

## **PILOT PROGRAM: PHASE 1, LETTER OF INTENT GUIDELINES**

### **PURPOSE:**

The CCTS Pilot Grant Program serves a vital function in advancing clinical translational science by funding a combination of broad translational and multidisciplinary projects and targeted priority areas as identified by the CTSA Program.

### **ELIGIBILITY:**

Principal Investigators **MUST** submit their own LOIs. Principal Investigators must be clinical, research, or tenure track UIC faculty or Senior Scientists at UIC. Although adjunct faculty cannot serve as PIs, they may serve as named investigators, collaborators, or key personnel. Post-doctoral fellows may also serve as key personnel but cannot be PIs. This pilot grant opportunity focuses on translational science projects only, and as such, all applications must involve human participants, facilitate human participant investigations, establish infrastructure related to human participant investigation, or concern disease mechanisms with clear, near-term implications for therapeutics or prevention. Pilot funding aims to support key aspects that will lead to a successful, extramurally funded research programs.

Pilot proposals must address a clinical translational science problem. We adopt the NIH's National Center for Advancing Clinical Translational Science (NCATS) definition of clinical translational science: Translational science "is the field that generates innovations that overcome longstanding challenges along the translational research pipeline. These include scientific, operational, financial, and administrative innovations that transform the way research is done, making it faster, more efficient, and more impactful" (NCATS, NIH).

### **INVITATIONS TO APPLY FOR THE FULL PILOT GRANT APPLICATION:**

Letters of intent are required and will be reviewed. Only applicants who have submitted a letter of intent and who are invited to apply for the full pilot or planning grant will be eligible. More information on submitting a full application can be found at the end of this document.

### **AWARD AMOUNTS & DURATION:**

Pilot grants are 1 year in duration, up to \$25,000, with funding starting June 1, 2025, and focus specifically on activities such as conducting preliminary research to inform study design, demonstrate feasibility of research protocols, pilot test novel methodologies, or initiate and establish new interdisciplinary research.

### **APPLICATION PREPARATION SUPPORTS**

We highly recommend that applicants attend the virtual Information Session on Monday, October 14, 2024 from 1:00pm – 2:00pm (<https://ccts.uic.edu/events/pilot-grant-information-session/>) to ensure their proposal meets eligibility criteria. We also recommend using other CCTS supports such as Research Ally (<https://ccts.uic.edu/research-ally/>).

### **AWARDEE EXPECTATIONS:**

If funded, the PI and other key personnel will be expected to also participate in CCTS Research in Progress sessions, with the expectation for each funded team to present at least once over the course of the funding year. Awardees will also be encouraged to make use of other CCTS supports such as Research Ally (<https://ccts.uic.edu/research-ally/>).

## **DUE DATE:**

**Friday, November 1, 2024 at 5:00pm CDT**, through the CCTS Awards site:

<https://awards.ccts.uic.edu/>

## **SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:**

A Letter of Intent is **REQUIRED** for consideration in Phase 1. Applications will **ONLY** be accepted via electronic submission in the Awards system from **September 30 through November 1, 2024 at 5:00pm CDT**. To submit your LOI, navigate to the CCTS Awards site homepage:

- If you are a first time user click the “Register” button in the top right corner of the page.
  - On the next page, enter your UIC NetID and select the “Register” button below your NetID.
  - After successfully registering your account, log back into the system by clicking “Proceed to log in”.
- For registered users, log into the training portal using your UIC credentials (via Shibboleth).
  - Upon login, on your “My Projects” homepage, you will see Available Funding Opportunities: CCTS Pilot Program 2024.
  - Select this option to access the LOI application.
- You will receive a confirmation email upon submission.

## **APPLICATION DATA FIELDS:**

The following information will be completed in the data fields in the electronic application system in addition to demographic information:

1. **Three (3) Keywords** describing your research
2. **Previous CCTS Funding**
3. **Co-Investigators and External Collaborators**, if applicable
4. **Research Category** (method or process development, digital health and social media, pediatric, rural health outcomes, health disparities, etc.)
5. **Translational spectrum category** (pre-clinical research, clinical research, clinical implementation, public health)
6. **Summary of Significance and Specific Aims** (up to 200 words)
7. **Summary of Scientific Plan** (up to 300 words)
8. **Collaboration:** Please explain how the proposed project will extend collaborations or develop new areas of research for the primary investigator. Clearly state how the proposed work is distinct from your ongoing collaborations. (up to 200 words)
9. **Responsiveness:** Please explain how this project is clinical translational science and relates to this cycle’s priority areas as stated in the RFA. (up to 100 words)
10. **Future Funding:** Please explain how funding this project will lead rapidly to future external funding. (up to 100 words)

## **REVIEW CRITERIA:**

The LOI application scoring will evaluate the following factors:

- **Significance/Innovation:** How important is the problem being addressed? How will completion of the aims advance science and/or clinical practice? What is novel about the proposed research and/or methods?

- **Collaboration:** Is the team interdisciplinary? Are multiple colleges and/or community partners involved? What is the level of involvement of collaborators?
- **Responsiveness:** Is the proposed research clinical translational science? Does the proposed research address CCTS priority areas?
- **Scientific Rigor:** Are the design and proposed methods appropriate to answer the proposed questions?
- **Feasibility:** Is the proposed research feasible with the time and resources available (12-months, \$25,000).

**Following an initial review of the letters of intent, applicants may be invited to submit full proposals. Anticipated notification during the week of December 16, 2024.**

### **FULL APPLICATION PREVIEW**

The anticipated deadline for full applications is **Friday, February 21, 2025**. Those invited to submit a full application in Phase 2 must adhere to the following application requirements. Please note that this list is subject to change by the start of the full application cycle.

1. Lay Summary
2. Community Impact Statement
3. Plans for External Funding
4. Suggested Grant Reviewers
5. Research Plan
  - a. Hypothesis and Specific Aims
  - b. Significance and Implication of Results
  - c. Research Strategy
6. Milestones
7. References
8. Biographical Sketch
9. Budget & Budget Justification
10. Animal Care Requirements (if applicable)
11. Protection of Human Subjects (if applicable)
12. Letter of Support from the PI's Department Head
13. Appendices (additional letters of support)

### **QUESTIONS**

Contact Mary Murray, Pilot Program Coordinator, Center for Clinical and Translational Science, at [mcampb22@uic.edu](mailto:mcampb22@uic.edu).