

CTSI Funding Pathways for New/Early-stage Investigators

CTSI funding programs create pathways for new/early-stage investigators to leverage their scientific proposals. Following these pathways will optimize internal UR-CTSI and external NIH funding opportunities to increase the likelihood of becoming an independently-funded investigator.

Research Methods Forum: The Forum provides an interactive setting for investigators to present new and developing research ideas to multidisciplinary experts in clinical research methods and potential collaborators of all ranks, who will provide critique and recommendations. Interested investigators can present their research proposal at an early stage of project development, and again when the research design is more advanced and the collaborative team is more established. New/early-stage investigators who plan to apply for a CTSI Pilot or KL2 award are encouraged to participate in the Forum or a similar peer review process prior to applying. Such faculty will particularly benefit from this forum, including acceleration of their integration into the URM research enterprise; obtaining early comprehensive feedback on their proposed research plans; and, ultimately, advancing towards an independent research career more efficiently. Investigators who plan to apply for CTSI programs should plan their first presentation at the Research Methods Forum at least 2-4 months prior to that program's due date.

Pathway 1: for investigators eligible for K awards

After participation in the Research Methods Forum, applicants can expand their specific aims page into a full KL2 application for the November deadline. The KL2 Mentored Career Development Program provides 2 years of support for the early career development of multidisciplinary clinical and translational scientists. The goal of the program is to promote the successful transition of KL2 scholars to an independent career as a clinical and translational investigator by means of an individual K or R award. If the CTSI KL2 application is not funded, the proposal can be re-worked into an NIH K award application. KL2 award announcements are typically made in January, so investigators will know by February if they are CTSI funded.

Date	Early Nov	Feb 12
Funding type	KL2 Application Notify CTSI of intent early Oct	NIH K or equivalent Application
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After participation in the Research Methods Forum, applicants can use their specific aims page for the September CTSI Pilot abstract submission and if chosen to submit a full pilot proposal, expand it. The overall goal of the Pilot Studies Program is to provide seed funding for highly innovative translational and clinical research that addresses translational research questions, and provides insights generalizable to other projects. While that application is under review, the CTSI pilot proposal can be modified into an independent investigator (NIH R-series, or equivalent) application. CTSI funding decisions will not be influenced by whether the investigator also applies for an NIH award.

Pathway 2: for investigators not eligible for K awards

After participation in the Research Methods Forum, applicants can use their specific aims page for the September CTSI Pilot abstract submission and if chosen to submit a full pilot proposal, expand it. The overall goal of the Pilot Studies Program is to provide seed funding for highly innovative translational and clinical research that addresses translational research questions, and provides insights generalizable to other projects. While that application is under review, the CTSI pilot proposal can be modified into an independent investigator (NIH R-series, or equivalent) application. CTSI funding decisions will not be influenced by whether the investigator also applies for an NIH award.

Date	Early Sep	Mid Dec	Feb or Jun 16
Funding type	CTSI Pilot Abstract	CTSI Pilot Full Proposal	NIH R or equivalent Application
Page limits	1	6	6

Some investigators may combine both pathways to optimize funding opportunities.

Combined pathway: for investigators eligible for K awards

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Date	Early Sep	Early Nov	Mid Dec	Feb 12	Jun 16
Funding type	CTSI Pilot Abstract	KL2 Application Notify CTSI of intent early Oct	CTSI Pilot Full Proposal	NIH K or equivalent Application	NIH R or equivalent Application
Page limits	1	12	6	12	6

Note: The NIH does not allow an applicant to have two active K-award applications at one time. However, investigators should take advantage of what they have already written when applying for the next funding opportunity. For the example: the twelve-page KL2 CTSI application can be used as the base for the NIH K award application and the six-page CTSI pilot application can be modified into a six page R21 application. To learn more about CTSI funding options or the Research Methods Forum contact researchhelp@urmc.rochester.edu.