

**INSTITUTE FOR INTEGRATION OF MEDICINE & SCIENCE  
CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCE AWARD**

**COVID-19 PILOT PROJECTS**

**ACCELERATED REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

**Deadline for Proposal Receipt: May 11, 2020**

**Anticipated funding date: June 1, 2020**

**Overview**

The Institute for Integration of Medicine & Science (IIMS) is soliciting proposals for pilot projects on **COVID-19** under an accelerated submission and rapid-response program. The objective is to support translational and clinical studies that will quickly advance knowledge of this pandemic disease and its causative viral pathogen, SARS-CoV-2. Aspects of COVID-19 of interest for this solicitation include, but are not limited to:

- Epidemiology of the virus and the disease
- Community and population health, as well as health policy aspects
- Pathogenesis, especially with respect to the host immune system
- Innovative preventative or therapeutic strategies
- Human studies, including early clinical trials (Phase 1 to 2a), are of special interest, although novel translational or pre-clinical approaches using cells or animal models will also be considered.

Projects deemed likely to lead to competitive national grant proposals will be of particular interest, as will interdisciplinary collaborative projects that bring together investigators with complementary expertise.

This program is supported by the Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). **Applicants must adhere strictly to the guidelines and formats stipulated in this RFA, as non-complying applications may be administratively inactivated.**

**Eligibility**

Principal Investigator applicants must hold faculty-level appointments at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UTHSCSA). Collaborating investigators may be from CTSA partner institutions (San Antonio Metropolitan Health District, San Antonio Military Health System, South Texas Veterans Health Care System, Texas Biomedical Research Institute, University Health System, University of Texas San Antonio, University of Texas School of Public Health (San Antonio Regional Campus), University of Texas College of Pharmacy, University of Texas Dell Medical School).

**Submission, terms, and conditions**

An individual may submit **only one project as a Principal Investigator (or Co-PI)**, but may also serve as a Co-Investigator on a second project.

Applications must be **submitted through the Survey Monkey Apply** platform (<https://apply-uthscsa.smapply.io/>). The funding opportunity at that site is listed as: IIMS/CTSA COVID-19 Pilot Projects. The deadline for receipt of the full application is **Monday, May 11, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.** If you have any questions, please contact Cindy Castilleja ([castillejac@uthscsa.edu](mailto:castillejac@uthscsa.edu)) at 210 744-6446.

Awards will be made for a one-year project period starting on or about **June 1, 2020**. Progress reports will be required six months (brief) and 12 months after the initiation of funding. In addition, a follow-up survey of related grants and publications will be solicited at 24, 36, and 48 months. Recipients who fail to submit timely and meaningful progress reports will be deemed ineligible for future funding cycles. For projects involving the use of human subjects or vertebrate animals, no expenditures will be permitted until IIMS is provided with a copy of the official letter of approval by the appropriate Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), respectively. Investigators are encouraged to submit IRB and IACUC protocols early in order to avoid significant delays in project initiation. In addition, CTSA-supported projects comprising greater-than-minimal-risk clinical trials (NIH definition) must be pre-approved by the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences. Excessive delays in meeting these regulatory requirements may result in withdrawal of the award.

### **Budget and financial policies**

The maximum budget for these one-year awards is \$50,000, although proposals with smaller budgets will be considered and reviewed under the same criteria. Facilities and Administrative (F&A, indirect cost) expenses will **not** be reimbursed. Funds **cannot** be used to support the salary of the PI or faculty-level collaborators. Salary (plus associated fringe benefits) may be requested for non-faculty support staff, including post-docs. Other allowable expenses include: equipment essential for the project (maximum \$10,000, including computer hardware); PI or Co-PI travel to relevant scientific meetings (maximum \$1,500); consumable laboratory supplies; animal purchase and per diem; core facility fees; consultation fees (maximum \$5,000); computer time; software; publication / presentation expenses; costs related to human subject enrollment and management (listed as "Patient Care Costs" on budget page); and other expenditures that can be justified as being essential for the completion of the project. Note that for projects making use of an IIMS Clinical Research Unit (CRU), an estimated budget for these expenses should be included within the \$50K cap; once such a project is selected for support a detailed budget must be developed in consultation with IIMS staff before the award will be finalized. Tuition expense is **not** an allowed budget item. Account management will be centralized within IIMS-CTSA with expenditures and encumbrances being committed as they are incurred.

### **Application requirements and format**

Applications should be prepared using the templates provided on the Survey Monkey Apply (SMA) website. For attached PDFs, font size can be no smaller than 11 point, preferably Arial or Times New Roman, and margins all-around should be at least 0.5". The length of the **Research Plan is limited to one single-spaced page** (one extra page may be included and may contain graphs, images and illustrations ONLY). The organization of the proposal should be as follows:

Complete SMA templates and attach documents as follows:

- Estimated CRU budget, if applicable (see above)
- Biographical sketch for PI (NIH format; maximum 5 pages)
- Biographical sketches for other key personnel (maximum 5 pages each)
- Research Plan (maximum **one page**)
  - Hypothesis and specific aims
  - Background and significance
  - Work proposed
- Optional **one page maximum** for preliminary data, if available
  - **Note:** Only figures/tables/legends; no narrative text permitted on this page)
- Literature citations (maximum **one page**)
- Letters of collaboration or support (optional)
- Appendices are **not** allowed
- A Certificate of Proposal (COP) is **not** required

### **Review process and criteria**

Applications will undergo accelerated review for scientific merit and program relevance by a group of appropriate content experts and representatives from CTSA resources and services. Merit will be scored based on the following criteria:

- Significance
- Novelty / innovation
- Strength of the study protocol
- Qualifications of the PI and investigative team
- Likelihood of future NIH or other competitive external funding
- Contribution to career development of clinical / translational scientists, if applicable
- Extent of meaningful interdisciplinary collaboration and / or community engagement
- Potential for ultimately improving health outcomes
- Protection of human subjects and experimental animals

Note that due to the accelerated time frame of the review process, applicants will not receive written critiques of their proposals.

### **Funding expectations**

It is anticipated that this program will support at least four projects.

### **Responsibilities of the Principal Investigator**

- Abide by NIH rules and regulations
- Abide by IIMS-CTSA policies and procedures
- Provide demographic information in a timely fashion, as required before expenditures can be authorized
- At the time of funding provide a complete list of other support, including other pilot project mechanisms, along with explanations of any potential scientific or budgetary overlap
- Submit complete and timely progress reports
- Acknowledge support from the CTSA in all publications and reports generated with pilot project resources (details to be provided at the time of funding)