



**Translational Biomedical Informatics Research Benefiting Rural Health  
Pilot Grant Opportunity  
Request for Applications January 2020**

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE LETTER OF INTENT (LOI)**

The UAMS Translational Research Institute (TRI) invites applications for pilot grants involving translational biomedical informatics research. The mission of TRI is to develop new and novel approaches that will measurably address the complex health challenges of rural and underrepresented populations. For this Request for Applications (RFA), TRI seeks proposals that employ translational biomedical informatics approaches to healthcare issues that particularly affect rural individuals and/or that directly examine or impact rural health.

Priority will be given to projects that generate critical data to improve competitiveness for future extramural funding and/or facilitate new, multi-disciplinary research collaborations. Projects at all levels of the Translational Spectrum will be considered, but priority will be given to projects that meet an immediate translational need or that can be incorporated into clinical practice in the short-term. Projects with the potential to develop into future multisite studies will be given special consideration. These awards will NOT support projects that are minor offshoots of ongoing research by existing teams. Likewise, these awards will not support bridge funding to previously funded investigators.

Budgets up to \$50,000 for a one year project will be considered. A review of the budget will be part of the funding decision, and applications with less than the maximum budget are encouraged. All pilot projects must be designed to be completed within the one year.

**ELIGIBILITY**

Full-time faculty at UAMS, ACH/ACRI, or CAVHS who hold non-temporary positions at the rank of Instructor or above are eligible for this pilot grant opportunity.

Previous TRI Pilot Grant awardees must submit proof that they have both published at least one manuscript in a peer-reviewed publication and submitted an application for extramural funding based on your previously funded pilot project. Further instructions are provided on the LOI cover page and template.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

**Required Pre-Reviews and Approvals**

Depending on the details of the project, those selected for full application may be required to obtain pre-reviews and/or approvals from their departments or other UAMS committees. For example, all cancer related studies must receive PRMC approval before proceeding with an IRB submission. TRI Program staff will use your LOI to determine which pre-reviews and/or approvals you will need to proceed. All pre-reviews and approvals must be completed by April 10, 2020 in order to proceed with your application.

## **Regulatory Approvals**

Projects selected for full application must be submitted to the relevant research regulatory body (IRB and/or IACUC) for approval by April 17, 2020 and must receive full approval, if applicable, before June 15, 2020. **Projects exempt from IRB submission must provide an [official letter from the IRB](#) stating that the proposed research has been determined as non-human subjects research.** Proof of IRB and/or IACUC submission OR a non-human subjects determination letter should be [emailed](#) to Chrissie Barnes by 4:00 p.m. on April 17.

Receipt of a human subjects research determination request DOES NOT satisfy the requirement for proof of IRB submission. Proof of IRB submission is satisfied by: 1) a non-human subjects determination letter, or 2) proof from CLARA that your request for IRB review has been submitted.

For projects that incorporate animal research, please submit a copy of an email from IACUC certifying that your request has been submitted for review.

IRB and/or IACUC approvals must be [emailed](#) to Chrissie Barnes by June 15, 2020. The expected start dates for all projects is between July 1 and September 1, 2020, depending on the NCATS Prior Approval process (see NCATS Review of Awardees section below). All projects must be completed within one calendar year. Extensions on pilot grants will not be permitted.

## **Consultations and Budget Review**

All projects invited to submit a full application are required to consult with the following TRI groups: 1) Biostatistics, Epidemiology, and Research Design (BERD) group with respect to design and statistical approaches; 2) Comprehensive Informatics Resource Center (CIRC), with respect to informatics approaches and needs; and 3) Laura Wilson, Budget Manager for TRI with respect to budgeting and allowable costs. These consultations are free to pilot program applicants and serve as great resources for strengthening proposals and research design. More details will accompany instructions for the full application.

## **NCATS Review of Awardees- Prior Approval**

Before a notice of award can be issued by TRI, each recommended application must undergo scientific review by the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS). We anticipate project start dates between July 1 1 and August 1, 2020. More information regarding the Prior Approval process will be provided to awarded applicants in May.

