

Idaho State UNIVERSITY

College of Pharmacy
Department of Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences
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October 18, 2017

Translational Research Scholars Program
Institute of Translational Health Sciences
University of Washington
Seattle, WA 98109-4714

Dear Program Coordinator,

As Chair of the Department of Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences, I would like to provide my enthusiastic support of Dr. Dong Xu, a highly promising early-stage investigator, for his grant proposal to the ITHS Translational Research Scholars Program.

Dr. Xu's proposal describes a translational and interdisciplinary project in which he will use advance computational and experimental methods to screen and identify any FDA-approved drugs for the new indication of inhibiting a key exotoxin in *C. Sordellii*, a lethal bacterium in humans and animals.

While this proposal entails a test-of-concept, one-year pilot project, I believe it has a very strong potential of success, which generate important preliminary data for an NIH R-type grant submission. My assessment is based on:

- 1) Dr. Xu is an experienced computational researcher who has extensive training and expertise in computer-aided drug design, bioinformatics, and new drug screening;
- 2) Dr. Xu's laboratory has all the equipment required for this project;
- 3) ISU and the department provide a conducive research environment. We are committed to providing Dr. Xu **15% release time** to participate in the TRS program;
- 4) Dr. Xu will be mentored by Dr. Dennis Stevens, a renowned infectious disease researcher and clinician at the Boise VA medical center. Recently he has secured a \$10-million NIH COBRE grant for infectious disease research.

I am excited that Dr. Xu is working towards this new translational research direction. I look forward to ITHS support of his grant application.

Sincerely,



Vaughn L. Culbertson, PharmD
Professor and Interim Chair
Department of Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Idaho State University College of Pharmacy