NUCATS VOUCHER AND PILOT PROGRAMS

The NUCATS voucher (tier 1) and pilot (tier 2) programs are a new funding mechanism designed to accelerate research by providing rapid, targeted funding to address small, but critical gaps in clinical and translational research work that is otherwise at present not funded by other sources. View PDF

Focus:
The funding is open to all eligible investigators, described below, but is particularly targeted at:

1. Junior faculty who have not yet established a significant funding base
2. Projects involving critical steps in the device and drug development pathway
3. Projects involving critical steps in research dissemination and implementation in community and practice settings
   (This subset of Tier 2 Pilots, Dissemination & Implementation (D&I) pilots has some specific background and requirements described below.)
4. A need, while critical to translational science, is too small to be suitable for conventional research funding mechanisms (example, biostatistics support for the development of preliminary data)

Applicant Eligibility:
1. All applicants must be NUCATS members, AND one of the following:
   2. A. Faculty in one of the NUCATS partner institutions (NU, NMHC, LCH, or RIC) engaged in research who is eligible to apply for follow-on external grant funding.
      B. Other individuals such as community/practice partners, students, trainees, post doctoral fellows, residents, and fellows who are collaborating with a NUCATS member who is a researcher described in 2A. may be a co-investigator, but not a PI.
3. D&I pilot applications are required to be submitted jointly. The application should include one academic co-PI that is faculty in one of NUCATS partner institutions and one community co-PI that is representative of the dissemination/implementation audience. Relevant community stakeholders may include community- or faith-based organization, community-based clinician or health center, policy organization or public agency, or other stakeholders. Other academic or community collaborators in addition to the co-PIs may also be part of the proposed work.

Request Eligibility:
1. The request must be for clinical and translational research projects.
2. Gap addressed by the request should not be fundable through other sources available to the applicant.
3. The request should be hypothesis driven.
4. Specify the target date and source of subsequent extramural funding.
5. D&I pilots should facilitate the transfer/spread of evidence-based findings to community/practice audiences.

Request Deliverables:
1. Enough data to provide preliminary results or demonstrate feasibility for an important specific aim of a grant or other source of funding (pharma, foundation).
2. Has significant potential impact on human health in the near term.
3. D&I pilots may but are not required to lead to future external funding.
4. 1-page report addressing the outcome of funding within the 30 days of the service being rendered. You will also be asked to report the outcome of pilot or voucher funding for NUCATS reporting purposes.
5. A signed statement of understanding that manuscripts or other project outputs that result from this or subsequent work enabled by this opportunity must cite the NUCATS grant.
6. Commitment to participate in NUCATS evaluation of grant outcomes.

Funding, Reviews and Timing:
Two Tiers of funding will be available:

Tier I. Voucher Program.
   a) Up to $2,500 will be awarded. The total amount that may be requested in a single application is $2,500 for all proposed activities. Investigators may submit more than one application during a given year for different projects. Requests for >$2,500 must be pre-approved by the NUCATS Director or Deputy Director.
b) The NUCATS Navigator team will conduct an administrative review.
c) Applications are accepted and reviewed on an ongoing basis.
d) Applicants will receive a response within two weeks of the submission of a complete application.

tier 2. Pilot Program.
e) Up to $10,000 will be awarded, with exceptions considered in cases for which significant scientific opportunity can be demonstrated. Requests for >$10,000 must be pre-approved by the NUCATS Director or Deputy Director.
f) The NUCATS Pilot and voucher program team will conduct an initial administrative review and NUCATS staff and faculty will conduct a second layer of review depending on domain of the request. Experts in Dissemination and Implementation will participate in the review of all pilot submissions.
g) Applications will be accepted 2 times per year, June 15th and November 15th. We are currently accepting applications and the due date for the applications is April 22, 2016.
h) As of 8/15/15 our funding agency requires additional documentation prior to the release of funds. You will be required to cite our grant in your IRB or IACUC documentation and we will need to forward your IRB and IACUC approval, protocol, and consent form to the NIH.

Examples of Allowable Costs:
Examples of Tier 1 Support (Data analysis):
- Consultation with faculty statisticians and statistical analysts in the Biostatistics Collaboration Center.
- Regulatory support from NUCATS.
- Computational Cluster CPU time to run specific analyses.
- Participant recruitment.
- Laboratory or hospital tests such as CBC’s.
- Qualitative focus groups.
- Bridges in funding will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- This is not an exhaustive list and examples outside the list above will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Examples of Tier 2 Support (Pilot data):
- Any of the items listed above.
- Analysis of samples by an NU (or affiliated U of C or UIC) core facility.
https://www.facilities.research.northwestern.edu/browse-facilities/list

Examples of Tier 2 Support (D&I Pilots):
- Design/printing of materials.
- Event expenses.
- Consultants.
- Technology development.
- Staff/student salary (allowable with appropriate justification).

Examples of Non-Allowable Costs:
- Your own salary, or salary of anyone in your group (allowable for D&I pilots with appropriate justification).
- Hiring a summer student, part-time FTE, etc. (allowable for D&I pilots with appropriate justification).
- Laptop Computers.
- Computer Disk Storage.
- Travel to scientific meetings.

Application Instructions:
1. Complete the appropriate application in NITRO Competitions.
2. Tier 1 requirements. In 500 words or less provide the significance, hypothesis, aims, analysis plan, impact and deliverables. Be sure to address lack of alternate funding and plans for future funding. You must describe your focus area.
3. Tier 2 requirements. In 1000 words or less provide significance, hypothesis, aims, analysis plan, impact and deliverables. Be sure to address need, lack of alternate funding, and plans for future funding.
   a. An additional cover sheet is required for the tier 2 (pilot) program application, please be sure to fill it out and submit in the NITRO Competitions application.
   b. For D&I Pilots: In 1500 words or less, please provide the following: significance, description of research findings to be disseminated/implemented (e.g. main findings, engagement of stakeholders in study if any, evidence findings are ready to be D&I); D&I plan (applicant experience/capacity, strategies/activities, target audience(s); Description of partnership (duration, prior activities), description of any additional key stakeholders involved; Evaluation plan to measure effects of D & I (e.g. reach).
      1. You must also upload a letter of support from the community co-PI organization stating interest/willingness to serve as partner/site for D & I.
      2. Submitted budget must clearly indicate the separate budget expenses/amounts for the academic and community co-PIs.

4. If you are utilizing an NU or affiliated core, you must include specific line-item estimates from the applicable cores and/or resources. A quote from the core is preferred.
5. If your request includes PHI or research participants, please include the IRB number and approval information. IRB approval must be obtained prior to the release of funds. Due to changes with our funding program, funds cannot be released until after the project protocol is submitted and approved by the IRB and submitted to NIH for review.
6. Priority will be given to applicants without current "active" Pilot Grant support
7. If more than one application is submitted in a given round, then please rank your applications by need
8. If you are requesting services from Lurie Children’s Hospital, please contact the LCH Office of Research before submitting.

**Contact Information:**
Please direct questions about the pilot and voucher program to Abby Cosentino-Boehm at a-cosentino-boehm@northwestern.edu or (312) 503-2306.