

**CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCE INSTITUTE (CTSI)  
BASIC TO CLINICAL COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PILOT PROGRAM  
(Revised, August 2009)**

**Program summary**

The CTSI Basic to Clinical Collaborative Research Pilot Program (BaCCoR) is intended to seed new projects in interdisciplinary, translational research, with each such project representing a true collaboration between a clinical scientist and a basic research scientist. A true collaboration is one in which both the clinical scientist and the basic research scientist have significant, defined roles in the research project. The term “clinical scientist” is meant to denote an individual who has an active clinical practice, in addition to participation in research activities. Although the two primary investigators may have collaborated in the past, the research project proposed must be novel and not part of an ongoing project. In other words, *the proposed research must not be a “next logical step” in ongoing research.* The two investigators must be independent of each other; one may not be the direct research supervisor or formal mentor of the other. It is incumbent upon the applicants to convince the reviewers that both team members will be actively involved in the project. Similarly, if the proposed project is related to an existing collaboration, it is incumbent upon the applicants to convince the reviewers that the project is a new area of exploration distinct from related work.

*In general, it is the intent of this program to support research that is focused on an observation made by a basic scientist who wants to explore possible clinical consequences of that observation or, conversely, an observation made by a clinical scientist who wants to understand the biological basis that leads to the clinical manifestation. If a basic scientist and a clinical scientist are working on complementary aspects of a (bio)medical question and want to explore areas of scientific overlap, a project describing such research may also be responsive to this solicitation. In any event, there must be both basic biomedical and clinical aspects to the proposed research. These pilot studies are intended to allow the investigators to develop the preliminary data and refinement of procedures and hypotheses that would enable submission of highly competitive applications to national funding sources. In the case that the research does not require an approved IRB protocol, there must be unequivocal demonstration that the research is predicated on a clinical question.*

Please note, if the original observation was clinical, the basic research should focus on mechanistic issues, gene or protein profiling, or identification of molecular targets for therapeutic intervention; DNA profiling or other essentially phenotypic analyses are considered clinical research.

**Application Deadlines**

The deadlines for receipt of applications are August 15, 2009, October 15, 2009, January 15, 2010, and April 21, 2010. Please note that the April 21, 2010 deadline is the final receipt deadline for the BaCCoR program. If any of these dates fall on a weekend, the Monday following that weekend is the relevant deadline. Please note that the annual CMRF solicitation (<http://www.oorhs.pitt.edu/funding/CMRF.CFM>) also includes a collaborative research component; that program offers an additional opportunity to initiate new translational studies.

## **Budget information**

CTSI funds are available to support four \$25,000 awards annually, each award being of one year duration. Thus, it should be anticipated that there will be only one award in each application cycle. If funds become available for additional awards, they will be used to support the most meritorious applications that would otherwise be unfunded. When appropriate, as dictated by the proposed research, applicants are encouraged to seek matching funds from other institutional resources.

The monies awarded will support direct costs only; no indirect support will be provided. *The monies awarded may not be used for salary support for either of the two primary investigators. Note, however, effort is required of the two principal investigators, must be reflected on the budget page, and must be cost shared by the department or other entity that will support such effort. Funding may not be used for travel or computer equipment.*

In planning budgets, please note that *requests for no-cost extensions (carryovers) will not be approved.* Applicants will be notified within six weeks of submission whether or not their application will be funded. If the necessary protocol approvals are in place at the time of notification, the starting date for the award will be within two weeks of that notification. In any case, the starting date for the award will be no later than two months after the notification, independent of whether necessary protocol approvals are in place. Please note, however, that funds cannot be expended for any part of the research that is governed by a required protocol until that protocol has been approved.

Please note that the source of funding for the BaCCoR program is the Clinical and Translational Science Award (<http://www.ctsaweb.org/>), with funds provided by the National Center for Research Resources, National Institutes of Health. Thus, any salary support requested in a submitted budget should reflect federal fringe benefit rates. If a BaCCoR award is made, a budget meeting will be held with participation from the principal investigators, their respective research administrators, and financial administrators from the CTSI. If necessary, minor adjustments to the requested budget will be made at that meeting.

## **Eligibility**

University of Pittsburgh faculty members at the levels of assistant/research assistant professor, associate/research associate professor, and professor/research professor are eligible to apply as primary investigators to the BaCCoR Pilot Program. Instructors, research associates, fellows, and postdoctoral researchers are not eligible to serve as primary investigators, nor are investigators from other institutions.

***The application must include the following items:***

### **I. Cover sheet**

The first page of the application must be a cover sheet that gives the name, degree, academic title, primary departmental affiliation, and contact information (telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address) of both the basic research scientist and the clinical scientist who are serving as the two principal investigators. Please see the appendix to this document for an example of an appropriate cover sheet. Both principal investigators and their respective department chairs or appropriate responsibility center directors (*e.g.*, division chief or institute director) who can

authorize cost sharing against an Entity-02 or -04 institutional account must sign the cover sheet. These signatures certify acceptance of principal investigators' cost shared effort and no indirect cost. The appropriate institutional account numbers against which the effort will be charged must also be provided. *If the project is funded, cost shared effort must be reflected on the SPAR document and copies of the relevant SPAR must be provided to the CTSI administration upon request.*

## **II. Research Plan**

The research plan may not exceed five single-sided pages; please note general instructions, below. It should include:

- Discussion of the clinical or laboratory observation that is the basis of the proposed study or a discussion of the complementary research activities that prompted a unified approach.
- Description of the research to be performed including how the research and the data to be gathered will connect to the clinical question being posed. It is understood that the money provided by this program will only be sufficient for generating the preliminary data and/or refinement of procedures that will be necessary before submission of larger, nationally competitive grant applications.

