

Request for Application: Team Science Champion Award

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' 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 Champion Award.

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 utilizes 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 awardee(s) will be selected through a competitive peer-review process with priority going to new teams proposing innovative research approaches with high potential for future funding and impact.

Award Information: Up to two awards of up to \$75,000 will be funded to teams to conduct cross-disciplinary research that a) involves telemedicine, digital health, or other innovative technologies, and b) addresses rural health. To incentivize team-based collaborations throughout the state of Arkansas, **the proposed project must involve a collaboration with a rural provider, such as the [Rural Research Network](#) or similar located outside of the UAMS Little Rock campus catchment area that cares for a rural population.** This grant may be used to fund a completely new research study or to extend the translational impact of an existing study by adding a novel cross-disciplinary component.

All Champion awards are significant investments in an interdisciplinary teams; thus recipients should address significant translational science problems in innovative ways and show the potential to become long-term collaborations. Applications will be evaluated 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) How and to what extent is this a new collaborative team?
- 2) How and to what extent is the team collaboration interdisciplinary?
- 3) How is the proposed work structured to optimize the unique contributions of each team member?
- 4) Is it likely that the team will result in 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. Applicants must list the diverse disciplines represented by their team in the application submission process. 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.

Champion Award Information: The award is intended to fund a project that can be completed within one year with a high probability of obtaining future external funding.

Preference will be given to teams in which at least one member has existing or a recent history of federal funding.

Areas of opportunity that could utilize this funding opportunity include, **but are not limited to**, the following:

- Comparing telemedicine versus traditional care delivery for disease management
- Cost effectiveness of telemedicine in value-based care
- Using telehealth as a research approach in unique environments (e.g. schools, other)
- Triage for acute, time-sensitive clinical conditions
- Evaluating mobile health (mHealth) technologies including software and wearable devices

- Impact of remote patient monitoring on clinical outcomes, patient experience, reducing hospitalization
- Digital technologies to impact provider behavior and healthcare delivery
- Studies to reduce the digital divide and enhance digital/technology uptake by rural populations
- Digital approaches addressing the COVID-19 pandemic
- Health challenges of rural populations

All award 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, and travel.

Expenses such as participant compensation are allowed. However, **any proposed work that meets the [NIH definition of a "clinical trial"](#) will be subject to an NCATS pre-approval process, which can take 1-2 months. This must be considered in developing your timeline.** Specifically, NCATS prior approval must be received prior to starting any new research involving human subjects that is considered **greater than minimal risk**, meets the threshold of an **NIH defined clinical trial**, or involves a **foreign component**. Projects that are minimal risk, do not meet the NIH clinical trial definition, and do not involve a foreign component may proceed once all required documentation has been submitted, and NCATS has been notified. **Please visit <https://ncats.nih.gov/ctsa/funding/prior-approval-paga> to learn more about the NCATS prior approval requirements.**

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' 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 perspectives are gained by incorporating the different disciplines on the team.
- Describe how the discipline-specific 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). 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 members from at least two (2) demonstrably different disciplines. Applicants must indicate in the submission process the diverse disciplines represented by the proposed team.
- Non-permanent faculty or fellowship positions 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.
- The proposed project must involve a collaboration with a rural provider, such as the [Rural Research Network](#) or similar, located outside of the UAMS Little Rock campus catchment area that cares for a rural population. Studies intending to collaborate with the Rural Research Network **must** obtain a consult with the Rural Research Network. TRI staff will assist with scheduling these consults.

- Studies intending to use telehealth, digital devices, and/or remote monitoring devices **must** discuss the project with Hari Eswaran, PhD, Research Director for the Institute for Digital Health and Innovation, prior to submission. TRI staff will assist with scheduling these consults.

Application Process:

Champion Award information sessions will be offered on 12/16/21, 01/06/22, and 01/27/22. Please email Adam Kleinerman (akleinerman@uams.edu) or Paul Duguid (pduguid@uams.edu) if you would like to attend one of these sessions.

All applicants are required to submit a Letter of Intent that provides a summary of the proposed project and a description of the investigative team, including their discipline/department and contribution to the team.

The Letter of Intent is due 2/7/2022. [Submit your letter here.](#)

All applications are required to have biomedical informatics and biostatistical consults. These consults can be scheduled in January and February. Please contact Adam Kleinerman for aid in scheduling all required consults.

All applications must be received no later than **3/14/2022**.

Applications will be evaluated using the attached criteria. Please read them carefully as they differ significantly from standard grant proposal criteria. It is crucially important that all applicants articulate their plan for using the award to develop or advance the team.

Applications must include, in this order:

- A brief cover letter describing the team members, their role on the project, and a short abstract of the project
- A 4-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.
 - Specific aims/goals for use of the award; what will be done during the 12 months. Explanation of how the award will enable the team to conduct future research or markedly expand the translational potential of an existing program of work or; the impact of this award funding on the team’s ability to move forward.
 - Composition of the team: how each member uniquely contributes to the team. 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).
 - Relevant prior work and data
 - Design and methods
 - Plans for future grants and publications
 - References (not included in page limit)
 - Timeline of activities (not included in page limit)
- An NIH Biosketch of all investigators on the team.
- Proposed budget with justification. This must provide specific expenses, the roles and responsibilities of any personnel being funded, and any potential overlap with existing funding. (Please access the required budget form template [here](#) and the budget justification template [here](#))
- A letter of support from the department chair of the primary applicant
- References and timeline will not count as part of the page limit

TRI has a wide array of resources to support your research including statistical consultations, mock study panel reviews, community review boards, biomedical informatics consult and support, participant recruitment, plain language/Spanish translation services, various data resources, study coordination, protocol development and IRB submission, and a database of potential research participants. You may find it helpful to include these in your planned activities. 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/>

The application should be submitted as a single PDF via the following website: <https://redcap.link/hlt5ymmc>

Applications will be peer reviewed by an interdisciplinary committee.

For questions or additional information, please contact Paul Duguid at pduguid@uams.edu. Potential applicants are welcome to request an informal consultation with our faculty prior to submitting their application.