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THE

CANCER LETTER

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Vol. 1 No. 10

March 7, 1975

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The Cancer Letter, Inc.

Subscription \$100 per year

CANCER CONTROL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS TO START SOON; TWO WEAKNESSES OCCUR IN MANY PROPOSALS

NCI's Div. of Cancer Control & Rehabilitation will start negotiating within the next two weeks with organizations which submitted successful proposals in response to 24 RFPs the division has released this fiscal year.

Not all negotiations will start that soon; CCR still has at least 50 more site visits to complete before making final selections from the approximate 178 proposals it has received. The last site visits will be

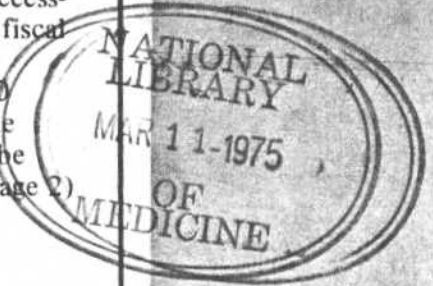
(Continued to page 2)

In Brief

NUTRITION RESEARCH INTRIGUES INVESTIGATORS AFTER ALL; ADVISORY COMMITTEE BEING FORMED

NUTRITION RESEARCH program NCI is developing has attracted plenty of interest from scientists. NCI had feared investigators would feel nutrition and its relationship to the etiology and control of cancer would not be able to compete with more prestigious research. Gio Gori, who is running the program for NCI, says interest has been high and feels there will be plenty of respondents when RFPs and grant programs are announced. NCI is putting together a Diet, Nutrition and Cancer Program Advisory Committee to help develop policy, review proposals. It will include a number of clinical oncologists, nutrition experts, representatives of the food industry and someone from FDA.

... KEY HEALTH committee lineups in the House of Representatives include seven new members of Paul Rogers' (D-Fla.) Health Subcommittee--Democrats James Scheuer (N.Y.), Henry Waxman (Calif.), W. G. Heffner (N.C.), James Florio (N.J.), Charles Carney (Ohio), and Timothy Wirth (Colo.), and Republican James Broyhill (N.C.). Hold-over members are Democrats Robert Satterfield (Va.), Richardson Preyer (N.C.), and James Symington (Mo.), and Republicans Tim Carter (Ky.), top-ranking Republican; James Hastings (N.Y.), and John Heinz (Pa.). Dan Flood's (D-Pa.) Health Appropriations Subcommittee has added Democrats Edward Roybal (Calif.) and Louis Stokes (Ohio). Holdover Democrats are William Natcher (Ky.), Neal Smith (Iowa), Bob Casey (Tex.), Edward Patten (N.J.), and David Obey (Wisc.), and Republicans Robert Michel (Ill.), top ranking Republican; Garner Shriver (Kan.), and Silvio Conte (Mass.). ... RECOMBINANT DNA research ban, accepted voluntarily by scientists after potential dangers were recognized last year, has been lifted following an international conference in California last week. The conference recommended safety procedures, mostly involving safer labs and avoiding work with viruses that cause highly contagious diseases. Summaries of the meeting may be obtained from William Gardland, executive secretary of the Recombinant DNA Molecule Program Advisory Committee, NIH, Westwood Bldg Room 920, Bethesda, Md. 20014.



Sole Source Negotiations ... Page 2

Contract Awards ... Page 3

RFPs Available ... Page 3

MESSAGE FOR WOULD-BE CONTRACTORS: READ THE RFP, COOPERATE WITH OTHERS

(Continued from page 1)

made before mid-April, and negotiations will have to be completed by the end of April to permit processing and award of contracts before the June 30 deadline. NCI funds for fiscal 1975 must be obligated before that date.

Most of the community projects are included among the 50 site visits CCR has yet to make. Many of the projects represented by the 24 RFPs will result in multiple contract awards. CCR executives refuse at this time even to estimate the number of awards they will make for individual projects or a total for all. "That will depend on the number of high quality proposals we get and the budget picture," said one.

From the reviews so far and from impressions gained on site visits (some of which were "reverse" site visits, in which proposers had their conferences with reviewers at NCI), CCR executives have developed some impressions regarding strengths and weaknesses of the proposals, a number of which have been submitted by organizations dealing with NCI for the first time or whose experience was limited to grant applications.

One major (and surprising) weakness: The principal investigator has not insisted that his associates thoroughly familiarize themselves with the RFP, and then brings them in to talk with reviewers on site visits.

"The PI invariably knows the RFP thoroughly," one CCR executive told *The Cancer Letter*. "But others on his staff who will be involved in the project frequently either haven't read the RFP at all or have only given it cursory attention.

"One of the most important factors in scoring a proposal, if not the most important factor, is how well it responds to the scope of work. Unless the entire staff is thoroughly familiar with the scope of work as described in the RFP, site visitors will be unfavorably impressed.

"It seems so obvious, but a surprising number of proposals just do not meet the scope of work simply because the people involved have not read the RFP."

