend a fair amount of time perfecting both of those. (Sokol)</p>	

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Letters of Reference	<p><b>Q: Can the outside letters be people we have collaborated with as long as they are outside of our institution?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 37:20) Yes.</p>	CU Boulder
Application	<p><b>Q: If a researcher applies and does not get the grant in one year, can that researcher apply in a subsequent year with a revised proposal or a different proposal altogether?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio 33:05) Yes, you are allowed as long as you meet the eligibility criteria you can continue to reapply. (Sokol)</p> <p>In the past we have had a number of people who have been unsuccessful on their first application but were successful on a subsequent application. (Thorburn)</p>	CU Boulder
Applications	<p><b>Q: How many applications were received in 2017?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 47:55) I don't know if we're permitted to say how many applications we received. It hasn't been posted.</p>	CU Boulder
Award Distribution	<p><b>Q: Are the six CU awards assigned to specific campuses or could all six go to the same campus?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 51:40) We do not assign awards to campuses. We take into consideration what campus the individual is on more so in regard to the facility, the collaboration, and expertise of the campus but there is no restriction to how many awards go to any of the CU campuses.</p>	CU Boulder
Eligibility	<p><b>Q: Can a T-32 fellow apply for Boettcher foundation award?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 53:50) You have to be a faculty member that has an appointment and the T-32s may be pre-doctoral or post-doctoral. Most post-doctoral T-32s though, being training grants, are not given to faculty members. If there is an exception to that, that particular person should speak again to their campus representative. In general, with a training grant you should not be eligible because you shouldn't have a faculty position. You must have a faculty position at the time of application.</p>	CU Denver
General	<p><b>Q: Is this grant mechanistic and hypothesis-based like NIH, or meant to be more high-risk and innovative?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 40:00) I'm not sure that those two should be mutually exclusive. Most of the grants that we receive are hypothesis-based. Most of the grants tend to be hypothesis-based. That doesn't mean that we are not open to assessing grants and to supporting grants that are not hypothesis-based. We are interested in funding innovative research that is going to move the field forward. So I guess I would say I don't think that should be an-either-or. We would like it to have innovation. If it is not innovative, it is unlikely to do very well. If it is innovative, it could still have a clear hypothesis; but</p>	CU Denver

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	hypothesis-driven research is not absolutely required and we do support discovery-based type research as well. (Thorburn)	
General	<p><b>Q: How much of preliminary data is welcomed?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 39:25) This is really like any other grant. If you’re providing so much preliminary data that the reviewer thinks that you’ve actually answered the question, it can eventually work against you; but unless you’re going that far, preliminary data establishes feasibility and establishes a reasonableness of what you’re trying to do will almost always be helpful. (Thorburn)</p>	CU Denver
General	<p><b>Q: With the relatively new NIH focus on rigor and reproducibility do you suggest including that section in the application?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 37:30) I certainly think that explaining how your research would be done in a rigorous fashion and will lead to reproducible results would be helpful. If you can fit it in, I think it definitely would not be a bad idea to do so. I think this also gets to some of the issues that I mentioned in terms of statistical analysis, explain to us how you are going to do it and explain to us how you have designed your experiment that you propose to do. (Thorburn)</p> <p>Some of that you may incorporate in your research plan, for instance, you could say coded specimens will be analyzed. You could explain how you determine 10 animals per group in your statistical session, in your section, in your power analysis, etc. So some of the rigor and reproducibility you can just incorporate right into your research plan, but showing that you are aware of that will only be a benefit. The reviewers would appreciate that you’re addressing those facts. (Sokol)</p>	CU Denver
Letters of Reference	<p><b>Q: What is the length maximum on letters?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 39:00) There is no limit. However, any letter over 2 pages starts getting to be a bit long. I recommend keeping letters at 2 pages although there is no max. (Sokol)</p>	CU Denver
General	<p><b>Q: Is there any preference from BF regarding basic science vs clinical studies?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 33:40) There is really no specific preference; the important thing to remember is if it’s basic science you clearly have to link it to human health. Most investigators that are involved in basic science now-a-days have translational components to their research but you have to make it clear that it does link to human disease or human health and we didn’t want to come across with the notion that this was a clinical research grant. Most of the investigators who have been funded are actually doing laboratory research that is closely linked to human health in some way. We wouldn’t discourage any investigator from basic to clinical research from applying. (Sokol)</p>	CU Denver

