College of Medicine
Call for Applications
RESEARCH ALLIANCE TEAMS

“DRIVEN BY SCIENCE; ENABLED BY STRUCTURE”

The College of Medicine is launching a college-wide Alliance Initiative, which in addition to supporting emerging areas of research, will support growth in key areas of science aligned with the University’s VPR strategic Research Priority Areas (RPA) Initiative.

Alliances that relate to existing RPA’s will be reviewed in conjunction with RPA leaders. Thus, applications that are aimed at developing an area of strength within an existing RPA, or whose cross-disciplinary emphasis would support several RPAs, should be discussed in advance with RPA leaders, including discussions of matching support in the form of programmatic funding and/or protected time/coverage.

Since the RPA initiative prioritizes participation from across campus, a philosophy that is supported by the College of Medicine, these awards will be eligible to faculty across the campus provided at least one Alliance member is from the College of Medicine. We seek Alliance teams in the categories of (1) basic, (2) clinical, (3) translational, (4) population, and (5) implementation science. Alliance teams will be expected to have a plan for regular meetings and will be highlighted as part of the college’s strategic research structure (on website, etc.) and in campus-wide communication to foster continued growth.

Overall Alliance goals include the following:

- Support the development of transdisciplinary “nodes” of strength within research priority areas.
- Incubate applications that address three key factors in programmatic success: our faculty; our institutional infrastructure, and systems (operations, facilities, equipment, systems for compliance and safety, etc.); and our existing support (administrative, funding, etc).
- Promote the development of a leadership culture dedicated to mentoring and supporting the career development and academic success of all basic and/or clinical faculty members of the Alliance.
- Increase collaborative interaction and programmatic funding.
- Achieve greater UK science impact on discovery and in promoting new standards of care.
- Engage leadership from multiple departments and/or centers for success.

Academic Research Alliance applications will be peer reviewed for support of and integration with one or more of our priority areas as defined in the College of Medicine strategic plan (addiction sciences; cardiovascular sciences; diabetes/obesity/metabolic sciences; neuroscience; oncological sciences) or other emerging areas with a clear justification, while leveraging our center, departmental, college, and University structures, or as noted above, “Driven by Science; Enabled by Structure.”
The overriding purpose of the College of Medicine Alliance initiative is to develop selected programmatic themes and structures to be “best in class” from a national perspective and to achieve this result through well-constructed teams aligned with the college’s and with the institutional research strategic plan. Priorities will be given for Alliance teams that clarify priority “sub areas” within the overall strategic plan signature foci noted above. Although most Alliances are expected to be research-based, other programs with national impact in education, policy etc. will also be considered. Support may be utilized to develop a new Alliance or to strengthen an existing group of investigators who are already meeting and collaborating. Moreover, Alliances that cross disciplines, specifically those that augment and/or support several RPAs, are encouraged.

Each Alliance will have a chairperson(s), a leadership team that will form the steering committee for the Alliance, and defined and meaningful membership. Each application must show leveraging, and how such leveraging will be accomplished. Examples include partnership between two basic science departments and/or centers, a basic science department(s)/center(s) and a clinical department(s), and with RPA leadership. The proposed development of the Alliance must include defined metrics that will be achieved at six-month intervals; over the 24-month period of programmatic support. Funding will include an initial allocation of $50,000, plus up to three additional $50,000 allotments at six-month intervals, contingent upon satisfactory performance related to the defined metrics, for a total of up to $200,000.

Defined metrics may include identification of specific Alliance team members, with an emphasis on clinician, early-career, and less well-funded scientists, that the chairperson(s)/steering committee will help/mentor/advise toward increased grant funding; specific multi-PI grant submissions (R01, P20, P30, RM1, U01); individual grant submissions by member faculty; increased grant submissions and funding of Alliance team members as a group; increased publications in the highest impact journals; and improved national ranking including a top 20 national NIH research ranking of a department or selected programmatic area for public universities. Metrics for funded Alliances may be revised following consultation with the College of Medicine research leadership team. Additional resources for supporting clinician scientist career development are available through the Center for Clinical and Translational Science [https://www.ccts.uky.edu/education-training/career-development-and-training-programs](https://www.ccts.uky.edu/education-training/career-development-and-training-programs).

Proposals should include a plan for self-sufficiency following the initial award period. For example, if funds are requested for administrative support or core facilities, grants spawned from the award period should include support for the core in the budget.

