

**NUCATS Institute**  
**Pilot Awards**  
**Fall 2020 Request for Applications**



**Application Deadline: Monday, September 7, 2020 at 11:59pm CT**

Competitive awards of **up to \$30,000** will be awarded to projects that can be completed within 12 months. NUCATS pilot funding is open to all eligible investigators, described below, but is particularly targeted at:

- Projects where the potential for strong clinical or translational impact on human health is clear and can be completed in the proposed timeframe (within 12 months);
- Junior faculty who have not yet established a significant funding base;
- Projects involving critical steps in the device and drug development pathway;
- A need, while critical to translational science, that is too small to be suitable for conventional research funding mechanisms (e.g., biostatistics support for the development of preliminary data); and
- Innovative approaches to the dissemination and implementation (D&I) of research findings that address the gap between research discoveries and the translation of this knowledge into evidence-based programs, practices, or policies in the clinic or community to improve the health of the public (see pages 3 & 4 of this RFA for supplemental instructions for D&I submissions).

**Priority Areas**

Although applications are encouraged from across the broad domains of clinical and translational science research, we are especially interested in applications covering the following priority areas for 2020 funding:

- Projects with high likelihood of translation to clinical or population health impact
- Projects that align with the Chicago Department of Public Health’s [Healthy Chicago 2.0/Healthy Chicago 2025](#) goals
- Studies that address health disparities/health equity
- Innovative approaches to the dissemination and implementation (D&I) of research findings

**Allowable and Non-allowable Expenses**

<b>Allowable Expense Examples</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation with faculty statisticians and statistical analysts in the Biostatistics Collaboration Center</li> <li>• Regulatory support from NUCATS</li> <li>• Computational Cluster CPU time to run specific analyses</li> <li>• Participant recruitment stipends</li> <li>• Laboratory or hospital tests (e.g. CBCs)</li> <li>• Analysis of samples by a Northwestern University or affiliated core facility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bridge funding will be considered on a case-by-case basis</li> </ul>
<b>Non-allowable Expense Examples</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≠ Design/printing of materials</li> <li>≠ Event expenses</li> <li>≠ Consultants</li> <li>≠ Technology development</li> <li>≠ Staff/student/faculty salary</li> </ul>	<p>Note: Pilot funds cannot be used for clinical trials beyond phase IIA.</p>

Note: Exceptions to the maximum award limit may be considered in cases for which significant scientific opportunity can be demonstrated; requests must be pre-approved by the NUCATS director AND deputy director.

## Applicant Eligibility

All applicants must be NUCATS members and either:

- Faculty of Northwestern University, who may or may not also work in one of the NUCATS partner institutions (Northwestern Memorial HealthCare, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago or Shirley Ryan AbilityLab), AND be engaged in research AND be eligible to apply for follow-on external grant funding.

OR

- An individual (such as community/practice partners, students, trainees, post-doctoral fellows, residents and fellows) who is collaborating with a NUCATS member who meets the aforementioned requirements. This individual may be a co-investigator, but not a PI. Biosketches for both investigators should be submitted during the application process.

Priority will be given to applicants without current "active" NUCATS support. If more than one application is submitted in a given round, please rank your applications by need.

## Application Process

The NUCATS Pilot program team will conduct an initial administrative review, and then the NUCATS Pilot Award Review Panel will conduct a second layer of review depending on domain of the request.

**Dissemination & implementation (D&I) proposals should reference pages 3 & 4 for supplemental instructions. Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the Center for Community Health to discuss possible D&I application ideas.**

To apply, complete the appropriate application in Competitions

(<https://grants.nubic.northwestern.edu/sign-in>). Upload the following required documents

- **Cover Sheet:** Complete and upload the required, additional cover sheet.
- **Proposal:** In 1,000 words or less, you must provide your project's:
  - significance, hypothesis, aims, analysis plan, impact, deliverables, lack of alternate funding, and plans for future funding.
- **Biosketch:** NIH-style biosketch is required for PI and Co-PIs.
- **Budget:** Verify that the submitted budget clearly indicates (when applicable):
  - specific line-item estimates from the applicable NU cores and/or resources;
  - separate budget expenses/amounts for the academic and community co-PIs.
- **Other Possible Documents:** Estimate from a core, such as the EDW, if utilized. Additional biosketch, for mentor or key collaborator. Key documents, etc.
- If you are requesting services from Lurie Children's Hospital, please contact the Office of Research before submitting.

## Prior Approval Requirement

Our funding agency requires additional documentation prior to the release of funds. You will be required to cite our grant in your IRB or IACUC documentation and related publications, and we will need to forward your IRB or IACUC approval, protocol, and consent form to the NIH prior to the commencement of the project.

## Timeline

- Application deadline: Monday, September 7, 2020 at 11:59pm CT
- Award decision: October 2020
- Earliest anticipated start date: November 2020

## Questions?

Please direct questions about the pilot program to Abby Cosentino-Boehm at [a-cosentino-boehm@northwestern.edu](mailto:a-cosentino-boehm@northwestern.edu).