Another weakness has shown up in some of the proposals submitted for the so-called "saturation" program, the community-based cancer control program (RFP NCI-CN-55173-06). This RFP, which will result in multiple awards, was in two phases: phase I, for planning a program in which all cancer control capabilities in a community (leadership and resources) are mobilized; and phase II, for implementing a program.

Laurence Callan, associate director for community activities, told the Cancer Control Advisory Committee that CCR had received 33 proposals for phase I and five for phase II.

"What happens if you get proposals from two organizations in the same community?" asked com-

mittee member Maurice Reizen, director of the Michigan Dept. of Public Health.

"We'll try to find out if they know each other exists," Callan answered.

"We had two organizations in Detroit submitting separate PSRO applications," Reizen said. "They knew each other existed all right. It was just that they hated each other. They were both turned down, I might add."

CCR Director Diane Fink commented that one of the first tasks of reviewers is to determine if the potential participants in a community program are cooperating. "A few turndowns should encourage cooperating," she said.

This weakness involves more than a willful lack of cooperation, Callan explained. Some of the proposals have shown an apparent lack of knowledge of possible resources that exist in their own communities. They indicate a limited understanding of community organizations, and a lack of awareness of the need to involve others in their programs.

Frequently, personnel in a community essential to a cancer control program—people who are there and available—are either unknown to the proposer or are not included in the proposal for one reason or another.

The message was clear to those who are gearing up to submit proposals in the division's next round of RFPs: Read the RFPs carefully, especially the scope of work, and make sure everyone involved in the project reads and understands it; and develop the highest degree of cooperation possible with other organizations that should be included.

Despite the weaknesses found in some proposals, CCR has been impressed by the quality of others. "I'm very encouraged. We're going to get some excellent programs out of these," said Veronica Conley, acting chief of the office of committees and review activities.

"There have been some outstanding proposals," Callan agreed. "There have also been some overly ambitious ones."

Fink said that CCR hoped to be ready with new guidelines for its grant programs by June (the last guidelines were announced in September). She also hopes to have most of the division's RFPs ready for announcement in July and August.

The division will be severely restricted on new programs if President Ford's budget proposal for fiscal 1976 prevails. The President asked only \$45 million for Control & Rehabilitation, \$5 million less than the division is getting this year. Congress has authorized more than \$80 million for the division for 1976.

SOLE SOURCE NEGOTIATIONS

Proposals listed here are for information purposes only. RFPs are not available.

Title: Continuation of administrative and technical support services

Contractor: Automation Industries, Silver Spring, Md.

Title: Support services to maintain studies of the role of viruses in experimental oncogeneses and human cancer

Contractor: Hazleton Laboratories, Vienna, Va.

CONTRACT AWARDS

Title: Selection and propagation of haploid and partial monosomic cell lines

Contractor: Yale Univ., \$105,551.

Title: Phase out the study of the carcinogenic properties of industrial chemicals

Contractor: Univ. of Cincinnati, \$49,161.

Title: Study of biological effects of chemotherapeutic drugs

Contractor: Allegheny General Hospital, Pittsburgh, \$269,548.

Title: Expansion of trust territory cervical cancer screening program

Contractor: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Saipan, \$193,278.

Title: Planning for a cervical cancer screening program

Contractor: Utah Dept. of Social Services, Div. of Health, \$44,056.

RFPs AVAILABLE

Requests for proposal described here pertain to contracts planned for award by the National Cancer Institute, unless otherwise noted. Write to the Contracting Officer or Contract Specialist for copies of the RFP. Some listings will show the phone number of the Contract Specialist, who will respond to questions about the RFP. Contract Sections for the Cause & Prevention and Biology & Diagnosis Divisions are located at: NCI, Landow Bldg. NIH, Bethesda, Md. 20014; for the Treatment and Control Divisions at NCI, Blair Bldg., 8300 Colesville Rd., Silver Spring, Md. 20910. All requests for copies of RFPs should cite the RFP number. The deadline date shown for each listing is the final day for receipt of the completed proposal unless otherwise indicated.

RFP NCI-CM-63823

Title: Biomedical engineering resources and services
Deadline: April 9

The Div. of Cancer Treatment of NCI, by means of a research and development contract, desires to investigate and utilize certain areas of biomedical engineering in order to develop better techniques for the control, therapy and cure of cancer.

The R&D contractor will be required to supply key groups of technical personnel, who will work closely with NCI scientists and engineers, to identify and characterize problems of intramural research amenable to bioengineering approaches and to specify and executive technical developments potentially

applicable to the solution of such problems. These groups will effectively execute approved bioengineering efforts to conceive, design and produce applicable hardware, processes, and studies of engineering feasibility to exploit technical opportunities towards the control of cancer.

The R&D contractor will engage the knowledge and support of high-level management towards the objectives and plans of the biomedical engineering unit and DCT program activities. The contractor's management will insure that highly competent technical personnel will be sought from the broadest possible organizational structure within the contractor's own staff for assignment to NCI tasks, projects and programs.

