2026-2027 Pilot Project Program: Request for Proposals

Application due date: October 19, 2026
Information Session: Wednesday, September 23, 2026, 12:00 – 12:45 pm. **Register to attend**

Overview: The UNH Center of Integrated Biomedical and Bioengineering Research (CIBBR) is dedicated to promoting multidisciplinary, high impact biomedical and bioengineering research at UNH. Our mission is accomplished by supporting the career development of faculty so that they are successful in competing for investigator-initiated external awards from NIH, as well as encouraging biomedical scientists to develop collaborations on multidisciplinary research projects that advance clinical research, commercial opportunities, and translational medicine. **The one-year funding period is anticipated to begin January 1, 2027**.

Award Information: The CIBBR Pilot Project Program is intended to support research enabling a research team to prepare and submit a major research project grant from the NIH by the end of the funding period. Direct costs for a one-year Pilot Project historically have not exceeded $50,000.
Pilot Project Investigator (PPI) applicants are highly recommended to consult with the Leadership Team

- if a higher level of funding is requested
- to discuss your project for facility cost estimates
- to refine your project scope

Eligibility
In this funding cycle, the Pilot Project Program is prioritizing funding for:

1. Former CIBBR Project Leaders who have yet to receive a major research project grant (RPG)
2. CIBBR investigators with a well-documented, realistic timeline to submit a major RPG (e.g., R01, R35)
3. UNH tenure-track and Research Faculty (especially those recently hired) with a commitment to submit a major RPG within CIBBR's thematic focus.
4. Utilizing CIBBR's Research Cores and/or other UNH core facilities will also be viewed favorably.
5. Projects with a foreign component are not eligible without prior approval of the Director.

Responsibilities

1. One month of effort (over the entire budget period) must be devoted to the Pilot Project per NIGMS policy.
2. Awardees are required to adhere to the timeline they propose for submission of a major RPG.
3. Pilot Project Investigators are expected to participate in the CIBBR Mentoring Program, periodic reporting, and other CIBBR activities.
4. The COBRE grant (P20GM113131) must be cited in all publications reliant on CIBBR funding and/or CIBBR cores.

Pilot Project Application Process
A complete proposal submission must include the following:

1. PHS 398 Form Page 1 and PHS 398 Form Page 2
2. Specific Aims page (1 page maximum)
    - The specific aims for the Pilot Project should represent a subset of the aims of the to-be-submitted RPG.
3. Research Strategy (Significance, Innovation, and Approach; ~2 pages):
    - The Significance section (~250 words) should include the biomedical relevance and a description of the scientific premise.
    - The experimental plan should align with the specific aims. Detailed methodology can be omitted.
    - Supporting data for the scientific premise of the application should be incorporated into the proposal in sufficient detail to support the feasibility of the proposed work.
4. Budget: Use the UNH Excel budget template file. Include the Budget Justification document (see below).

5. Current NIH-formatted Common Form Biographical Sketch
6. Current & Pending Other Support Common Form
7. IRB and/or IACUC approval (if applicable)
    - for animal studies, the Vertebrate Animal Section must be submitted along with an approval letter from IACUC. IACUC approval may be obtained either prior to submission or upon notification that your project has been selected for funding.
    - for studies with humans, please submit the Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information Forms.
8. CIBBR-relevant documentation
    - Rigor and Transparency: Include a brief statement addressing how robust, unbiased results will be obtained, as well as methods to ensure the identity and validity of key biological and/or chemical resources used in the proposed project.
    - Products/outcomes and timeline: Provide a timeline for submission of NIH grant applications, manuscripts, conference presentations, patent applications, etc.
    - Previous NIH submission relevant to proposed project: please include the summary statement and your 1-page response (Introduction section) to the critiques.
    - External Scientific Mentor: If you do not already have an external scientific mentor, provide the names of senior biomedical/bioengineering researchers outside UNH who might serve in this capacity if the project is funded.
    - **If your project is selected for funding,** you will be required to submit a Data Management and Sharing plan, developed in consultation with the Data Science Core staff.

Budget Guidelines

1. The budget should include 1 or 2 semesters of GRA support, or equivalent staff support to conduct preliminary studies in support of the grant application. Salary support for the PI is typically discouraged.
2. Funds for grant preparation services and preparation of Data Management and Sharing plan (~$3500).
3. Funds for compensating senior-level, NIH-funded External Scientific Mentor(s); $1000 each.
4. Supplies and expenses for service providers limited to <30% of total direct costs.
5. Acquisition of equipment (>$10K) is typically not allowed without prior consultation.
6. Travels funds to present research at a domestic scientific conference are allowed.

Review Process

- Standard NIH review criteria will be used for the evaluation of proposals and special consideration will be given to the proposal's relevance to the CIBBR theme and goals.
- The CIBBR Leadership Team -- Rick Cote, Alexei Tulin, Kelley Thomas, Don Wojchowski, and Steve Fiering (Dartmouth) -- will review the proposals, aided by *ad hoc* reviewers as appropriate.
- Following a scientific review of the application, a summary statement will be provided to the applicant.
- Applications that are recommended for funding will be forwarded to the CIBBR Advisory Committee (AC) for their review and recommendation.
- If the application is approved by the AC, it will be sent to NIGMS for review and final approval.
- Funds will be made available as soon as NIGMS approval is received.

Please contact us if you have any questions:
Pilot Project proposals: Rick.Cote@unh.edu, Director
Application and process: Michelle.Lemos@unh.edu, Program Manager

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Visit our webpage to submit your proposal: **https://www.unh.edu/research/cibbr/funding/pilot-project**