2016-2018 DTRI Transformative Funding Agreements
REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS
Application Deadline: February 29, 2016

The Duke Translational Research Institute (DTRI) supports development and proof-of-concept evaluation of therapeutic agents, biomedical devices, and diagnostic tests designed to address unmet clinical needs. The DTRI supports translational research not only by providing funding, but also by promoting investigator collaboration, encouraging innovation, providing project management assistance, and providing access to resources/services in a collaborative and service-oriented fashion.

I. Purpose

The DTRI Transformative Funding Agreement provides funding up to $350,000 to address the T1 valley of death: the gulf between novel clinically motivated research and products that show safety and efficacy in humans (Coller BS and Califf RM, 2009). This program seeks to provide funding for development of mature research that if successful will attract significant interest for external partnering. The goal of this program is to enable and accelerate translation of research out of the academic environment (i.e. new company formation, license, or partnership).

Applicants will work toward major milestones (e.g. prototype development, GMP manufacture, GLP toxicology studies, IND submission, completion of Phase I clinical trial) that will enable this translation. Projects selected for funding will be assigned a translational support team for a run-in period of up to six months to deliver a proposed development path, outsourcing plan, and detailed project timeline before funds are released.

Examples of projects responsive to this application might include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A therapeutic agent that has shown efficacy in animal models but needs funding to complete scale up, pharm/tox studies and submit IND needed for clinical trials.
- An alpha prototype device with early proof-of-concept data that needs funding to manufacture devices and conduct clinical trials.

The primary source of funding is from Duke’s National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) UL1TR001117.

II. Key Dates

- Application Submission Deadline: February 29, 2016 (11:59pm ET)
- Selection of Finalists and Oral Presentations: April 2016
- Final Selection: May 2016
- Project Planning Run-In Period: May 2016 - October 2016
- Funding Period: Nov 1, 2016 - April 30, 2018 (18 months)
III. Eligibility

The Principal Investigator (PI) must be at the regular rank Assistant, Associate or Professor level at Duke University. The proposed project should be innovative, high-risk, and high-impact that if successful will attract significant interest for external partnering. Applicants will work toward major milestones that will enable translation out of the academic environment.

Applicants are encouraged but not required to bring funding partners, matching discretionary or departmental funds, or commitments from other sources to supplement CTSA support and accelerate research or broaden aims. Applicants must show that they have considered collaboration with other NCATS initiatives including Bridging Interventional Development Gaps (BrIDGs) and Therapeutics for Rare and Neglected Diseases (TRND) to compress timelines and access available expertise.

Faculty members may not serve as PI on more than one concurrently funded Duke CTSA pilot award, with the exception of Core Facility Vouchers and NIH Supplemental Award.

IV. Funding

The award will consist of up to $350,000 (direct costs only) with an expected start date of November 1, 2016 and ending no later than April 30, 2018. Only one award may be funded during this award cycle. Requests for no-cost extensions (carryover) will not be approved.

V. Selection Process and Review Criteria

1. Letter of Intent and Consultation (Optional):
   - We strongly recommend submitting a Letter of Intent with a one-page preliminary proposal. Please submit via email to dtripilots@dm.duke.edu.
   - The DTRI Project Office will review the LOIs and arrange a consultation meeting with appropriate consultants based on the specific project needs to provide feedback prior to the application submission.
   - Applicants who are resubmitting a proposal that was not funded are highly encouraged to submit an LOI and arrange a consultation.

