

## **Request For Applications: Team Science Vouchers**

The mission of the Translational Research Institute (TRI) at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) is to develop new knowledge and novel approaches that will measurably address the complex health challenges of Arkansas's rural and underrepresented populations. TRI provides services and resources to ensure the swift translation of research into health care advances.

### **TRI is pleased to solicit applications for the Team Science voucher program.**

This program is designed to support early-stage, cross-disciplinary collaborations and to expand the translational potential of existing research programs (<https://tri.uams.edu/helpful-information/what-is-translational-research/>). The overall aim of this program is to increase the quantity, quality, and effectiveness of cross-disciplinary research at UAMS.

Cross-disciplinary research utilize varied concepts, methods, and theories from differing fields. Members of cross-disciplinary teams contribute their disciplinary expertise and collectively contribute to the production of new knowledge. This can utilize a multidisciplinary approach (which simply combines or involves several academic disciplines), an interdisciplinary approach (in which multiple disciplines are integrated), or a transdisciplinary approach (in which multiple discipline perspectives are transcended to form a new holistic approach). (National Academies, Committee on Facilitating Interdisciplinary Research (2004). Facilitating interdisciplinary research. Washington, DC: National Academies Press).

**The Team Science voucher awards** will be awarded through a competitive peer-review process with priority going to new teams proposing innovative research approaches with high potential for future funding and impact. Multiple vouchers of up to \$20,000 will be funded. These vouchers are “seed money” that will enable a group of potential collaborators to develop into a successful team. The voucher provides resources to allow them to start the process of growing an idea into a viable program of research. Although collecting preliminary data is an activity that may take place using voucher funding, data collection is not required. **Please note:** The vouchers are not intended as a mechanism to fund projects that merely continue an existing program of research.

All Team Science voucher recipients should address significant translational science problems in innovative ways and show potential to become long-term collaborations. Each award is an investment in that team. Application evaluation will be weighted on the attributes of the proposed team, in balance with the scientific merit of the proposed work. Reviewers will focus on four overarching questions with regard to team composition: 1) Is this a new collaborative team? 2) Is the team collaboration interdisciplinary? 3) Is the proposed work structured to optimize the unique contribution of each team member? 4) Is it likely that the team will grow into a durable partnership among investigators with equal commitment to the success of the project?

Teams must be interdisciplinary and include representation from at least two different disciplines. Team collaborations between established investigators and junior faculty will be viewed favorably. Teams that meaningfully address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion through team composition and functional structure are strongly encouraged.

**Application Release Date:** April 14, 2021

**Application Deadline:** May 31, 2021 5:00 pm Central Time

**Notice of Intent to Fund:** June 11, 2021

**Just In Time Period:** June 11, 2021 – June 21, 2021

**Final Award Announcement:** June 21, 2021

**Funding Cycle:** July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

### **Award Information:**

Multiple vouchers of up to \$20,000 will be funded. Proposals may address any health-related topic. However, preference will be given to teams that focus on TRI high priority areas: COVID-19; rural and underrepresented population; community engagement; digital health and mobile health (mHealth) approaches.

The vouchers can be used for a broad range of aims with the ultimate goal of developing a successful interdisciplinary collaboration that will successfully compete for future funding. However, **any proposed work that meets the specific NIH definition of a “clinical trial” is not allowed in this mechanism.**

The voucher may be used to fund activities such as (but not limited to):

- Performing proof of concept work to support future extramural grant applications
- Conducting observational and/survey work to inform team and research direction
- Attending training to strengthen your team science approach (e.g. team development and dynamics)
- Developing and piloting the translation of an existing protocol to allow expansion to a new population
- Acquiring infrastructure (e.g. software, devices, tools, databases, data sets) to support the development of preliminary data toward a grant application
- Developing predictive models that can be tested and advanced in further studies
- Providing salary support to add a new team member to increase the interdisciplinarity or translational potential of ongoing team research efforts
- Travel to conduct site visits, meet with community partners, or engage potential collaborators

**TRI has a wide array of resources to support your research that you may wish to include in your proposed activities.**

These include statistical consultations, mock study panel reviews, community review boards, biomedical informatics consult and support, participant recruitment, plain language/Spanish translation services, and protocol development. You can visit the TRI website to learn more or to access our Portal to request services: <https://tri.uams.edu/resources-and-services/tri-services/>

**All awards funds must be expended within one year of date of award** and may be used for expenses including, but not limited to: faculty salary, staff salary, consultant fees, supplies, small equipment, software, training, publication fees, participant compensation, and travel.

#### **Guidelines:**

We are particularly interested in projects that forge new collaborations across multiple disciplines that directly address the mission of the TRI to develop new knowledge and novel approaches that will measurably address the complex health challenges of Arkansas’s rural and underrepresented populations.

