

Request For Applications: 2024 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 healthcare advances.

TRI is pleased to solicit applications for the 2024 Team Science voucher awards.

The TRI is committed to investing the necessary resources and support for successful team deployment during this team science voucher program and beyond. 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 Team Science voucher awards will be awarded through a competitive peer-review process with priority going to new teams proposing innovative approaches with high potential for future funding and impact. Multiple vouchers of up to \$15,000 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 the team 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 about team composition: 1) How is this a new collaborative team? 2) How is the team interdisciplinary? 3) How is the proposed work structured to optimize the unique contribution of each team member? 4) How likely is it 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 underrepresented faculty](#) through team composition and functional structure are strongly encouraged.

Application Release Date: August 2024

Application Deadline: October 1, 2024, 5:00 pm Central Time

Notice of Award Announcement: November 1, 2024

Earliest Potential Funding Period: November 1, 2024 – October 31, 2025

We are offering two informational sessions for interested teams to learn more about this funding opportunity. The sessions will be offered via Zoom on August 22, 2024, 1-2 pm and August 30, 2024, 9-10 am. Please [click here to register for these sessions](#).

Award Information:

Multiple vouchers of up to \$15,000 will be funded. Proposals may address any health-related topic. However, preference will be given to teams that focus on **TRI high priority areas**: 1) health concerns and challenges of rural and underrepresented populations; 2) implementation science to incorporate new research findings into the healthcare system; 3) biomedical informatics approaches, including AI to improve diagnosis and preventions; 4) community and/or stakeholder-partnered research, 5) public health emergencies/emerging priority needs; 6) lifespan research.

The vouchers can be used for a broad range of aims with the goal of developing a successful interdisciplinary collaboration that will successfully compete for future funding. However, **any proposed work that meets the [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 or 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. We strongly encourage voucher awardees to leverage other TRI programs and resources. You can visit the [TRI website](#) to learn more or [access our Services Portal to request 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 the following: 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 support the team’s interdisciplinarity and diversity.
- 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.
- 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.

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 and Research Institute (ACRI), 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 institution or community 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 underrepresented faculty](#) through team composition and functional structure are strongly encouraged.

- The faculty members on the 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 that directly align with TRI priorities.

Expectations:

The TRI is committed to investing the necessary resources and support for successful team deployment during this team science voucher program and beyond. The TRI expects that the entire team will complete the following during the award:

- Complete the proposed activities.
- Participate in at least two brief team science trainings.
- Complete the Collaboration Planning document that focuses on the team's vision, roles and responsibilities of team members, research products, communication, and team processes. A trained facilitator will help the team complete this document during Quarter 1.
- Complete the Team Role Experience and Orientation (TREQ) scale before application (optional) or during Quarter 1 of the award by all team members. This scale assesses individuals' predispositions to occupy six distinct team roles based on their previous experiences and orientations. The team will receive a report to understand and enhance team dynamics and performance.
- Complete a modified TEAM STEPPS assessment by all team members during Quarter 4. This tool assesses team performance; skills; leadership; climate and atmosphere; and team identity. The team will receive a report that can be used to debrief at the end of this award and to enhance the performance of the future team.
- We expect the team to submit an internal or external grant application within six months following the end of the award.

Application Process:

All applications must be received no later than October 1, 2024, 5:00 pm.

Applications will be evaluated using [this review criteria](#): 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.

Following the review, a brief interview (~30 minutes) will be conducted with the top potential teams. The interviews provide an opportunity to clarify concerns or questions raised in the review, to answer the team's questions, and to observe strengths that may not have been noticed in the written application. At least 75% of the team should be present during the interview.

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. The history of team development and plan for team

- management (i.e. communication, meetings, division of labor).
- **Specific aims/goals for use of the voucher.** Describe 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: include an explanation of how this voucher allows the team to markedly expand the scope and/or translational potential of their work.
- **Team processes** that ensure a highly functioning team.
- **Plans for specific outcomes,** products, and accomplishments during the award period.
- Potential paths 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/contact PI.
- Proposed budget with justification using the forms linked below. 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 [Detailed Budget Form found here.](#)
- Your budget justification should follow the detailed budget form and describe each line item included in the budget. Please [follow the instructions](#) to complete your budget [and use the template on the last page of the instructions](#) for your justification.

References and timeline are not included in the page limit. Applications must adhere to the following formatting specifications:

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

All applicants are required to use TRI’s online application system, [Apply](#), to enter their basic information and upload their application. The application must be submitted by 5:00 pm, October 1, 2024. Contact Hailey Rogers at 501-526-0363 if you have any questions. [Here are instructions](#) for how to make an account in Apply.

For questions or additional information, please contact Hailey Rogers at hrogers@uams.edu. Potential applicants can request an informal consultation with our faculty prior to submitting their application.

Overall Program Timeline

Info Session	August 22, 2024
Info Session	August 30, 2024
Application Due	October 1, 2024
Review Due	October 11, 2024
Study Section	October 18, 2024
Meetings with Teams	Week of Oct. 21, 2024
Awardees Announced	November 1, 2024
Regulatory Approval, if applicable	ASAP
Earliest Start Date for Projects	November 1, 2024

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