2. Application Submission: The Review Committee will perform a detailed review of the applications and select the finalists. The Review Committee will consider the following criteria when reviewing and scoring applications:
   - Significance – The novelty, uniqueness and impact of the opportunity presented by the proposal.
   - Innovation – The project represents work that is sufficiently patentable and scientifically interesting to attract attention from potential investors or licensors.
   - Approach – Methods and analyses used are well-reasoned and suitable to accomplish the specific aims of the proposal and mitigate the potential associated risks:
     - Technical risk of development (devices), CMC/product risk (drugs) or assay technical risk (diagnostics)
     - Regulatory pathway to approval and regulatory risk
     - Clinical development risk
   - Feasibility – Project scope of work is appropriate for the timeframe and level of funding.
• Translation – Translational potential of the opportunity presented by the proposed activity including:
  o There is potential for independent external funding with data provided by this award;
  o The project is sufficiently scientifically interesting to attract potential investors or licensors;
  o The commercial potential, either by virtue of market size or unmet need in a smaller population can command premium pricing;
  o The competitive landscape, including products in development that might impact the potential to partner or translate the innovation.
• Transformative – the totality of all of the dimensions supports the transformative nature of the project and addresses an unmet medical need.

3. Oral Presentation: Finalists will be invited to present their proposals during a final selection meeting.

4. Project Planning Run-In Period: The project selected for funding will undergo a run-in period of up to six months to ensure that all requisite preliminary work is performed before funds are released.

VI. Application Procedure

DTRI strongly recommends involving a biostatistician in the application development process and including biostatistical support in the budget where necessary to ensure success. The online application form will ask for the name of the biostatistician who consulted on the proposal. For investigators without access to a biostatistician, biostatistical support can be obtained through the CTSA Biostatistics Core. The core provides an initial 1-hour consultation upon request at no cost.

DTRI utilizes the MyResearchProposal online application software to submit applications. To apply

• Visit http://bit.ly/myresearchproposal and log in if you already have an account or select “Create New User.” Proposals must be submitted under the Principal Investigator’s name.
• Enter access code “DTRI” and select the “DTRI Transformative Funding Agreement 2016-2018” funding opportunity and follow the instructions.
• A step-by-step user’s guide for applying via the MyResearchProposal software is available.
• Select the “DTRI Transformative Funding Agreements 2016-2018” funding opportunity and follow the instructions.

Applicants will enter general project information via the web-based form:

1. Project Title, Brief Description, and Amount Requested
2. Co-Investigators: Name, rank, department, and area of expertise
3. General Project Information: Applicants will be asked to answer general questions regarding the project (e.g. clinical need, IRB, IACUC, ongoing sources of funding, intellectual property, relevant citations).
4. Resubmissions: Applications that were previously submitted and not funded will be asked to briefly describe additional data or other changes from the previous proposal.
Proposal sections (except the Abstract) will be uploaded as individual PDF files. The application sections are:

1. **Scientific Abstract**: The abstract summary of the proposal for use by review committee members and DTRI (250-word maximum).
2. **Research Proposal**: (5-page limit, including tables and figures. Use single line spacing, 1-inch margins, and a font no smaller than Arial 11. References do not count toward the 5-page limit.) Research proposal should address the following:
   a. Explanation of unmet clinical need
   b. Table of quarterly milestones to be achieved
   c. Research plan to achieve milestones (include preliminary data where helpful)
      i. Include stage of the project/product
      ii. Include preliminary data where helpful (not required)
   d. Intellectual property status, strategy and plan for translation (license, etc.)
3. **Proposal Timeline**: The timeline should represent the activities to achieve the aims in the specific research grant as well as show the translation of the work covered by the grant through the next logical translational unit(s).
4. **DRAFT Budget with Budget Justification using PHS 398 Form Pages 4 and 5 (combined into a single PDF with no page limit).** Initial submissions are approximate and do not need institutional approval. Finalists selected for oral presentations will be required to submit a detailed NIH budget and updated budget justification. (If selected for funding, DTRI will route final budgets to departments for review and approval.)
5. **NIH Biosketches for key members of the research team (as a single PDF).** **PLEASE NOTE** the new NIH Biosketch format as of May 2015 - [click here for details](#).
6. **One copy of a relevant publication (no page limit)**

**VII. Budget Guidelines**

Please note the following during budget preparation:

