

University of Rochester Clinical and Translational Science Institute

Request for Proposals

Development of Novel Methodologies for Translational Research

The Novel Clinical and Translational Methodologies Key Function (NCTMKF) of the Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) is requesting applications from investigators interested in developing novel methodologies for translational research. The NCTMKF anticipates funding one Category 1 project (laboratory methods and devices) at approximately \$160,000 in direct costs over two years, and one or more Category 2 projects (biostatistical and epidemiologic methods) at a combined direct cost over two years of \$90,000 over all projects.

Applicants should submit a brief description of their proposal. **Principal investigators of unfunded NIH Challenge Grants that meet the purpose of this program are strongly encouraged to submit the abstract page for review.** After review by the NCTMKF Coordinating Committee and selected outside reviewers, a limited number of applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal.

Deadlines:

Proposals must be received by: September 30, 2009

If selected, full proposals must be received by: October 30, 2009

Projects begin: July, 2010

Purpose:

This opportunity is intended to fund projects that have as their key objective the development of novel methodologies to overcome major roadblocks that impede the progress of translational research. This mechanism will not fund the development of methodologies for clinical or diagnostic purposes.

Background:

Two steps have been identified as the major roadblocks preventing new information in the basic sciences from being translated into new therapies for clinical implication: the discovery step (translation between bench and bedside) and the implementation step (translation between bedside and practice). The overall goal of the NCTMKF is to help overcome specifically identified limitations at either the discovery or implementation steps, by developing widely applicable methodologies that will significantly enhance the validity and accuracy, scope or speed of translational research.

Category 1 novel methodologies projects (laboratory methods and devices) could include methods to rapidly identify potential disease-specific drug targets or potentially protective or therapeutic immunologic targets. Development of better endpoints for trials, such as development of novel immune assays, imaging techniques, biomarkers, functional assessments, or remote sensing devices could also be included. Category 2 novel methodologies projects must involve biostatistical or epidemiologic methods.

Format for brief proposals:

Preliminary proposals should be limited to three pages, and should include the following sections:

- A. Specific roadblock to translational research that the proposed method will overcome. Describe the roadblock and how the methodology could be used to overcome this problem. Discuss the local investigators or programs that are currently inhibited by the roadblock.
- B. Current status of the method. What preliminary data supports the concept behind the method, and how much developmental work, if any, has already been done.
- C. Proposed work. In five or six paragraphs, briefly outline what work is to be supported by the NCTMKF for the next 12 months, and how this work will develop the method to the point where it will be useful for translational research.
- D. Potential application: How will the method potentially be used in the future, including, if applicable, in potential applications outside of the field of interest of the investigator. Include the local investigators or programs that would immediately implement this novel methodology.

Proposals exclusive of budgets and literature citations must not exceed 3 pages in length, and must be submitted using 1-inch margins throughout with at least an 11-point font size. No appendices should be submitted with the brief proposal.

Budget:

Provide an estimate of direct costs for the one year project period, separated into amounts for personnel, equipment (if any), supplies, and other costs. Investigator salaries may be funded through these awards. Technician or research assistant salary support is also allowed. If the proposal is selected for further development, a more detailed budget will be requested. Note that only direct costs can be supported by the NCTMKF.

Submission:

Proposals may be submitted either electronically by email to katherine_libby@urmc.rochester.edu, or via intramural mail to Ms. Libby at Box 278990.

Review Criteria:

The ideal application will satisfy three important criteria: [1] It will address a recognized roadblock to translational research; [2] It will be broadly applicable across disciplines; and [3] It will be at a sufficient state of development such that support by the NCTMKF can have a meaningful positive impact in advancing the application toward translational research. Note that funding of hypothesis-driven research is NOT considered a priority of the NCTMKF.

Applications will be reviewed by the NCTM Coordinating Committee and selected reviewers from the CTSI Committee on Industry and Foundation Relations (see <http://www.urmc.rochester.edu/ctsi/overview/industry.cfm>) according to the three criteria described above. In addition, proposals will be reviewed for overall significance, innovation, approach to development, and feasibility.

RFP: Novel Methodologies

Applications that are multidisciplinary and which involve collaborations among investigators that would not normally occur outside of the CTSI will be given priority. The NCTMKF encourages proposals from young investigators and from underrepresented minorities. Unfunded NIH Challenge Grant proposals will also be considered.

The reviewers will select a subset of applicants and request that they submit a more detailed proposal focused on the technical approach to development of the methodology. A set of developmental milestones and timelines is required for the detailed proposal. We anticipate that the final development plan will be the result of a cooperative process between the investigator and the NCTM committee.

Projects will be reviewed quarterly for progress against milestones, and may be renewed for subsequent funding cycles.