## **Dissemination & Implementation Pilot Award Supplemental Instructions**

NUCATS is seeking applications for Pilot Grants that support innovative approaches to the dissemination and implementation of research findings that address the gap between research discoveries and the translation of this knowledge into evidence-based programs, practices, or policies in the clinic or community to improve the health of the public. These grants can also be used to support community-academic collaborations to generate products/activities that facilitate the transfer/spread of evidence-based findings to community audiences, practice or other sites, or policy makers.

Possible activities include:

- **Preparing for dissemination and implementation.** Aims and activities are likely to include engaging with and establishing partnerships with key stakeholders required for successful dissemination and implementation of a specific evidence-based practice/intervention or blending of different components. Activities could include conducting interviews and meetings with key stakeholders from multiple sectors (e.g., healthcare systems, public health, policy, payors, community groups, political groups, patients/participants, and community members), and plan and prepare for implementation by examining barriers and facilitators in specific contexts (healthcare systems, community organizations) for adoption, delivery with fidelity.
- **Selecting or tailoring implementation strategies and dissemination strategies.** Aims and activities could include implementation mapping, panels to select and rate strategies for feasibility and likely effectiveness (Go et al. 2016; Powell et al. 2015); using the Implementation Research Logic Model with community partners and key stakeholders to identify strategies to address contextual barriers to dissemination and implementation, and applying adaptation models to specific established implementation strategies to better align with the needs of community and healthcare system partners.
- **Conducting dissemination or implementation activities.** Aims and activities could include training of community or healthcare providers to deliver a specific evidence-based practice/intervention or combine several; distribution of materials and information to potential adopters and evaluating their perspective on the quality of the materials and likelihood that they will lead to adoption of the new practice/intervention; and collaborating with adopters/community partners to establish evidence-based implementation plans.
- **Developing methodology for dissemination or implementation research.** Aims and activities could include developing tools for measuring, decision making, or evaluating implementation. Such methodology should document the types of research and practice where these could be used.

For purposes of these grants, *dissemination* is defined as the targeted distribution of information and intervention materials to a specific public health or clinical practice audience. The intent is to spread knowledge and the associated evidence-based interventions. Successful dissemination may occur quite differently depending on whether the audience consists of community members/patients, caregivers, practitioners, policymakers, employers, administrators, or other stakeholder groups. *Implementation* is the use of strategies to adopt and integrate evidence-based health interventions and change practice patterns within specific settings. Implementation efforts must seek to understand the behavior of health and healthcare professionals and support staff, health organizations, community members/patients and caregivers, and policymakers in context as key variables in the sustainable adoption, implementation and uptake of evidence-based interventions. NUCATS seeks to fund projects designed to actively disseminate and implement research results and products using context-appropriate approaches

informed and guided by established dissemination and implementation models and frameworks, in the context of real-world settings.

Proposals should explicitly describe how this pilot funding would be critical to or enhance the chances of funding specific applications in the future.

### **Eligibility**

D&I pilot applications are required to include both Northwestern University investigators and relevant stakeholders (e.g. community, clinician, policymakers or other stakeholders). This could include an academic co-PI that is also a faculty member or who could be personnel in one of NUCATS clinical partner institutions. A community co-PI that is representative of the dissemination/implementation audience is required. The application should illustrate that the submitting partnership is a collaborative effort between the researcher/research team and the major community/practice partner(s). There should be strong established working relationships necessary to prepare and complete the proposed project and plans for further funding. NUCATS' Center for Community Health offers guidance and support for partnership development. To learn more, [click here](#).

### **Selection Criteria**

Applications are ranked on standard NIH criteria, including significance, investigator(s), innovation, approach, and environment. Applications to this mechanism should be informed by appropriate frameworks or models appropriate for dissemination and implementation. Aims should address system level factors appropriate for dissemination or implementation. Applicants should include quality and feasibility of stakeholder and academic partner engagement, quality and feasibility of proposed activities, potential for positive community impact, and consideration/plans for sustainability. Applications that only address patient or client level factors will be considered non-responsive.

D&I pilot grants provide up to \$30,000 over 12 months.

**Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the Center for Community Health to discuss possible application ideas. Please direct questions specific on the NUCATS Research Dissemination & Implementation Pilots to Darius Tandon at [dtandon@northwestern.edu](mailto:dtandon@northwestern.edu).**

### **References**

Go VF, Morales GJ, Mai NT, Brownson RC, Ha TV, Miller WC. Finding what works: identification of implementation strategies for the integration of methadone maintenance therapy and HIV services in Vietnam. *Implementation Science*. 2016;11(1):54. doi: 10.1186/s13012-016-0420-8.

Powell BJ, Waltz TJ, Chinman MJ, et al. A refined compilation of implementation strategies: results from the Expert Recommendations for Implementing Change (ERIC) project. *Implement Sci*. 2015;10. doi: 10.1186/s13012-015-0209-1.