

**National Research Fund for Tick-Borne Diseases, Inc.**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**LYME DISEASE ORGANIZATION FORMS SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD  
AND INVITES GRANT APPLICATIONS**

WILTON, CT – August 11, 2005 – The National Research Fund for Tick-Borne Diseases, Inc. (NRFTD) announces the formation of a scientific advisory board. Its distinguished researchers will support the organization in its mission to advance scientific understanding of tick-borne infections -- including Lyme disease -- by funding research of the highest caliber. Scientists interested in researching these complex but poorly understood public health threats are invited to submit grant applications.

Estimated to affect as many as 54 % of households in some communities, Lyme disease case reports doubled from 1991 to 2000, then rose a dramatic 40% between 2001 and 2002. Now, other tick-borne diseases such as babesia and ehrlichia are emerging as serious risks in many areas. Children, who spend much time outdoors, are especially vulnerable. Lyme disease was only recognized in 1975; several other tick-borne illnesses were acknowledged even later. As a result, scientific understanding is still extremely limited, leading to diagnostic and treatment confusion.

“Patients and physicians alike are often overwhelmed by the uncertainty surrounding these issues, which can lead to significant quality-of-life and financial implications for victims as well as families, schools, employers and society,” states Catherine F. Morrissey, NRFTD Research Board Chair. “Recognizing the urgent need to understand and cure tick-borne diseases, the NRFTD and its superb team of scientific advisors will fund the finest investigators and academic centers in the world.”

**About the NRFTD Scientific Advisory Board**

The NRFTD’s scientific advisory board (SAB) consists of leading researchers from across the United States. The SAB advises the NRFTD on research objectives while maintaining strict standards in grant selection. In particular, the SAB has established a rigorous application and review process that confirms the NRFTD’s commitment to excellence as well as its desire to advance scientific knowledge as quickly as possible. The SAB works to ensure that broad segments of the research community become aware of the NRFTD’s activities and goals, opening doors to vast areas of scientific study that must be investigated.

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### **About NRFTD Research Grants**

NRFTD grants will be awarded to investigators whose projects demonstrate the potential to attract long-term funding by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), or other scientific or biomedical agencies. The NRFTD is guided by its desire to transform scientific discoveries into tangible results, such as publication in peer-reviewed medical journals and presentations at scientific conferences.

The current offerings will be funded for either one or two years and carry a maximum direct cost of \$50,000. Scientists who wish to perform innovative pilot project research on any aspect of established or emerging tick-borne diseases -- including those caused by Lyme disease and relapsing fever borrelia, anaplasma, babesia, bartonella and ehrlichia species, and their tick vectors -- are invited to apply.

The deadline for applications is 5:00 P.M. EDT on September 1, 2005. The grant application can be found at [www.nrftd.org](http://www.nrftd.org).

### **About the National Research Fund for Tick-Borne Diseases, Inc.**

The NRFTD is a nonprofit organization devoted to funding scientific research in the rapidly expanding field of tick-borne diseases. It is determined to advance scientific understanding of these complicated infections by sponsoring innovative research of the highest quality at premier institutions throughout the world.

The NRFTD was founded in 1999 to address the complex and critical research questions raised by thousands of patients afflicted with emerging tick-borne diseases, including Lyme disease, relapsing fever borrelia, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, bartonella and ehrlichiosis. The need for answers has grown markedly as Lyme disease has spread dramatically throughout the country and as other tick-borne infections have been recognized as public health threats.

For more information about the NRFTD, or to make a tax-deductible donation, visit [www.nrftd.org](http://www.nrftd.org).

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