

11/18/96

**ADDENDUM TO NIEHS MARINE AND FRESHWATER BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES
CENTER GRANT APPLICATION (P30) GUIDELINES DATED 10/14/94**

Essential Characteristic E, "Research Grant Base," is hereby retitled "Research Focus." The text describing this Essential Characteristic on pages 5-6 of the application guidelines is replaced with that presented below. Potential applicants should be aware that review guidelines have also changed accordingly and should inquire about receiving revised guidelines.

This information is available via the NIEHS Centers World Wide Web site:

<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/centers/home.htm>.

Program staff indicated in the application guidelines may be contacted for further information.

E. Research Focus in Environmental Health Science

An NIEHS Marine and Freshwater Biomedical Sciences (MFBS) Center grant provides a mechanism for fostering interdisciplinary cooperation in a group of established investigators conducting high-quality research in environmental health science. Therefore, existence of a strong research capability is fundamental to establishment of a new Center or continuation of an existing Center. To qualify for potential Center support, an institution must orchestrate this research capability so as to have a clearly identifiable, major scientific focus in environmental health research. An existing program of excellence in biomedical research in the field of environmental health science is thus a basic prerequisite for establishment of an NIEHS MFBS Center. Furthermore, a Center must be able to capitalize upon these research capabilities and resources in order to advance significantly our understanding of its chosen scientific focus.

Research within an NIEHS MFBS Center should take advantage of new scientific findings to address an interdisciplinary spectrum of research questions pertaining to environmental health. Such approaches should provide the scientific foundation that ultimately leads to improvement in treatment and prevention of diseases having an environmental etiology. Although the scope of research at an NIEHS MFBS Center may be broad, emphasis should be placed on the generation of innovative, cutting-edge approaches and strategies that explore novel hypotheses that can profoundly affect our current level of knowledge. As a result, a Center award should enhance the development of new lines of research as well as the capacity of the host institution to serve as a national resource regarding emerging issues in environmental health.

The scientific focus of an NIEHS MFBS Center should be easily identifiable from: 1) the subject matter of the grants which are held by members of the Center and are part of the application; 2) the structure and objectives of Research Cores within the Center; and 3) the manner in which the Center promotes interdisciplinary, interprogrammatic research.

Because the purpose of an NIEHS MFBS Center grant is to accelerate progress in research and application of research results in human populations, a minimum base of research grant support by proposed Center investigators is required. At the time of submission of a competing application, the proposed MFBS Center structure must have a minimum of three active NIH or peer-reviewed research grants on environmental health-related topics totaling at least \$250,000 direct cost and awarded during the fiscal year in which the Center grant application is submitted. Those grants qualifying for the \$250,000 support base should be directly related to the focus of the Center and not a collection of all grants supporting research that might have some connection to environmental health sciences. These grants should have a minimum of two years of funding remaining in the project period, not including any administrative extensions, either with or without additional funds. Qualifying research grant support should be distributed among the proposed participating Center investigators and be representative of the type of research that the proposed cores can be expected to enhance. Research grant support from sources other than PHS will be considered on a case-by-case basis if it can be demonstrated to NIEHS staff and to reviewers of the Center grant application that: (1) the research is sufficiently related to human health; (2) the grant award is the result of an openly announced and appropriately competitive process; and (3) the grant application was subject to a peer review of comparable rigor to that of PHS. If the qualifying grant base includes other than PHS research grant support, the scientific merit of that research and the degree to which it satisfies the three criteria above may be subject to review by the Environmental Health Sciences Review Committee.

Prior to submission of an application, the proposed Center Director must consult with Institute Staff regarding the adequacy of the research base.