Successful applications *will*:

- Describe how the collaboration is new or how it expands the impact of an existing collaboration.
- Explain what innovations or perspectives are gained by incorporating the different disciplines on the team.
- Describe how the unique skills of each team member will be used.
- Describe how team communication and structure supports the team’s interdisciplinarity and diversity.
- Define how the proposed project aligns with the TRI Mission to develop new knowledge and novel approaches that will measurably address the complex health challenges of rural and underrepresented populations.
- Describe how the proposed work will support a future application for extramural support.
- Provide a vision for future directions, including research direction, grant applications, manuscripts, presentations, and/or any other dissemination activities.

#### **Eligibility Criteria:**

- The team’s primary applicant must hold a terminal degree and have at least a 50% faculty appointment at UAMS, Arkansas Children’s Hospital (ACH), or Central Arkansas Veteran’s’ Healthcare System (CAVHS) (preference given to faculty with 100% appointments).
- The primary applicant must be located at UAMS, UAMS-Northwest, ACH or CAVHS (any track, any department), but the team may involve faculty from any organization. Applications from teams consisting of faculty from multiple colleges/departments are strongly encouraged. Team collaborations between established investigators and junior faculty will be viewed favorably. Teams that meaningfully address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion through team composition and functional structure are strongly encouraged.
- The investigative team must consist of faculty from at least two (2) disciplines.
- Individuals with non-permanent faculty appointments or in fellowship positions may be included in teams, but

are not eligible to serve as primary applicants.

- Proposals will be considered from all areas of research, but priority will be given to collaborations with high translational potential and that directly align with TRI priorities.

#### **Application Process:**

**All applications must be received no later than May 31, 2021, 5pm CENTRAL time.**

**Applications will be evaluated using [this review criteria](https://app.box.com/s/vpbogaryd9xbdm21zmd21x251vqf0a7q):**

Please read them carefully as they differ significantly from standard grant proposal criteria. *Most importantly, applicants must explain the interdisciplinary nature of the team and articulate how the voucher would facilitate the development or advancement of a successful collaborative team.* Voucher applications may involve aspects of a research study such as collecting preliminary data or conducting analyses, but that is not required. Voucher applications that are written as standard pilot grant applications and focus on the project (vs. the team) will not be well received.

#### **Voucher applications must include:**

- A 2-page (maximum) narrative that describes:
  - Brief background, including the significance and innovation of the team's research questions, and their relevance to TRI's mission.
  - Composition of the team. Each member's unique contribution to the team- not only the tasks to be performed, but what their perspective and expertise bring to the team's potential future work. The intended approach to cross-disciplinary research and the strategy for ensuring optimal use of team members' disciplinary expertise. History of team development. Plan for managing team (i.e. communication, meetings, division of labor).
  - Specific aims/goals for use of the voucher. Specific tasks that will be done during the 12 months. Impact of this voucher funding on the team's ability to move forward. For teams that have previously worked together: explanation of how this voucher allows the team to markedly expand the scope and/or translational potential of their work.
  - Plans for specific outcomes, products, and accomplishments during the award period.
  - Potential path to obtaining extramural funding.
  - Timeline of activities.
- A cover letter signed by all investigators.
- An NIH Biosketch of all investigators on the team. Format instructions can be found here: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>
- A letter of support from the direct supervisor of the primary applicant.
- Proposed budget with justification using these forms. This must provide specific expenses the voucher will be used for, the roles and responsibilities of any personnel being funded, and any potential overlap with existing funding. Please use the PHS 398 Detailed Budget Form, found here: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/fp4.PDF>. Your budget justification should follow the detailed budget form and describe each line item included in the budget.
- References and timeline are not included in page limit.

Applications must adhere to the following formatting specifications:

- 11-point Arial font
- Single-spaced
- At least ½" margins on all sides
- 8 ½" x 11" (i.e., standard size) paper
- Number all pages

**The application should be submitted as a single PDF via the following REDCap survey website:**

**<https://crisredcap.uams.edu/redcap/surveys/?s=K3F33774DF>.**

Please note, you will be asked to provide information on the status of any previous TRI funding the primary applicant has

received, basic information about the primary investigator, contact information for all of the team members, summary information about the study, and the required NCATS Benefit Survey about your work. The submission form includes five individual survey screens you will need to fill out.

Applications will be reviewed by an interdisciplinary committee.

**For questions or additional information, please contact Paul Duguid at [pduguid@uams.edu](mailto:pduguid@uams.edu).** Potential applicants are welcomed to request an informal consultation with our faculty prior to submitting their application.