NUCATS VOUCHER AND PILOT PROGRAMS

The NUCATS voucher (tier 1: $2,500) and pilot (tier 2: $10,000) 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. Projects where the potential for strong clinical or translational impact is clear and can be completed in the proposed timeframe.
2. Junior faculty who have not yet established a significant funding base
3. Projects involving critical steps in the device and drug development pathway
4. 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.)
5. 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:
   - 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
   - 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.
2. 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 or 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 (encouraged but not necessary for D&I pilots).
4. You must specify your timeline (including the target date for follow-on funding) and delineate the targeted 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). D&I pilots are encouraged but not required to lead to future external funding.
2. Has significant potential impact on human health in the near term.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Commitment to participate in NUCATS evaluation of grant outcomes.

Funding, Reviews and Timing:

Two Tiers of funding will be available:
Tier 1. Voucher Program: $2,500 award mechanism awarded on a rolling basis.
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 pending an update on the initial award. 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: $10,000 award mechanism awarded 2 times per year.**

a) 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.
b) 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 D&I will participate in the review of all D&I submissions.
c) Applications will be accepted 2 times per year, June 15th and November 15th. **We are currently accepting applications, they will be due November 30, 2016.**
d) **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 or IACUC approval, protocol, and consent form to the NIH prior to the commencement of the project.**

**Examples of Allowable Costs:**

Examples of Tier 1 Support:
- 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](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

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

**Application Instructions:**

**Voucher Program (tier 1)**
a) Complete the appropriate application in NITRO Competitions: [https://grants.nubic.northwestern.edu/competitions/NUCATS/nucatsvoucherpilot2017](https://grants.nubic.northwestern.edu/competitions/NUCATS/nucatsvoucherpilot2017)
b) 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.

c) The submitted budget must clearly indicate the separate budget expenses/amounts for the academic and community co-PIs.

d) If you are utilizing an NU or affiliated core, you must include specific line-item estimates from the applicable cores and/or resources.

e) 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.

f) Priority will be given to applicants without current "active" NUCATS support

g) If you are requesting services from Lurie Children’s Hospital, please contact the LCH Office of Research before submitting.

Pilot Program (tier 2)

a) Complete the appropriate application in NITRO Competitions: https://grants.nubic.northwestern.edu/competitions/NUCATS/nucatspilot2016

b) 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.

c) An additional cover sheet is required for the pilot program application, please be sure to fill it out and submit in the NITRO Competitions application.

d) The submitted budget must clearly indicate the separate budget expenses/amounts for the academic and community co-PIs.

e) If you are utilizing an NU or affiliated core, you must include specific line-item estimates from the applicable cores and/or resources.

f) 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.

g) Priority will be given to applicants without current "active" NUCATS support

h) If more than one application is submitted in a given round, then please rank your applications by need.

i) If you are requesting services from Lurie Children’s Hospital, please contact the LCH Office of Research before submitting.

Additional instructions for D&I pilots only:

a) Please see the attached document, which provides additional information about D&I submissions.

b) Include information about your community co-PI in the document upload section.

c) 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).

d) 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.

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.
Information about Research Dissemination & Implementation Pilot Grants

NUCATS is seeking applications for Pilot Grants that support innovative approaches to the dissemination and implementation of research findings that address the gap between research discoveries and the translation of this knowledge into programs, clinical practices, and policies to improve the health of the public. These grants will support community-academic collaborations to generate products/activities that facilitate the transfer/spread of evidence-based findings to community audiences, practice or other sites, or policy makers.

Possible activities include:

- developing dissemination products/activities (e.g. white paper, policy brief, infographics, media, manuscript, etc.) or implementation products/activities (e.g. train the trainer session or training guide/video, web-portal, implementation guide/toolkit),
- conducting dissemination or implementation activities (e.g. town hall forum or community meeting to disseminate more broadly, training of community or healthcare providers, distribution of dissemination/implementation products, events/mechanisms to engage/inform study participants of research progress/findings,).

For purposes of these grants, dissemination is defined as the targeted distribution of information and intervention materials to a specific public health or clinical practice audience. The intent is to spread knowledge and the associated evidence-based interventions. Successful dissemination may occur quite differently depending on whether the audience consists of community members/patients, caregivers, practitioners, policymakers, employers, administrators, or other stakeholder groups. Implementation is the use of strategies to adopt and integrate evidence-based health interventions and change practice patterns within specific settings. Implementation efforts must seek to understand the behavior of health and healthcare professionals and support staff, health organizations, community members/patients and caregivers, and policymakers in context as key variables in the sustainable adoption, implementation and uptake of evidence-based interventions. NUCATS seeks to fund projects designed to actively disseminate and implement research results and products using context-appropriate approaches informed and guided by established dissemination and implementation models and frameworks, in the context of real world settings.

Eligibility: D&I pilot applications are required to include both Northwestern investigators and relevant stakeholders (e.g. community, clinician, policymakers or other stakeholders). This includes an academic co-PI that is faculty in one of NUCATS partner institutions and a community co-PI that is representative of the dissemination/implementation audience. The application should illustrate that the submitting partnership is a collaborative effort between the researcher/research team and the major community/practice partner(s). There should be strong established working relationships necessary to prepare and complete the proposed project. NUCATS’ Center for Community Health offers guidance and support for partnership development. Click here to learn more. (hyperlink to http://www.feinberg.northwestern.edu/sites/cch/funding/seed-grants/index.html)

Selection criteria include quality and feasibility of stakeholder and academic partner engagement, quality and feasibility of proposed activities, potential for positive community impact, consideration/plans for sustainability.

D&I pilot grants provide up to $10,000 over 12 months.

Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the Center for Community Health to discuss possible application ideas. Please direct questions specific on the NUCATS Research Dissemination & Implementation Pilots to Jen Brown at jenbrown@northwestern.edu or Darius Tandon at dtandon@northwestern.edu.