

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: PILOT AND COLLABORATIVE STUDIES
Key Function of the Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute

The Pilot and Collaborative Translational and Clinical Studies Key Function of the CTSI is requesting applications from investigators for funding of pilot projects. Six types of awards will be considered for the current RFP: (1) Investigator-initiated pilot studies for faculty (\$50,000 maximum for one year); (2) Investigator-initiated pilot studies for trainees (defined as graduate students, medical students, residents, or fellows in URMC training programs; \$25,000 maximum for 1 year); (3) Interdisciplinary conference awards (\$5,000 maximum, to provide support for an investigator-initiated interdisciplinary scientific conference); (4) Traveling fellowship awards for faculty or trainees (\$10,000 maximum, from one to 8 weeks in length, to acquire new skills, methods, technologies or models, or establish new research collaborations); (5) Clinical Research Center pilot grants (\$20,000 maximum for clinical projects that use the Clinical Research Center); and (6) a new category, Upstate NY Translational Research Network (UNYTRN) grants (\$50,000 maximum for 1 year). UNYTRN grant proposals must be collaborative between a University of Rochester principal investigator and a co-principal investigator from one of the participating UNYTRN institutions: Albany College of Pharmacy, Albany Medical College, Bassett Healthcare, Binghamton University, Cornell University Ithaca, Guthrie Healthcare, Ordway Research Institute, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), Roswell Park Cancer Institute, SUNY Albany School of Public Health, SUNY Upstate Medical University, and University at Buffalo.

Applicants will submit a one-page abstract of their proposal, which will be reviewed by the Coordinating Committee, and a limited number of full proposals will subsequently be requested. **It is critical that research ideas need to be expressed in a way such that a non-expert can understand the idea and appreciate the significance.** All principal investigators of proposals must be faculty or trainees at the University of Rochester. Co-investigators may be from other institutions. Funding cannot be used to support faculty salary. Trainee salary support is permitted but must be justified in the proposal. Renewal of funding of investigator-initiated pilots for a second year may be possible under special circumstances where considered justified, and revised applications from prior Requests for Proposals may be submitted. Concurrent funding of more than a single pilot award to an investigator from the pilot granting key functions of the CTSI is not permitted.

Deadlines: Initial abstracts of proposals must be received by August 3, 2009.

Applicants from whom full proposals will be solicited will be notified by September 4, 2009.

Full proposals must be received by November 2, 2009.

Awards will be made by January 1, 2010, with an anticipated start date of July 1, 2010. **Note: All animal and human subject protocols must be approved prior to the start date. No funds will be released until these approvals have been documented.**

Background: The overall goal of the Pilot and Collaborative Translational and Clinical Studies Program is to provide research support for preliminary and proof-of-concept studies critical to moving basic laboratory findings into clinical applications. High priorities of the program are to facilitate development of enabling technologies, new therapeutic, diagnostic, or outcomes assessment approaches, and novel cross-disciplinary collaborative programs. The pilot funding will be targeted at research proposals, which demonstrate ability to be catalytic in terms of generating new programs, directions, and funding for clinically applied research and methodologies. The Pilot Program will utilize a number of funding mechanisms to ensure flexibility in the ability to take advantage of new funding opportunities. The Program will provide funding for trainees to obtain new skills, technological development, critical clinical trial preliminary data, new collaborative approaches, and new outcomes assessment and bioinformatics.

To enhance the flexibility of funding new investigators, the Program will give priority to pilot studies that facilitate education of applicants concerning optimal study design, development and refinement of end point measures, and long range considerations, such as, expectations by FDA and potential funding agencies. Additional priorities include facilitating production of critical preliminary data to support submission of new clinical and translational research proposals, such as data to support applications for novel pivotal clinical trials, and for trainees to develop new skills and methods. Also, funding is intended to support proof-of-concept studies seeking clinical applications for basic science findings. This would include testing ideas which could create new technologies or technical advances to drive clinical applications of basic research. Since technical developments often are non-hypothesis driven research projects, support could help to generate the compelling preliminary data needed to justify submission of proposals for these types of projects to federal and other funding sources. Applicants should be aware that the Novel Methodologies Key Function of the CTSI is more focused on enabling technology development and may be a more appropriate pilot funding source for proposals with such a focus.

A final goal of the funding is stimulation of new cross-disciplinary collaborations, both within the Institution and externally. The UNYTRN award category newly incorporated into the Pilot and Collaborative Clinical and Translational Studies key function program this year is intended to stimulate new inter-institutional collaborations in health research. Investigators are encouraged to develop an innovative, team-based approach to a problem in health research that reflects the particular strengths of the members and their institutions. UNYTRN proposals must involve meaningful participation of faculty and facilities from at least two different UNYTRN member institutions. The roles of the co-PI's must be clearly defined. New collaborations are eligible, as well as ongoing, funded collaborative projects that can demonstrate (1) a significant and meaningful addition of faculty and resources from an institution not already involved in the collaborative, and (2) that the addition of new faculty also initiates a separate, potentially related but non-funded component of the project. UNYTRN research teams must meet monthly in person or via tele- or video-conference, with documented proceedings. A minimum of two face-to-face meetings are required annually.

Format for Abstract Submission: Abstracts are to be limited to 1 page with no smaller than an 11 point font, and should include:

- (1) Title of the project
- (2) Investigators
- (3) Type of award: Faculty pilot, Trainee pilot, Conference, Traveling Fellowship, Clinical Research Center pilot, or UNYTRN Pilot Collaborative grant
- (4) Total amount of money requested
- (5) Indication as to whether the application is new or a revision
- (6) A description of how the proposal is responsive to the priorities of the Pilot and Collaborative Studies Program
- (7) Specific Aims of the project
- (8) A brief description of the research plan
- (9) A signed attestation statement that the project is not funded through another mechanism

Submission: Proposals must be submitted electronically by email to Katherine_Libby@urmc.rochester.edu. (phone: 585-758-7831)

Format for Full Proposal Submission: Full proposals will be in a modified NIH format with a 6 page, 11-point font maximum. The face page should indicate whether subcontracts are included, whether the proposal is new or a revision, and the status of any RSRB approvals. All proposals will contain Specific Aims and Background sections, and a section on "Significance and opportunities for catalyzing new funding." These first 3 sections are limited to a total of 2 pages, and the remaining 4 pages will contain the Research Plan and Methods, a Potential Problems and Alternatives section, and up to a 1 page maximum bibliography. No appendices or letters of support will be allowed, and all figures and tables must be contained within the body of the proposal. A specific WORD template will be provided to the selected applicants at the time of solicitation of full proposals. Revised versions of previously submitted applications that have not been funded may be resubmitted, if responsive to the clinical and community based focus of the current RFP. Revised proposals may only be resubmitted one time. Revised applications may include a 1 page maximum introductory statement responding to prior concerns. A completed ORPA sign-off form (available at <http://www.rochester.edu/ORPA/FORMS/>) must accompany each full proposal.