

Core Facility Pilot Project Awards – February 2009

There are two sources of funding for pilot project awards to use technologies in our core facilities. The University Cancer Research Fund (UCRF) will fund awards relevant to cancer research and the Clinical Translational Science Award (CTSA) will fund awards in areas not related to Cancer.

Guidelines

I. Purpose

A major goal of the University Cancer Research Fund (UCRF) is to lower the burden of cancer in North Carolina and the nation by promoting groundbreaking cancer research. Modern cancer research is a highly collaborative enterprise employing sophisticated technologies that are expensive to purchase, expensive to maintain, and require highly trained and experienced personnel. To make these technologies readily available to our clinical and basic science faculties, UNC has developed a set of core facilities (Cores) that focus on the technologies needed for today's cancer research, and is developing new technologies and new Cores to make us ready for the cancer research of tomorrow.

A major goal of the Clinical Translational Science Award (CTSA) is to enhance translational research at UNC-Chapel Hill resulting in more rapid translation of novel discoveries into clinical practice. A critical component of this effort is the development and applications of new technologies to clinical problems. See the TraCS website for more information on these awards: <http://tracs.unc.edu/pilots.htm>

The primary purpose of these UCRF Pilot Project Awards is to provide funding for clinical and basic researchers wanting to initiate a project using technology in one or more of our Cores, but lacking the preliminary results to apply for agency funding. These awards will provide the Cores with the funds to carry out the analyses necessary to acquire the preliminary results needed by the investigator to apply for longer-term funding. These pilot funds can also be used by faculty who want to augment their research by adding new technology to their research, but their current grant(s) must not contain funding for

these analyses, as well as for initiating totally new projects. It is anticipated that the new data will enhance the competitive renewal of this research. The number and amount of the awards will vary depending on the Cores and technologies being used and the type and amount of data needed. Pilot Project applications must demonstrate significant potential for future funding, and it is expected that research grant proposals will result from these awards.

Note that in addition to funds for carrying out experimental work in cores, there are also funds available for analysis of data generated in the cores by the Center for Bioinformatics.

II. Funding for UCRF Awards

Awards for pilot projects will be variable depending on the the technology needed, and are anticipated to be between \$5,000 and \$50,000. Higher amounts of funding may be justified for particularly expensive technologies. The final number and amount of awards will depend upon the quality of the proposals received, the available funding, and the needs of the pilot project to collect data in one or more of our core facilities. **All funds will be provided to the appropriate Cores in the name of the investigator to be spent only on the pilot project.** [Prep work done in the PI's lab will not be funded through this mechanism.] Funds may be used for services the core currently bills for, as well as for the expenses of developing new technologies.

A proposed budget appropriate for the idea and work proposed will be a major review criterion and should be developed with input from the director of the Core. Input from Core Directors concerning the budget may be sought during the review process. Expenditures may begin at any time after the official start date but generally should be expended within the time limits set by the award. No-cost extensions are possible but not encouraged. Annual reporting on progress, significance, and impact is required, with particular attention to proposals resulting from these experiments.

III. Eligibility

UNC Chapel Hill faculty members are eligible to apply. All UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center members are eligible to apply. An investigator (acting as principal investigator) may submit only one proposal per round to the Pilot Project Awards. Investigators

can be co-investigators on multiple projects or principal investigator on one project and co-investigator on one or more other projects. Pilot Project Awardees will be ineligible to submit proposals (as PI) for one year following their award. Awardees may also be called upon to assist with the review process in the future.

IV. Application

a. Applications for this second round are due Wednesday, March 4th at 5:00 pm EDT. Investigators must submit their entire application as a single PDF. The file size of the single PDF must not exceed 2 MB. Submit the complete application to: Dede Corvinus (email: dede_corvinus@med.unc.edu). A complete application includes a cover sheet, a Pilot Project Abstract, text (limited to three pages), budget, budget justification, letters of support, appendices, etc. A letter of support from the Core Director is required. (Request coversheet and budget templates from Dede.) Other letters are optional.

b. As much as possible, the proposal text should follow the standard NIH outline: specific aims, background, previous studies, and research plan. Specific aims, background, and previous studies should be limited to provide a sufficient description of the research plan.

Applicants should use the required Abstract to summarize their proposed work and make clear the research's promise for future funding, including problem to be solved and impact. The text of the application (specific aims to research plan) is limited to three pages (including figures). The abstract, budget, budget justification, references, human subjects, etc. are not included in the three-page limit. Appendices and other supporting materials (such as letters of support) are allowed and are also not included in the page limit. Reviewers are not compelled to read appendices. Please make sure that your application is interpretable without appendices and that it meets file size specifications.

