DATE: November 30, 2015

TO: All UMMS (Worcester campus) Faculty

FROM: Katherine Luzuriaga, MD
Director, UMass Center for Clinical and Translational Science (UMCCTS)
Vice Provost, Clinical and Translational Research

RE: UMCCTS 2016 Pilot Project Program (PPP) - Request for Letters of Intent

A major goal of the UMass Center for Clinical and Translational Science (UMCCTS) is to accelerate the translation of basic discoveries into practical, cost effective solutions that improve human health. Building upon our strong reputation as a world-class research institution, producing noteworthy advances in clinical and basic research, the UMCCTS provides the infrastructure necessary to support outstanding clinical and translational investigators and their work.

The UMass Center for Clinical and Translational Science is announcing the next funding round for the Pilot Project Program (PPP). This program differs from other intramural funding in that the key goal of PPP funding is to effect a qualitative change in the way the work is conducted. Individual project awards (ranging from $30,000-$50,000 for 1 year) will be made on a competitive basis to enable investigators to accelerate the translation of innovative, cutting edge research into:

- New understanding and/or diagnosis of a disease process
- New devices, therapeutics, and vaccines for the treatment and/or prevention of disease
- Support for junior investigators
- New standards of care in the practice of community medicine
- New approaches to community-based research demonstrating true bi-directionality between community and academia
- New methodologies to leverage institutional strengths and new initiatives, and/or
- The pursuit of high-risk, high reward studies

The intent of the funding is to speed up the rate of progress to move a research project, clinical finding or other discovery into a broader network of activities, while maximizing the breadth of transdisciplinary skills applied to the research question. We are particularly interested in proposals which feature a clinical scientist working with a basic scientist and proposals with an emphasis on community-based research.

Thank you for your interest in Clinical and Translational Science. We look forward to your ideas.

DEFINITIONS OF CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

NIH defines Clinical Research as:
Patient-oriented research. Research conducted with human subjects (or on material of human origin such as tissues, specimens and cognitive phenomena) for which an investigator (or colleague)
directly interacts with human subjects. Patient-oriented research includes: (a) mechanisms of human disease, (b) therapeutic interventions, (c) clinical trials, or (d) development of new technologies.  

*Epidemiological and behavioral studies.*  
*Outcomes research and health services research.*

**Translational Research** as:  
The process of applying ideas, insights, and discoveries generated through basic scientific inquiry to the treatment or prevention of human disease.

**LETTER OF INTENT INSTRUCTIONS**

**Letters of Intent** (LOI) will be peer-reviewed internally and the most promising projects will be selected for full proposal submission.

Please email your Letter of Intent (2 pages or less) as an attachment (Word or PDF) to: ccts@umassmed.edu on or before Friday, January 22, 2016 by 5:00 pm (EST).

**Describe in two (2) pages or less** the work that has motivated you to apply. Do not attempt to document the key findings at this LOI stage. The next phase of the process will entail a full proposal. Rather, the LOI review process seeks to make two determinations:

1. That the project meets one or more of the definitions of clinical and translational research defined above.
2. That the availability of PPP funding would accelerate the translation of innovative, cutting edge research into:  
   - New understanding and/or diagnosis of a disease process  
   - New devices, therapeutics, and vaccines for the treatment and/or prevention of disease  
   - Support for junior investigators  
   - New standards of care in the practice of community medicine  
   - New approaches to community-based research demonstrating true bidirectionality between community and academia  
   - New methodologies to leverage institutional strengths and new initiatives, and/or  
   - The pursuit of high-risk, high reward studies

Include project goals and elements that require: expertise beyond your own; use of core facilities; or other resources. Please bear in mind that PPP funding can support a full array of resources, from something as simple as user costs of a core facility, to collaborative expertise in biostatistics and epidemiology, to “mechanical” aspects of research, such as providing funds for writing assistance in preparing an IRB application for a clinical study or help in patient recruitment. **Faculty support up to 10% of the NIH salary cap is allowable. Indirect costs are not allowed.** Applicants will receive added consideration from the reviewers if they plan to use one or more of the research resources available through the Center for Clinical and Translational Science ([http://www.umassmed.edu/ccts/resources/](http://www.umassmed.edu/ccts/resources/)).

3. The Principal Investigator must be a UMMS Worcester faculty member, but collaborations with faculty on any UMass campus are encouraged. You are welcome to have external or internal collaborators, but this is not a requirement.
4. All faculty applicants must be UMCCTS members. Membership is free, easy, and entails completion of an on-line membership form on the UMCCTS website at: [http://www.umassmed.edu/ccts/footer/membership/](http://www.umassmed.edu/ccts/footer/membership/)
Oversight
The PPP is overseen and administered by the Scientific Review Committee of the University of Massachusetts Center for Clinical and Translational Science, (http://www.umassmed.edu/ccts/footer/advisory-committees/home/). The Review Committee makes funding decisions based upon the scientific merits and potential impact of the proposals.

Full proposals will be due on Friday, March 11, 2016 for those selected finalists.

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Partial List of CCTS Resources Available for PPP Applicants
More information about these resources can be found at http://www.umassmed.edu/ccts or by contacting Nate Hafer at nathaniel.hafer@umassmed.edu

- Massachusetts Integrated Clinical Academic Research Database (MICARD)
- REDCap (Research Electronic Data Capture)
- Informatics Core
- Quantitative Methods Core
- Regulatory Consultation
- Clinical Research Center
- Investigational Drug Service (Pharmacy)
- Conquering Diseases Biorepository
- Conquering Diseases Volunteer Recruitment Core
- Community Engagement resources and consultation services
- Special Population Resource Center
- Small Molecule Screening Core
- Structure-Based Drug Design Core