## **LETTER OF INTENT (LOI) SUBMISSION PROCESS**

LOIs are solicited broadly from UAMS and related campuses including CAVHS, ACH, and the UAMS northwest campus. All applicants are required to submit a cover page and a one and a half page Letter of Intent (LOI). A copy of the cover page and LOI Instructions are available to download on the [RFA page](#) of the TRI website. The cover page and LOI must be submitted by 12:00 p.m., February 28, 2020, via email to [Chrissie Barnes](#). Please note that the Cover Page and LOI must be merged and submitted as a single pdf document. Contact Chrissie Barnes at 501-526-8730 if you have any questions.

## **Letter of Intent (LOI) Format**

The LOI Cover Page can be downloaded from TRI's [website](#). The LOI should be typed, single-spaced with 0.5 inch margins and no longer than 1,000 words. Acceptable fonts are Arial, Tahoma, or Calibri with a font

size of 11 point. Figure and Table legends may use smaller font but no smaller than 9 point. Please use appropriate headings in preparing your proposal. All proposals should be submitted as a Portable Document Format (PDF) file. The LOI must provide information on each of the following points, which will be major factors in scoring and selecting invitations to submit a full proposal:

- Project Title
- Project Summary - Summarize the project and the importance of the proposed research at a level easily understood by diverse scientific disciplines.
- Potential Impact on the rural health/healthcare.
- Approach - Briefly describe the scientific approach used to address the research question.
- Plan for Extramural Funding - Describe your specific plan of obtaining extramural funding. The plan should include what this project will provide with regard to the likelihood of the type of grant (including proposed project length, agency, and date of submission) that will be targeted.
- New Multi-Disciplinary Research Collaborations - Describe how the project will solidify new multi-disciplinary research collaborations.

### **LOI Review and Selection**

The LOI review committee will consist of UAMS senior faculty and staff. Each LOI will be reviewed based on the criteria listed above. A subgroup of applications will be invited to submit a full application. We anticipate selecting approximately 8 LOIs for invitations to submit a full proposal.

The LOI review and selection committee will prioritize projects that include translational biomedical informatics research; projects that address issues related to rural health and healthcare, and projects with a high likelihood to obtain future extramural funding. Likelihood of future funding from extramural sources is strongly influenced by training, environment, and productivity (e.g., peer reviewed publications) that are appropriate for the PI and Co-I's current state of professional development. Successful LOIs will address these factors in addition to the specific future funding mechanisms that will be targeted.

### **FULL APPLICATION REVIEW AND SELECTION**

Full applications will undergo review by two specific content experts and one community member. The community members comment on feasibility, impact, and the relevance of the research to the local community at large. One of our goals is to integrate community reviewer perspectives into shaping our translational research agenda and helping researchers communicate to the local public about research occurring at UAMS. Community reviewers will read, score and discuss the applications.

**The full application process also includes preparation of a two-page summary of the application's content with reduced jargon to promote readability at a nonscientific high school reading level, as well as a three to five-minute informational video which explains the project to a general/lay audience.**

Full applications will be peer-reviewed for scientific and technical merit using the NIH-based review system. This system includes Overall Impact, Significance, Investigator, Innovation, Approach, and Plan for Extramural Funding. Full applications will be prioritized for funding by an NIH-style study section. Applications receiving the highest priority will be presented to the TRI Leadership Council for final approval.

A summary statement that evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the application will be provided to the PI whether the project was funded or not.

## TIMELINE

LOI Due Date	Feb 28, 2020 (12:00 noon)
Full Applications Invited	By March 12, 2020
BERD Consultations	March 12 - April 17, 2020
CIRC Consultations	March 12 - April 17, 2020
Pre-Reviews (if applicable)	By April 10, 2020
Budget Review	By April 17, 2020
Proof of Regulatory Submission Due	April 17, 2020 (via email- 4:00 p.m.)
Full Application Due	April 24, 2020 (12:00 noon, via online system)
Lay Videos Due	May 1, 2020 (4:00 p.m.)
Study Section	May 21, 2020
Awardees Announced	Week of May 25, 2020
Regulatory Approval, if applicable	June 15, 2020
Prior Approval Time Period	June 15 - July 31, 2020
Estimated Start Date for Projects	Once Prior Approval is granted, July 1- September 1, 2020

Please contact Chrissie Barnes (by [email](#) or call 526-8730) if you have any questions the application process.