1. The budget period is November 1, 2016 through April 30, 2018 (18 months). No indirect or overhead costs are awarded; the awardees receive direct costs only.
2. As part of federal requirements, Duke has an obligation to report effort correctly on sponsored projects. The transformative agreement involves significant programmatic involvement, and Investigators must include sufficient effort to accurately reflect their leadership on the project.
3. Grant funds may be budgeted for
   - salary support for the PI or faculty collaborators
   - research support personnel
   - tuition and fees
   - travel necessary to perform the research
   - small equipment, research supplies and core lab costs, or
   - other purposes deemed necessary for the successful execution of the proposed project
4. Grant funds may not be budgeted for
   • effort for post-doctoral trainees or fellows on training grant equivalents
   • capital equipment
   • office supplies or communication costs, including printing
   • meals or travel, including to conferences, except as required to collect data
   • professional education or training
   • computers or audiovisual equipment
   • manuscript preparation and submission, or
   • indirect costs

Awarded funds must be used to conduct the work proposed. All direct charges to this award must adhere to government regulations and Duke requirements regarding the use of CTSA funds. DTRI reserves the right to revoke funding in the event it is determined that funds were not spent in accordance with the approved proposal. The general criteria for determining allowable direct costs on federally sponsored projects is set forth in 2 CFR Part 200: Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (The Uniform Guidance). The Duke General Accounting Procedure (GAP) 200.320 is a resource to determine whether a particular cost item would be considered an allowable direct cost for budgeting and/or charging on a government-sponsored project.

VI. Terms of the Award
   
   A. Project Execution

   The Oversight Committee for the project will include institutional experts in therapeutic development, technology transfer, and commercialization as well as external experts from the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, device, diagnostics, and investment sectors. Projects selected for funding will undergo a run-in period of up to six months to ensure that all requisite preliminary work is performed before funds are released. Key deliverables for the run-in period will include the proposed development path, outsourcing plan, and detailed project Gantt chart.

   DTRI will assign a dedicated team during the run-in including a project manager, a CTSA Regulatory Affairs associate, and an invention manager from the Office of Licensing and Ventures. This team will provide critical expertise in drug and device development, informatics, intellectual property, conflict of interest management, contracts, outsourcing, regulatory affairs, and statistical expertise.

   At the end of the run-in period, the Oversight Committee will meet with applicants to review project aims and preliminary feasibility data and to determine whether to initiate full funding. A committee member will be assigned to each funded project to help develop a long-term funding strategy. Any project that fails to achieve pre-specified deliverables or that meets pre-specified futility endpoints will be reviewed by the Oversight Committee and may be terminated, with residual funds reallocated.

   Investigators agree to work in collaboration with the Oversight Committee, to submit brief written quarterly progress reports to the committee, and present the interim findings of their work at 6 months, 12 months, and final results at 18 months as part of committee meetings.
B. Post-Award Reporting

The DTRI tracks significant events ("translational units") required to translate a scientific discovery from laboratory, clinical or population studies into clinical or population-based applications to improve health by reducing disease incidence, morbidity and mortality. The DTRI will contact investigators annually to determine if any translational units have been achieved as a result of this award. Examples include:

- Abstracts/presentations, manuscripts, published guidelines
- Follow-on funding (e.g., grants, SBIR/STTR, angel investment)
- Milestones achieved in animal models, manufacturing and toxicity campaigns
- Regulatory meetings and filings (e.g., 510K, IDE, IND, BLA, NDA)
- Initiation of appropriate clinical studies
- Improved diagnosis or treatment of disease
- Implementation in clinical practice and community
- Commercialization (e.g. new intellectual property, patent applications, license, commercial partnerships, start-up company)
- Direct-to-consumer interactions (e.g. mobile health apps)

When requested, all awardees will be expected to provide updates of publications and other translational units that originated from the award.

All publications that are the direct result of this funding must reference: “Research reported in this publication was supported by the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences of the National Institutes of Health under Award Number UL1TR001117. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.”

Publications must also be registered in PubMed Central.

Awardees are expected to serve as reviewers for future DTRI funding opportunities.

MORE INFORMATION

For additional information on this funding opportunity, please contact Vonda Rodriguez, PhD at dtripilots@dm.duke.edu.