RFA QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What percentage of the overall budget is expected to be devoted to bench validation?

It depends on the situation. In general, the experimental validations are not the primary part of this FOA. It would be beneficial to think about the other software engineering and computational tasks proposed to do first. Experimental validations are not "deep" but sufficient to show useful rank-order results (or similar).

2. Is this FOA limited to the four classes of drug targets outlined in the original IDG FOA (nuclear receptors, kinases, GPCRs and ion channels), or can a solution be proposed that is applicable to any genomic target?

Nuclear Receptors are no longer one of the classes of drug targets. Any protein target can be proposed, but if the methods are not applicable to any of the three families (GPCRs, Ion Channels, and Kinases), then that method will not be useful. For example, your predictive method might only work for protein transporters, in which case such a method would not be responsive. It would be useful to think about experimental validation on one of the three targets, but that's not required.

3. If preliminary evidence is provided in the proposal of the ability of biocuration to shed light on previously uncharacterized biology of IDG targets, will biocuration of 'omics datasets be supported under this FOA?

Yes, but in general, you should think carefully about biocuration. If your biocuration is so heavily dependent on human involvement, you must think about what is going to happen after two years. It is a very dynamic field, and changes very quickly in a short period of time. You must convince reviewers that this biocuration effort is going to be a sustainable resource and useful to the community in the long term.

4. Can existing IDG members serve as collaborators or co-PIs on proposals?

This application is completely open. One of our aims in the program is to expand the number of groups in the IDG Program.

5. What fraction of the proposal should be informatics tool development vs experimental follow-up studies to characterize the understudied proteins?

Please see the answer to question #1 above.

6. Is it required that visualization projects propose new data sets, or could visualization tools be designed to operate on the existing data?

Visualization methods can be proposed that can work with either existing data (in Pharos), with new data or a combination of both.

7. Is there an expectation that non-IDG members reach out to current IDG members to get support or input on the proposed visualization tools to ensure that those new tools can be integrated?

If the question is about obtaining support letters, the answer is no it is not required. You should use the links provided in this webinar or ask IDG program staff via email/phone to get details about current efforts in the IDG program. The Pharos FAQ page provides details about the software technologies and approaches being adopted and in principle we will work with you to accommodate such integration. Also note that Pharos is a developing entity, so it changes constantly.

8. Is there an expectation that proposals include collaborators who are experts in drug development to come up with specific tasks for visualization, or can these be developed with members of the IDG after funding has been received?

The IDG Program is not a drug development enterprise. We are not developing drugs. One of the tools we will develop are small molecules that exhibit interesting properties in vitro and in vivo situations along with control molecules to enable deeper investigation of the biological/disease/pharmaceutical role of the compound. Consultation after funding has been received is fine if not crucially required for what was proposed.

9. Do we need a supporting letter from an existing IDG member?

No.

10. Does the experimental validation need to relate to cancer since it is managed by NCI?

No, the application can focus on any disease.

11. All other questions about this webinar or the IDG program in general can be sent to Jean-Claude Zenklusen or through the IDG Email address DruggableGenome@mail.nih.gov