

**Call for Applications for Collaborative Pilot Project Grants**  
**Nebraska Center for Cellular Signaling**  
**Year 5 of Phase III**

This notice represents our official request for the next round of collaborative applications. This funding is available to support collaborative projects amongst current and past NCCS CoBRE investigators and their collaborators.

One of our major goals is to support projects where it is judged likely that the investigators will submit meritorious, multi-investigator proposals to external agencies within 6 months after the completion of the NCCS pilot project. Another goal is to promote appropriate application and use of NCCS core technology, especially the UNMC Advanced Microscopy Facility. More mature collaborations that utilize this core facility will have an advantage over less developed partnerships.

Awards will be made for **1 year** with funded amounts up to **\$100,000 per project**.

**Budget Guidelines:**

The budget must not exceed \$100,000 total.

Earliest possible start of funding: August 14, 2017

No more than 5% salary/fringe benefit support for each investigator.

Salary/fringe benefit support for no more than two research personnel (one per laboratory) up to the current starting salary of a Technologist I.

The balance of funds is to be shared for a common supply budget between the collaborating laboratories. Supplies may include costs of core facility usage and lab operating expenses.

**Timelines:**

Please direct all questions to Keith Johnson at [kjohnsonr@unmc.edu](mailto:kjohnsonr@unmc.edu) or 559-3890 or Rick MacDonald at [rgmacdon@unmc.edu](mailto:rgmacdon@unmc.edu) or 559-7824. Applications must be submitted electronically to Michele Griebel at [michele.griebel@unmc.edu](mailto:michele.griebel@unmc.edu) no later than May 5, 2017.

Proposals will be evaluated for scientific merit by our External Advisory Board. As in the past for internal review mechanisms such as this, we will not be providing detailed critiques of proposals that are not recommended for funding.

**Application Instructions:**

- Format: NIH R21 format for length, including a complete cover page and budget pages. *Note these applications are not required to meet the normal R21 criteria for translational or high-risk/reward projects.*
- The core components of a typical R21 proposal (specific aims, research strategy, narrative, abstract, etc.) need to be included. Please be aware that we must forward the proposals that we select for funding to the NIH for their approval, so NIH format is required.
- It will be advantageous to include preliminary data and other evidence of ongoing collaboration.

- The proposal should include clear plans stating when grant applications will be submitted and to what agencies they will be submitted.

### **Eligibility and Requirements:**

- All past and current NCCS investigators and mentors at any of the collaborating NCCS institutions are eligible (a list of current NCCS investigators is appended to this RFA).
- The goal of the NCCS Pilot Project Grant Program is to assist teams of investigators in acquisition of external NIH R01-type funding. Please note that the NIH does not allow concurrent funding from *more than one* IDeA grant or *more than one project* funded by NIH dollars from a single IDeA grant. Thus, those investigators with an ongoing award from an INBRE, CoBRE or IDeA-CTR *may not be eligible* for funding from the NCCS CoBRE. Furthermore, if you already hold current NCCS funding that would continue beyond August 14, 2017, this *must* be taken into consideration in the review of new proposals. We *may* be able to fund a second highly meritorious pilot project for you by using NIH dollars for one award and internal (non-NIH funds) for the other.
- Teams of investigators on successful proposals will be made up of Co-PIs; ***teams composed of a single PI plus Co-Investigators do not meet these criteria***. At least one of the Co-PIs must be a member of the NCCS or meet the early-stage investigator criteria (below). Eligible investigators must hold appointments leading to tenure or be tenured already. In any given funding cycle, an investigator will be limited to one application in which he/she is a Co-PI.
- **Early-stage investigators are strongly encouraged to apply and, upon receiving pilot grant funding, will automatically be considered NCCS investigators.** For purposes of the NCCS Pilot Grants Program, early-stage investigators are defined as those who have been in a tenure-leading position for less than five years and who have not yet acquired NIH-derived or other similar external funding as an independent scientist. During the Pilot Project funding period, such early-stage investigators will be supervised by Professional Development Teams (PDT) to be assigned by the NCCS. Details of the duties, responsibilities and benefits of the PDT are available upon request.
- Individuals with transient commitments to or from their institutions will not be eligible. Thus, post-doctoral fellows and visiting professors and investigators with no more than adjunct appointments are not eligible.
- It is our intention to fund those projects most likely to result in meritorious multi-investigator applications being submitted to external funding agencies such as the NIH. Past history of scientific cooperation between the collaborating investigators is thus a plus.
- Applications will be considered from investigators currently participating in multi-PI projects whose funding has lapsed or whose funding is in no-cost extension. It will be an advantage if the investigators have submitted a renewal application and the renewal application was scored but not funded.
- NCCS members are encouraged to consider projects involving collaborations with clinical researchers or projects with clear clinical implications.
- We will accept applications seeking support for projects that already have seed grant support from other sources. However, such applications must make it unambiguously clear how NCCS funds will add to the likelihood of a meritorious multi-PI proposal being submitted. In addition, as mentioned above, we cannot fund with our CoBRE dollars a person who already has ongoing support from the IDeA program.

- We expect that applicants will submit a proposal to an external agency within six months of completing funding of these pilot grants. We ask that investigators state what external agencies they have in mind and outline a reasonable strategy for submitting proposals that utilize and build on the data you are obtaining with pilot grant support.
- We ask that applicants verify that all regulatory affairs requirements are being satisfied and, if applicable, provide IRB or IACUC protocol numbers. If such protocols have not yet been approved, the investigators will be obligated to provide evidence of protocol approval (protocol numbers) before funding can commence. The NIH will not allow us to fund any of the pilots until all have satisfied the regulatory requirements.
- **We require a final progress report sent to the NCCS no later than 30 days after the end of pilot grant support.** The reports will contain a summary of progress and scholarly activities such as presentations and publications. These annual/final reports will be reviewed by the Coordinator of the Pilot Grants Program to verify that investigators are complying with these requirements and then the reports will be included as part of our annual progress report to the NIH.

### **Review of Applications:**

We will have proposals evaluated for scientific merit by our External Advisory Board. As in the past for internal review mechanisms like this, we will NOT be providing detailed critiques of proposals that are not recommended for funding.

If you have any questions, please ask.

Good luck.

**NCCS Investigators, as of January 1, 2017:**

Director: Keith Johnson  
Assistant Director: Rick MacDonald

UNMC College of Dentistry

Ali Nawshad  
Aimin Peng  
Tom Petro  
Greg Oakley  
Jim Wahl

UNMC Eppley

Hamid Band  
Jixin Dong  
Rob Lewis  
Xu Luo  
Mayumi Naramura  
Amarnath Natarajan  
Pankaj Singh  
Joyce Solheim  
Jing Jenny Wang

UNMC College of Medicine

Erika Boesen  
Steve Caplan  
Kaustubh Datta  
John Davis  
Howard Fox  
Shantaram Joshi  
Ming-Fong Lin  
Parmender Mehta  
Justin Mott  
Naava Naslavsky  
Paul Sorgen  
Melissa Teoh-Fitzgerald  
Myron Toews  
Cheng Wang  
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Laura Hansen  
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Deb Brown  
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