Use at least 0.5 inch margins, single or exactly 12 pt line spacing; and no smaller than 11 pt Times Roman font or its equivalent.

c. Use the budget forms to present the budget. The accompanying justification should be sufficiently detailed so reviewers can assess whether appropriate resources have been requested. Inadequate justification may result in a less favorable

score and/or lower funding.

d. Applications must include NIH biosketches and other support for the principal investigator and all key investigators and collaborators.

e. If the principal or other key investigators have received other grant support for the proposed research or similar research in the past, please include relevant funding information.

f. Those receiving an award will submit one-paragraph scientific and lay abstracts (250 words or less, each). The lay abstract should describe the project or program in terms understandable to the non-scientific community. One or both abstracts will be published on the UCRF website and may be used in part or in full in reports to the University, the NC General Assembly and the public.

g. Your application must include a Pilot Project Abstract (500 words or less) that summarizes the project, its use of the Core(s) and the significance of the proposed work and its impact on cancer research. The Pilot Project Abstract is a key document, as it will be used in the first stage of review.

h. Within 72 hours of the deadline, you should receive a notice of receipt of your application. If you submit an application and do not receive notice within 72 hours, please contact Dede Corvinus (email: dede_corvinus@med.unc.edu).

V. Review

a. A committee composed of the chairs of the Core Oversight Committee and other scientists chosen for their relevant expertise, will evaluate and rank proposals. Depending on the number of applications received, the committee may triage applications to allow a thorough review of the most competitive proposals. This first-stage review will primarily use the Pilot Project Abstract. The Cores Oversight Committee will consider peer review rankings / recommendations and determine awards. We expect final decisions to be announced in early April.

b. Evaluation criteria (unweighted) include:

- Scientific merit
- Collaboration with a Core
- Innovation and the value-added by that innovation
- Relevance to cancer research

- Potential for future grants, publications, other research products and/or sustainability
 - Project feasibility given facilities, budget, time, and other resources available [including ability to conduct data analysis];
 - Appropriateness of the budget
 - Potential impact on cancer research, UNC, and North Carolina.
- c. Awardees and other applicants will not receive a score or a critique. The review process will endeavor to provide brief feedback to those not selected for funding.

VI. Requirements

- a. Funding must be used for a pilot project that uses one or more of the UNC Cores funded by the UCRF and/or the LCCC to carry out the main focus of the work proposed. For this first round, we anticipate a mid-April 2009 start date with 12 to 24 months (depending upon the proposal) to expend awarded dollars. The next round is planned for September 2009.
- b. Future applications by Pilot Project Awardees to granting agencies, submitted using preliminary results gained at least in part from this award, will budget for at least 5% of a tech salary in the Core being used for the work. This will enable strengthening of funding for our Cores and allow for expansion of the Pilot Project Award program.
- c. Papers arising from Cores that play a *significant* role in acquiring and analyzing data central to that paper should list major contributing Core personnel on those publications. Research has become a collaborative enterprise with multiple contributors to the acquisition and analysis of central data. All significant contributors should participate in papers and abstracts reporting that data. This will help attract the strongest directors and workers to our Cores and strengthen our research enterprise.
- d. Funds may be budgeted only for expenditure in the Core(s) appropriate for collecting the pilot data required by the proposal. This may also include funds for appropriate data analysis, listed as a separate budget item where appropriate. Unused funds will revert to the supporting funding source. All proposed expenses must conform to the general policies of the University.
- e. Project leaders are required to consult with the appropriate core directors prior to submission; letters of support are required from the appropriate core directors as part of the application.

f. Prior to actual funding, all awarded research projects that involve animals or human subjects must be reviewed in accordance with the University's general assurances and HIPAA. Reviews and approvals may be "Just in Time" and are not required for registration/application. Projects involving human subjects must be submitted to an Institutional Review Board (IRB). Intervention studies and clinical protocols must be reviewed and approved by the UNC Lineberger Protocol Review Committee. Appropriate animal forms must also be filed and approved. All investigators and all persons named on the budget page must have certification of training in the protection of human subjects.

g. Prior to actual funding, all awarded projects must submit electronic scientific and lay abstracts (250 words or less, each).

h. Progress reports are due annually on the anniversary of funding. A final summary report shall be submitted three months after the end date of support. This report must be submitted earlier, if the recipient of the grant is leaving the University. The summary progress report should assess the project's development successes in terms of the initial goals.

To assess the longer-term dividends from Pilot Project Award investments, principal investigators will provide short annual progress report updates for at least three years after the end of the funding so that we can assess the impact of the funding on publications and grant funding. All reports should reference impact on the Core, research products generated, including abstracts submitted/published, peer-reviewed articles submitted/published, grant applications submitted/funded, and potential/actual intellectual property (reports of invention, etc). All progress reports should identify the Cores in which the pilot project was done.

h. Awardees will help with at least one round of review of future Pilot Project Awards

i. All manuscripts, abstracts, posters, and presentations resulting from this award should acknowledge support from the University Cancer Research Fund or the CTSA as appropriate.

CORE FACILITY PILOT PROJECT REQUEST

Project PI(s)	
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Core Facility being used	
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Title:

Is this research cancer relevant (This is only to help identify the funding source)	
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Total requested amount:

PI Signature **Date**

Core Director Signature **Date**