§ 209-s. James D. Watson investigator program. 1. The James D. Watson investigator program is hereby created to recognize outstanding early career scientists who demonstrate the potential for leadership at the frontiers of knowledge in the life sciences and demonstrate an entrepreneurial spirit to help foster economic development in New York state into the future.

2. This program shall be administered by the executive director. Funds shall be awarded to the institution at which the investigator is employed on behalf of the recipient.

3. Within available funds, each award granted under the James D. Watson investigator program shall equal two hundred thousand dollars over a two year period. Selection of such awards shall be made pursuant to an application process to be conducted no more than once annually. Eligible recipients of such awards shall include researchers at academic, public, or not-for-profit private research institutions located within New York state. Such awards shall be provided for the purpose of supporting the research activities of such researcher not otherwise supported by the research institution. Such awards may be used for the salaries of such investigators, the salaries of support research personnel and for the purchase of equipment used directly in the pursuit of research not otherwise provided by the research program at such institution.

4. Eligible applicants for grants issued under this program shall be full-time staff members who are United States citizens or legal permanent residents, have been awarded their doctoral degrees, and have less than five years of post-doctoral experience, and are conducting research in the life sciences or in enabling sciences as defined in this article. All applicants must demonstrate expertise in the life sciences or in the enabling science discipline as stated in their application. Preference shall be given to researchers who demonstrate a willingness and ability to develop their research into economic development opportunities in New York state.

5. No academic, public, or not-for-profit private research institution

shall receive more than one award per year. No more than three-fifths of available awards in any year shall be granted to employees of public, not-for-profit, private or academic research institutions within the metropolitan commuter transportation district.