The contractor's management will endeavor to place adequate resources, including time required to accomplish objectives, in the hands of personnel assigned to NCI activities. The contractor's management will endeavor to explore with project personnel within NCI, how collaborative bioengineering efforts may be productively managed in limited or expanded biomedical engineering programs involving a diversity of technical projects and mixed skills.

The contractor's management will also support the objective assessment, solicitation and implementation of efforts to engage resources from outside the contractor's organization to help accomplish the objectives of this contract.

The R&D contractor shall directly support contract objectives and activities by providing facilities and equipment, technical and administrative support services, and appropriate documentation of engineering activities which meet the best professional standards.

The contractor shall exert its best efforts to:

a. Provide biomedical engineering resources for close and long term support of diverse specialized and interdisciplinary needs of intramural research within DCT.

b. Provide and maintain a flexible extensive resource of scientific skills, knowledge and facilities for NCI support through a concentration of diverse technical personnel in the physical and life sciences; a concentrated supply of state-of-the-art facilities and equipment; appropriate levels of management and administrative support to assure effective use of resources.

c. Direct such resources to continually identify and characterize various biomedical engineering problems related to and supporting research in the drug control of cancer and their requirements for solution; conceive, design and produce a variety of instrumentation, products, processes, techniques and systems that are non-existent or apply existing material and techniques, for the support of research interests in the drug control of cancer; conceive, design and conduct exploratory and feasibility studies, and critical experiments in biomedical engineering areas applicable to DCT, NCI research interests; and provide

technical consultation, engineering and system analyses, reviews, and recommendations regarding technical information, experimental data, technical proposals and projects, and system management areas of interest to DCT, NCI research.

d. Explore and establish ways in which bioengineering programs, projects, and tasks may be more effectively managed and implemented to achieve a rapid response and effective collaboration which is important to DCT, NCI research activities; to manage interdisciplinary activities associated with the design and development of software and hardware prototypes; and to help achieve particular goals and assigned projects of this contract effort through analysis and evaluation of technical operations.

The government estimates that performance of the services will require approximately six man-years of effort per year.

Contract Specialist: James M. Cooper
Cancer Treatment
301-427-7460

RFP NO1-CP-55655-57

Title: *Significance of mutation in carcinogenesis*

Deadline: *March 28*

Proposals are sought for a research approach aimed at determining whether mutation is a necessary and required step in the action of chemical carcinogens.

It is well-established that large numbers of known carcinogenic agents produce mutations in bacterial and other systems. It has been assumed by many that the carcinogenic activity of such compounds in animals may be derived from mutations which they induce. This point, however, plausible, has not been established nor ruled out by experiments to date.

It is to be expected that mutations may occur concomitant with transformation to malignancy, but be unrelated to it, and further that mutation, even if a necessary event, may not be sufficient in itself to cause cancer.

In considering suitable systems for use in this study, an investigation of mutation and transformation to malignancy in the same animal cell system may represent the simplest experimental system and yield correlative information useful in defining the oncogenic significance of mutation. For this reason, comparison of the frequencies of mutation and transformation by the same agent in the same cell system might be helpful in determining whether mutagenic potential is a valid measure or carcinogenic potential.

Respondents may address their proposal to any aspect of this problem which they feel can be satisfactorily achieved.

A three year effort is anticipated in the effective pursuit of this project. The government estimates that performance of this project will entail the following annual level of effort: Cell biologist (one man-year); technician (one-and-one-half man-years).
Contract Specialist: Anna Beattie

Cause & Prevention
301-496-1781

RFP NCI-CP-VO-53533-66

Title: *Operation of a facility to provide and maintain subhuman primates for cancer research*

Deadline: *April 15*

NCI is interested in contracting for the continuation of the operation of a subhuman primate facility to provide and maintain animals for cancer research. Organization will be expected to maintain a breeding colony of about 500 animals in addition to 500 experimental animals.

Adequate containment will be required to insure protection of personnel coming into contact with experimental monkeys. The primate facility must be located within a 50-mile radius of NIH to facilitate the rapid exchange of study materials.

Contracting Officer: W.L. Caulfield
Cause & Prevention
301-496-1781

RFP NO1-CP-55680-69

Title: *Feasibility study to define the modalities for a state of the art survey in diet, nutrition and cancer*

Deadline: *April 28*

The objectives of this study are to provide:

1. Definition of scientific literature sources in diet, nutrition and cancer.
2. Definition of a suitable classification of scientific publications to cover the etiologic, therapeutic and rehabilitation aspects of diet, nutrition and cancer.
3. Definition of criteria for determining the optimal depth of search in different areas of this literature review.
4. Definition of criteria for determining the reliability of individual research papers. This criteria should qualify a given work solely on the adequateness of experimental design, of materials and methods and of statistical evaluations.
5. Definition of criteria for condensation of information and format of annotated summary of current knowledge.

Contracting Officer: D.J. Dougherty
Cause & Prevention
301-496-6361

The Cancer Letter —Editor JERRY D. BOYD

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