

Pilot Project Call for Applications
Applications due February 15, 2018
Anticipated start date: June 1, 2018

NIH Center of Biomedical Research Excellence
Center for Host-Pathogen Interactions

In anticipation of the third year funding, the Center for Host-Pathogen Interactions at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences invites applications for pilot studies to support research that fits well within the scientific theme of this NIH funded Center For Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) (<http://med.und.edu/orgs/host-pathogen-interactions/>). This competition is open to all full time, tenured, tenure-track, research-track, and/or clinical-track faculty at UND. The goal of this Pilot Project Program is to promote new research in the field of host-pathogen interactions and extend the current research into novel directions with high potential for future COBRE projects and for acquiring R-grant type extramural funding support. It is expected that this program will attract investigators into the research area of host-pathogen interactions, foster new collaborations among new and existing investigators, and promote the utilization of flow cytometry, imaging, human cell core and histopathology core facilities supported by this host-pathogen interactions COBRE.

The mission of the Center for Host-Pathogen Interactions is to support the thematic, multidisciplinary center that augments and expands our ability to gain further understanding of host-specific events that are critical to pathogen evasion of host defenses and to identify potential new targets for treatments of devastating diseases. Because COBRE Centers are expected to have a thematic scientific focus, research projects must fit within the broad COBRE theme of host-microbial interactions. Successful applications may incorporate one or more of the following topics in depth:

- Microbiome effects on health and disease states in the host
- Investigations into understanding inflammatory processes in health and disease
- Microbial manipulation of host immune processes
- Development of new research tools to study host-pathogen interactions
- Identification of new correlates, diagnostics, and therapeutics for infectious and inflammatory diseases

The purpose of this award is to expand the existing host-pathogen interaction, inflammation, and infectious disease group; and increase the competitiveness of new and/or early-stage investigators conducting research

that is directly related to the theme of the Host-Pathogen COBRE. Established investigators will only be funded if research represents a new and novel direction.

The applicants for this award are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the mentoring program offered by this COBRE to identify a suitable mentor. We anticipate funding 3-4 proposals with a maximum budget of upto \$40,000 for one year, renewable for additional years depending on the availability of funds.

Criteria for evaluation of Pilot Project applications include:

- Strength of the science and the quality and clarity of its presentation;
- Likelihood of the project becoming competitive for independent R0I funding;
- Likelihood of getting a publishable result within the one-year time frame;
- Relevance to the COBRE theme (see above);
- A clear, detailed plan for utilization of one or more COBRE Core Laboratories;
- Background, experience and career status of the applicant;
- A track record of past research, research grant applications and research funding.

COBRE Projects must have a single Principal Investigator who will be responsible for the scientific direction and management of the project. Applications may involve collaborators, but only when they bring complementary investigator strengths and approaches to the project. All collaborators receiving COBRE funds must be from North Dakota institutions.

General Terms and Conditions of Pilot Project Awards:

1. New PIs not previously funded by COBRE are encouraged to apply.
2. Priority will be given to projects that collaborate with existing COBRE investigators and make significant use of COBRE Core Labs.
3. Funds may be used for consumable supplies, services or small laboratory hardware but not for equipment (i.e. items costing > \$5000). Personnel costs are allowable but preference will be given to applications that name specific individuals who are assured to be present on-site, eligible to work and ready to begin no later than June 1, 2018. Travel costs and tuition costs are not allowed.
4. Investigators who receive COBRE support are required to participate as fully as possible in the regular research meetings of the of the Center, as well as seminars, symposia, workshops and other special activities organized or sponsored by the Center.
5. A standard NII-I-type progress report (ca. 2 pages in length) including publications along with a proof of submission of an R-level (R0I, or R21 or P0I) grant for extramural support is required from each COBRE project investigator by February 16, 2019.
6. Awardees are required to cite the COBRE grant (NIH P20GM113123) on all publications.
7. Term and budget adjustments: The COBRE PI reserves the right to make term and budget adjustments in accordance with the intent of the Host Pathogen-COBRE program and NIH policies concerning scientific overlap of projects.

8. Unanticipated new requirements: By accepting COBRE funds, awardees agree to comply with any and all requirements not already mentioned that may be imposed on COBRE by NIH or other institutional authorities.

Prospective applicants with questions about eligibility, program details, or the "fit" of their project to the COBRE theme are encouraged to contact Dr. Jyotika Sharma (701-777-2624; jyotika.sharma@med.und.edu).

The Application Process:

Applications should be prepared in general accord with the NIH PHS 398 application guidelines, (3/2016 revision, available from <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>).

Include:

1. NIH Face Page (Form Page 1)
2. NIH Pages Two and Three: Summary, Relevance, Project/Performance Sites, Senior/Key Personnel, Other Significant Contributors, and Human Embryonic Stem cells
3. NIH Detailed Budget (Form Page 4). Allowable costs include salary support for graduate students or staff and supplies. Funds cannot be used for PI's salary, travel, and equipment purchases greater than \$5,000.
4. Budget/Personnel justification
5. Biographical Sketch(es) of PI and Key Personnel
6. Research Plan/Proposal (**three-page limit** including specific aims, significance, innovation, and research strategy. Bibliography is not included in the three-page limit.)
7. History or Success from Prior Awards (one page maximum outlining the progress on that prior work, including publications and extramural funding)
8. NIH Human subjects, if applicable
9. Vertebrate animal justification and protection, if applicable
10. Letters of support

In addition, please observe the following:

- The research plan may not exceed three (3) pages in length including figures and tables but excluding references (which must be complete citations in the NIH style).
- All figures and their lettering must be large enough to be clearly legible.
- Missing or inaccurate information may disqualify your application from consideration.
- **IRB, IBC, and IACUC approvals must be secured prior to anticipated start date (June 1, 2018).**

Proposals should be submitted by e-mail to Angie Olson (angela.olson@med.und.edu) by 5 p.m. February 15, 2018. Awards are scheduled to begin June 1, 2018.

Evaluation:

Each COBRE Pilot Project will be evaluated in two steps. In the first step, proposals will be evaluated based on scientific merit using the NIH scoring system. Proposals will be scored on a scale of 1 (best) through 9 (worst) based on significance, investigators, innovation, approach, environment (pertaining to research being proposed and the use of core labs), and an overall impact score (based on the high likelihood of success as a fully developed NIH proposal and the scope of work corresponding to the priorities of the COBRE program). In the second step, the COBRE Internal Advisory Committee will determine which grants to recommend for funding based on the priority scores and the COBRE mission. Final approval for funding will be made by the External Advisory Committee, with approval from the NIH.

Contact:

For additional information, please contact Dr. Jyotika Sharma (701-777-2624; jyotika.sharma@med.und.edu).