If the two investigators are active collaborators or have been collaborators in the past, a description of that collaborative research and a clear statement as to how the proposed project is distinct from that research is required. This statement may not exceed one single-sided page, and it is not included in the five-page limit to the research plan.

The Bibliography must not exceed one single-sided page; this is not included in the five-page limit to the research plan.

Please note that if any one of these page limits is exceeded in a given application, that application will be administratively withdrawn from consideration, without review.

## **III. Biographical Sketches and Support Pages**

The NIH-format biographical sketch and NIH-format Other Support document (revised November, 2007, <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>) must be included for both investigators.

## **IV. Budget and Budget Justification**

The NIH-format budget page (PHS 398 Form 4; revised November, 2007, <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>) must be used. An additional page should be included for the budget justification; all pieces of equipment must be explicitly justified as critical to the performance of the proposed research. Even though no BaCCoR funds may be used for salary for the co-principal investigators, their effort on the proposed study must be reflected on the budget page.

For any given application for which the applicants have received a commitment for matching funds, a letter from someone qualified to make that commitment must be included. The budget page and justification should reflect the total of the funds that would be directed towards the project, not simply the funds provided through the BaCCoR program.

## **General Instructions, Format, and Guidelines**

Adherence to type size and line spacing requirements is necessary for several reasons. No applicant should have the advantage, by using small type, of providing more text in his or her application than others are allowed to provide. Small type may also make it difficult for reviewers to read the application. The application must be clear, readily legible, and conform to the following three requirements: 1) The font must be Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, or Georgia 11-point; 2) Margins, in all directions, must be at least ½ inch; and 3) Text in figures, charts, tables, figure legends, and footnotes may be smaller in size but must be in black ink and readily legible. If these are not legible, there may be a negative impact on the evaluation of the application.

## **IACUC, IRB, IBC, ESCRO, and CORID**

If IACUC, IRB, IBC, ESCRO, or CORID protocol approvals are required in order to conduct the research, the relevant approvals must be obtained before money will be released to support the project. Approved protocols need not be submitted as part of the application. However, in order to minimize the time delay between approval of a project and release of funds, applicants are encouraged to prepare protocol submissions in advance of notification that an award is pending so that the protocols can be submitted for approval immediately upon such notification. As noted above, the start date of an award will be no later than two months after notification of funding, whether or not the approvals are in place and whether or not monies can be expended at that time. In the case of an award made in response to an application submitted for the April 21, 2010 receipt date, the award will start no later than July 1, 2010 and will terminate no later than June 30, 2011. No exceptions will be made to these dates.

## **Review Criteria**

The primary review criteria are:

- The scientific feasibility and scientific merit of the project;
- The potential to lead to more comprehensive studies;
- That there are clear and significant scientific roles for both the clinical scientist and the basic scientist;
- That the project is novel and is not simply a next logical step in ongoing studies.

For projects that are viewed as highly meritorious, as based on the above criteria, additional consideration may be given to the promise of matching funds. Such funds are viewed both as a reflection of the investigators' commitment to the specific project and a reflection of the commitment of the official providing the funds to the goals of the CTSI in promoting translational research.

**Applications are to be submitted electronically, in pdf format, to Ms. Melissa Penkrot, [mam266@pitt.edu](mailto:mam266@pitt.edu), by the receipt dates identified above. No exceptions will be made to these receipt dates. Within one week of any given receipt date, each applicant should receive an e-mail message notifying him or her that his or her application has been received. If an applicant does not receive such notification, he or she should contact Ms. Penkrot.**

**Questions about the program should be directed to Dr. Jeremy P. Somers, [somersj@pitt.edu](mailto:somersj@pitt.edu).**

## **APPENDIX: BaCCoR Application Cover Sheet**

*Please note that all information requested below is required.*

Project Title

Co-principal investigator (Basic Scientist)

Name and Degree

Academic Title

Primary Departmental Affiliation

Address

Telephone Number

Fax Number

E-mail address

Co-PI Signature

Department Chair's Signature\*

Institutional Account Number

This signature certifies acceptance of primary investigator cost shared effort and no indirect cost.

Co-principal investigator (Clinical Scientist)

Name and Degree

Academic Title

Primary Departmental Affiliation

Address

Telephone Number

Fax Number

E-mail address

Co-PI Signature

Department Chair's Signature\*

Institutional Account Number

This signature certifies acceptance of primary investigator cost shared effort and no indirect cost.

\* Department chair or appropriate Responsibility Center Director (*e.g.*, division chief or institute director) who can authorize cost sharing against an Entity-02 or -04 institutional account