

Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) Laboratory Support Center (LSC)

Overview

The CTSI - LSC will provide support for laboratory costs of your clinical or translational research project. Primarily, this support is paid to core laboratories located at the URM, since they have the services, equipment, and experience available to provide you with the data needed for your project. The goal is to provide funds for obtaining pilot or supporting data for extramural proposal submissions. Providing these funds will allow you access to expertise/methods that are otherwise not available to you. These funds are not intended to support your own laboratory. If there are laboratory analyses that are not provided or available through the URM core labs, other labs (internal or external) can be used. Projects that have not received extramural funding, but are in the final stages of completion, are also eligible for these funds. The goal is to obtain the supporting data for extramural grant proposals, or to obtain data needed to complete an initial study. In order to obtain funding for these laboratory costs, you must apply for this support.

Applications are intended to be brief, however, will adhere to NIH guidelines (should include specific aims, significance, preliminary data – if available, and methods). Applications will be reviewed for scientific merit and financial need, by a CTSI review committee (with input from outside experts as needed). The deadline for receiving applications will be September 28, 2009. Applications will be reviewed with funding decision made by December 7, 2009. Merit will be based on clinical significance (with translation from basic to clinical given the highest priority), innovation, experimental approach, and PI training (junior investigators) or productivity (established investigators). Preliminary results are not necessary, but should be provided if available. Only UR faculty are eligible for support. Graduate students, medical students, or post-doctorate fellows, are permitted to work on the project, however, the proposal must come from an UR faculty member identified as PI. Projects initiated by commercial entities will not be supported. Funding will be provided directly to the laboratories providing services, only after the lab work has been done. Routine clinical lab tests for subject screening or safety monitoring will not be supported by this mechanism. There are other mechanisms of support available through the CTSI for such expenses (e.g., Pilot and Collaborative Studies, Participant and Clinical Interaction Resources, Novel Methodologies).

These funds are designed to provide you with the pilot data needed for the preliminary results section of your proposal for extramural funding, or to complete an initial, but unfunded study. Funds available to cover laboratory costs can be up to \$50,000. The average funded award has been around \$19,000. The number of awards made will depend upon the number of proposals received and the caliber of projects submitted. We encourage you to apply only for the funds that you will need for pilot data or data needed to complete your initial project, whether it is \$500, \$5,000, or \$50,000. Past experience has demonstrated that reviewers are sensitive to what data is truly needed for these pilot studies and have adjusted budgets accordingly for meritorious projects.

Application process

- Submit:
- 1) proposal (3 page max)
 - 2) itemized budget
 - 3) NIH-format biosketch
 - 4) NIH-format Other Support

Submit the application as an attached .pdf by email to Mark Plessinger:

mark_plessinger@urmc.rochester.edu ; it is preferred that your application be sent as a .pdf file, however, some applicants may not have Adobe Acrobat and may submit their proposals as Word documents.

Your application will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Significance. How might your project lead to improved treatment or prevention of a specific disease, or improve the health of the general population? Will this research lead to a better understanding of the basic mechanisms of a disease? How will the endpoints in the proposed research move your project from the bench to the bedside? If the research is exploratory rather than hypothesis-driven (often the case with genomics and proteomics research), why is current knowledge insufficient to justify pursuing exploratory research rather than a specific hypothesis?

Approach. What are the specific aims and hypotheses, and what methods will be used to address them (please do not provide unnecessary details of laboratory methods)? What is the rationale for the proposed experimental approach as opposed to other potential strategies? How will the data be analyzed? What are the expected outcomes, and what would be done next if the expected outcomes are observed? What would be done next if the expected outcomes are not observed? If assistance is needed for protocol development, assay development, or statistical analysis, contact Mark Plessinger at 275-6413.

Preliminary data. This is less important than significance and innovation, especially for junior investigators. However, preliminary data can be important if you are proposing an untested method or if the hypothesis has very little support in the literature.

Need for support. Provide an NIH-format "Other Support" list. The goal is to use these funds to initiate promising new projects, not to support ongoing research that already has extramural support. We recognize that "K" awards have limited non-personnel budgets and welcome applications from those with such awards. If you have other support, what is unique about the proposed project compared to the funded project(s)?

PI training and experience. Provide an NIH biosketch.

Itemized budget. The LSC will not support salaries of technicians/postdocs/students in your lab. If using an URM core lab with pre-determined fees for services, indicate the number and type of analyses and the cost per analysis. Generally, these core facilities have personnel costs built into the fees so no personnel costs should be listed. If you need assistance in determining these analysis costs, please consult Mark Plessinger at mark_plessinger@urmc.rochester.edu or 275-6413. If requesting support from another collaborating lab, identify that lab, reagents, supplies, and personnel costs should be listed. Note that the CTSI will not pay a percentage of a technician's salary when a request is approved. The lab providing services will receive funds only after the lab work has been done, and only for the portion of the work that was actually completed and results (data) provided.

All applications will be given an NIH-relevant score from all reviewers, averaged among the reviewers, ranked against other applications, with funding decisions made from the rankings and available funds. Applicants will be notified of status and a 'summary statement' consisting of all reviewers comments will be provided to the applicant. Applicants may re-submit proposals, provided that concerns in the summary statement are adequately addressed. In the event of a re-submitted proposal, one additional page should be included that specifically addresses all reviewers concerns.