

EMERGING CHALLENGES IN BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH (ECBR)

Fall 2019

Requests for Research Proposals for Basic Science Discovery Research

I. Summary of Award

The UNC School of Medicine's Office of Research (OoR) sponsors an annual pilot award, *Emerging Challenges in Biomedical Research (ECBR)*, to provide support for innovative, early stage research relevant to NIH strategic priorities. For this round of funding, the OoR will provide support for innovative, basic science research projects.

The purpose of the current challenge (Fall 2019) is to recognize the importance and impact of fundamental research by supporting interdisciplinary, technology-focused, basic science research that can lead to new discoveries or technologies.

Basic science research leads to the understanding of living systems and life processes at a mechanistic level, and provides the critical foundational knowledge necessary to develop new drugs, reduce disease, and create cutting-edge technology that enhances public health and the quality of life for all humanity. In 2016, the NIH Institute and Center Directors, including the NIH Director Francis Collins, signed a letter to the editor of *Science* titled "[Basic Science: Bedrock of Progress](#)" reiterating NIH's commitment to basic science funding and recognizing the life-changing and breakthrough findings that have resulted from basic science research.

The School of Medicine Office of Research is using the 2019 ECBR to provide seed funding for fundamental, technologically sophisticated, interdisciplinary, discovery research projects that will lead to larger funding opportunities and scientific breakthroughs.

All new basic-science research proposals are welcome, and we particularly encourage new projects and ideas from new cross-cutting teams in areas that are not supported yet on campus. Direct translational impact is not required, though disease relevance should be apparent. The lead PIs on the proposal should all be faculty from the **UNC School of Medicine**, and at least **two of the PIs should be from different scientific disciplines**.

Furthermore, due to the current vaping epidemic and reports on vaping related illnesses and deaths, basic science research related to vaping will be considered as high-priority.

The funds are not meant as a supplement or bridge to an existing funded project. The supported project is expected to lead to submission of novel interdisciplinary program project grants and multiple PI R01s to ultimately improve human health by UNC SOM and Medical Center investigators.

II. Award Administration

The SOM Office of Research will administer the ECBR funding. The awards will provide up to \$50K for a 1-year period.

III. Eligibility

- a. The **team leaders must hold a primary appointment in the School of Medicine**. Teams may include collaborators from other schools or units, but Principal Investigators must be SOM.
- b. The proposal should represent a new avenue of research for the investigators. **This is a key criterion for review**. There must be no prior internal or external funding for the project or funding overlap. This award is not intended as supplementary or bridge funding.

- c. Our ultimate goal is to facilitate the collection of preliminary data that will support competitive new basic science federal grants.

IV. Application Process

The Application Components are as follows:

1. Title Page
 - Please provide the project title, and the name, title, department/affiliation, and role for each of the key team members.
2. Abstract (1/2 page)
3. Research Plan (5 pages; 1.5 line spacing, font Arial 11 pt., and 1-inch margins) which must include the following:
 - Brief Description of Research Team-
 - Specific Aims
 - Significance, Innovation, and Translational Impact
 - Approach. (Include statistical analysis and justification)
 - Timeline and goals for future funding.
4. Detailed Budget and Justification
 - Funds may be allocated to support research staff, supplies, core facility fees, travel directly related to project goals, and small equipment. Salary support for faculty is not an allowable cost. Salary support for trainees, and technicians are permissible. Funds will support direct costs only.
5. NIH Biosketches (for SOM) for Key Personnel
 - Include current and pending support and internal as well as external funding sources.

Applications must be received by 5 PM on December 1, 2019. All Submissions should be emailed to Trisha Dant at OoR_submissions@med.unc.edu. Should you have any questions, please reach out to Trish either by email or by phone: 919-966-4287.