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	<p>In the last few years it's probably been two-thirds of the people who have been awarded these awards that have laboratory components at least to their research and in many cases their research is entirely laboratory-based with no clinical component but is clearly related to human health. (Thorburn)</p>	
Letters of Reference	<p><b>Q: I am planning on writing this grant on a fairly new area of research for me so for the outside recommendations do you believe it would be best to have someone who is vaguely familiar with the work proposed or someone who can speak for the quality of research I have done in the past?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 35:15) Clearly you should have a letter from somebody who can speak to the quality of research you have done in the past. If it's a new area, having an expert in that area read your grant and comment in a positive way would be a benefit. If you are submitting a grant in a new area that you haven't worked in before, you clearly need some preliminary data and feasibility documentation to show that this is something you are capable of working on. You have to write a grant like that very carefully to convince the reviewers that this is your new area of research and that you have the support, collaboration and whatever you need to make that successful. (Sokol)</p> <p>This may be a place to take advantage of the fact that you can provide 1 or 2 outside letters. If it was appropriate, one letter from someone who really knew your past achievements and was able to talk about that, and the 2nd letter from someone who can talk about the particular area of science that you're working in now would be helpful. (Thorburn)</p>	CU Denver
Application	<p><b>Q: In the research proposal, do figures count toward the page limit?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 31:20) Yes. Figures and tables. One should therefore, not avoid putting figures in but you also should not shrink the figures and tables to the point where they are unreadable. Don't expect the reviewer to magnify every page in order to read a figure they should be doable on a normal computer screen or if you print it out on paper which is what I recommend to everybody writing a grant, a printed out one and make sure you can read everything in the grant, in the table and in the figure. It counts toward your page limit - but don't shrink them down to an impossible size for the reviewer. If you make it difficult for the reviewer, you make it difficult for yourself. (Sokol)</p>	CU Denver
Letters of Reference	<p><b>Q: Can you have previously published with the people from outside the institution who are writing your letters?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 32:30) Yes, if you have previously published with an expert in your field from outside of the institution and that person was able to explain your abilities and your research in their letter, it might be beneficial for you. No limitation on that. (Thorburn)</p> <p>Former mentors and collaborators can certainly write you letters. (Sokol)</p>	CU Denver
Eligibility	<p><b>Q: Can an individual have a NIH career development award simultaneously with the Boettcher for the same project?</b></p>	CU Denver

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	<p>A: (See audio – 43:10) You can have a K award and NIH career development award at the same time. Not the mid or senior year award as a K-24. This would have to be a K01, K08, and K23. In terms of the same exact project, we would probably encourage you to modify the project depending where you are on the grant. If you’re just starting a K award and you’re in year one, it’s not advantageous to submit the same grant to us, but we don’t have access to your K award. We certainly can go on the NIH website and see the abstract. (Sokol)</p> <p>We would be surprised if this grant application was not on a very closely related topic to the one that is the specific award in your K award. I don’t think it would be appropriate to have exactly the same text and the same specific aims but my experience is you can always have the next aspect of the work and the extension of the work and that would usually be what we would expect to see for the Boettcher award. (Thorburn)</p> <p>Most, who have had a K award, use it to accelerate their research or expand it on the same line as their K award but be able to expand it in a way that the NIH budget did not allow, to maybe trying to get some human specimens translated a bit into human specimens or clearly rather than taking 5 years maybe you can get it done in 3 years and work on other projects at the same time. We would expect it to be related to your K award but probably not identical. Yet, we would have a difficult way of determining whether it was identical. (Sokol)</p> <p><i>NOTE: NIH “K” series grants are generally mentored grants, however, the R00 grant, which can follow the K99 grant is an independent award.</i></p>	
Letters of Reference	<p><b>Q: For the reference letters outside my institution, does the referee need to know me personally?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 54:30) They do not need to know you personally. It’s going to be easier for them to write a strong letter if they are familiar with you. It’s not a requirement. (Thorburn)</p>	CU Denver
Letters of Reference	<p><b>Q: Should these letters focus on the science or the applicant?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 54:40) If they are familiar with your science and they don’t know you personally and you’re asking them to write a letter that supports the science, that’s probably just fine but they have to be familiar with the science and/or you, hopefully both. (Sokol)</p>	CU Denver
Letters of Reference	<p><b>Q: For letters of recommendation, what if your division chief is also your mentor?</b></p> <p><b>Do you recommend getting 2 letters, combining the letter, or getting a letter from the department head?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio 55:05) Personally, I would recommend getting a letter from the department head plus your division chief mentor. That’s to your advantage. (Sokol)</p>	CU Denver



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Budget	<p><b>Q: Any recommendation regarding strategy for spreading the award over 1-3 years, or is it just project-specific?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 46:02) Most budgets are for 3 years and occasionally they are for 2 years. I don't think a one-year budget would fly very well because we're looking for a proposal that is generally a proposal that's more than a one-year pilot award if you will. Almost all budgets are for 3 years, some are for 2 years, you could submit 1 year but I don't think we would recommend that. (Sokol)</p> <p><b>Q: In particular, what if the ECI transitions out of "early career" status during the proposed period of the award?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 46:40) Your status when you applied for the award is the important status. So if you are in year 9 of your residency, that is okay. (Thorburn)</p> <p>If in year 2 of this award you get an R01, you keep this award. This is not a career development award that you relinquish if you get a larger NIH grant, so you can keep this award and we would expect you to finish what's in this proposal. (Sokol)</p>	CU Denver
Letters of Reference	<p>Q: Can the mentor be outside of the institution?</p> <p>A: (See audio 47:50) Yes.</p>	CU Denver
General	<p><b>Q: How does the committee look upon applications that are closely aligned with the Aims from a current NIH K award? Should this application propose a new/separate set of aims instead of closely aligning with the K award?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 47:25) We've already answered that question. We'd expect it to be related but not identical.</p>	CU Denver
Eligibility	<p><b>Q: Can an investigator hold both a Boettcher grant and a K award?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 53:40) Yes.</p>	CU Denver
General	<p><b>Q: Can you comment on the need to include a career development plan. Or, since this is an independent grant, is this not suggested?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 48:58) It's not a requirement to have a career development plan. There's really not enough pages in the research plan to have it. However, in your letters it's worthwhile having your division director's letter discuss their plans</p>	CU Denver

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	<p>for your career development within your division and you could actually include some of that in your personal statement where you describe your plans in one of those early letters that Andrew talked about. We would not expect or probably want you to use any of those six pages as a career development section of your grant. (Sokol)</p>	
Budget	<p><b>Q: Can you clarify what is meant by “Investments should leverage existing or new partnerships to create an effort that is broader in scope than that which can be accomplished with the new funds alone”?</b></p> <p><b>Are there examples of this from previous awardees that you could share?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 49:55) That is verbiage from the website, right? Our interpretation of that is that it really is saying that we’re hoping to fund research that will move your career forward and your field forward. That’s the best I can do. (Thorburn)</p> <p>Remember this is maybe \$75,000 a year which is clearly not enough for a research program, particularly when you look at the fact that the faculty salary has to be paid. In many respects these funds are leveraging another grant or startup funds or some other way that you’re funding your salary and research so this is just one component towards your career development and we wouldn’t expect this to be the only component for any of the early stage investigators. (Sokol)</p> <p>That would be something else that your department chair or division chief might want to discuss in their letter. (Thorburn)</p>	CU Denver
Budget	<p><b>Q: When budgeting, should you use the NIH salary cap?</b></p> <p>A: (See audio – 52:10) This question has not come up before. Mainly because I’m not sure we’ve ever had an applicant who is above the average salary cap. I don’t think there is a specific rule. (Thorburn)</p> <p>My guess is that if you want to put some of the funds towards your salary, you choose to do that based on how many dollars in the grant are available to pay for a portion of your salary. Since this isn’t a grant that requires you to put any specific percent effort towards this grant I don’t really think we view the NIH salary cap as playing a role here. But it’s worthwhile speaking again to the contact on your campus, they may feel otherwise and they really are the people who should direct you toward that. (Sokol)</p> <p><i>ADDENDUM: There is not a salary cap for this grant; however, it may pose concerns to the review committee if the entire grant was utilized for salary.</i></p>	CU Denver
Eligibility	<p><b>Q: Are clinical researchers eligible to apply for the Boettcher Foundation Webb-Waring Biomedical Research Awards or is this opportunity for basic science researchers?</b></p>	CU Denver

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	<p>A: (See audio – 33:40) There is really no specific preference; the important thing to remember is if it's basic science you clearly have to link it to human health. Most investigators that are involved in basic science now-a-days have translational components to their research but you have to make it clear that it does link to human disease or human health and we didn't want to come across with the notion that this was a clinical research grant. Most of the investigators who have been funded are actually doing laboratory research that is closely linked to human health in some way. We wouldn't discourage any investigator from basic to clinical research from applying. (Sokol)</p> <p>In the last few years it's probably been two-thirds of the people who have been awarded these awards that have laboratory components at least to their research and in many cases their research is entirely laboratory-based with no clinical component but is clearly related to human health. (Thorburn)</p> <p><u>University of Colorado Qualifying Titles:</u> Investigators within ten years of completing their medical residency can now apply. In addition to tenure track appointments, non-tenure track research and clinical faculty are eligible to apply, assuming they meet all other eligibility requirements. Qualified "career-track academic appointments" based on the faculty titles [Regents policy 5-L] are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tenure and Tenure Track: <b>Assistant Professor</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Non-tenure Track: <b>Instructor, Senior Instructor</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Clinical Teaching Track: <b>Instructor, Senior Instructor, Assistant Professor</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Clinical Faculty: <b>Assistant Professor</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research Faculty: [Research Professor Series] <b>Assistant Professor, Senior Instructor, Instructor</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research Faculty: [Research Associate Series] <b>Research Associate, Senior Research Associate, Faculty Research Associate</b></li> </ul>	