Priority will be given to applications that incorporate the following:

- Support provided by the relevant RPA (which will include a relative priority assessment by the RPA leader, if applicable,) and agreements to match award funding. Include a letter from the RPA leader(s).
- Identification of an Alliance chair or co-chairs who must have R01 or equivalent funding, and will serve as the PI(s) of the application.
• Agreement (demonstrated by a letter of support) for all faculty with Alliance-related effort faculty effort to assure appropriate protected time and support (letter from chief/chair/center director for each member required).
• Identification of Alliance faculty membership, including contributions of each member to the Alliance and plans for the Alliance to support the career development of its members, with a particular emphasis on clinician and early career scientists. Priority will be given to Alliance teams that clearly outline a plan for supporting its members to pursue future grant submissions, team effort, clinical trials, etc.
• A detailed budget and budget justification including salary support, startup support (if applicable), supplies, etc. Sufficient justification and detail should be provided to validate the need and cost of each item. The budget will be reviewed to ensure that the funds being requested are relevant to the research being proposed.
• Plans for sustainability at the end of the award period, including ongoing sources of funding and fundraising.
• Metrics that permit objective tracking of progressive progress during consecutive six-month intervals and that inform successful program completion during the two years of programmatic support. Funding distributions will be formulaic, bi-annual, and contingent on meeting metric goals related to the success of the Alliance team.

Applications will be accepted and reviewed according to the following schedule

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<th>Call for Applications</th>
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<th>PI selected for Full Application Notification</th>
<th>Full Application Receipt Deadline</th>
<th>Funding Decision</th>
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<td>December 11, 2019</td>
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PRIORITIES FOR FUNDING:
Within the general guidelines outlined above, the types of projects that will be considered within this mechanism include projects that:
• Increase grant funding and ranking in key signature areas or emerging areas (with justification of the relevance of emerging areas).
• Enhance the success of clinician scientists, early career faculty, and faculty with less funding, through partnership and mentor support of Alliances.
• Increase the number of programmatic/multi-PI grants.
• Increase the number of grants submitted by Alliance members.
• Increase the engagement and partnership of clinical and basic science departments and centers to leverage strengths in our academic medical center.
• Enhance the value of basic science departments.
• Enhance the expertise of our faculty in clinical departments and centers.
• Enhance career development of faculty.
ELIGIBILITY:
- Eligibility is limited to full-time faculty (all title series including regular, research, clinical, and special) at the University of Kentucky. At least one of the senior Alliance members should be College of Medicine faculty, preferably one of the chairs.
- Investigators in training including residents, post-doctoral fellows, and clinical fellows are NOT eligible to serve as PIs but may be co-investigators.
- Volunteer faculty and adjunct faculty are NOT eligible to serve as PIs but may be co-investigators.

FUNDING INFORMATION:
Alliance awards will be made on a competitive basis. The College of Medicine support will include an initial award of up to $50,000 in total direct costs over a 12-month period, with additional distributions of up to $50,000 every six months depending on clear metrics of team development (maximum of up to $200,000 from the College of Medicine over 24 months). These contributions are expected to be partially matched by participating departments and centers, and also supported by priority focus areas where applicable.

It is anticipated that up to three Alliance proposals will be funded.

ALLOWABLE COSTS:
- Funds may be used to develop faculty and/or projects, including the recruitment of faculty in areas critical for the development/success of the thematic focus area.
- Funds are to be used for the conduct of the project, including supplies, subject payments, assays, etc.
- Travel funds that are needed for study conduct are allowed, if essential.
- To support collaborations between basic scientists and clinician scientists and to promote clinician-scientist involvement in proposed project, support for effort may be requested for a clinician scientist.

College of Medicine funds will be held by the college and the budgets invoiced for a period of 24 months maximum, dependent on the nature and scope of the study. Individual principal investigators will not be allowed to hold more than one Alliance research award at any one time.

LOI AND BIOSKETCH SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:
Letters of Intent (LOI) and Biosketch (BS) in NIH format will be reviewed by a steering committee and a subset of meritorious LOIs will be selected for full applications. Full proposals will be subject to a standard NIH-type study section assessment. Each proposal will be reviewed by a minimum of two reviewers.

DEADLINE DATE for LOI: November 11 by 5 p.m. (EST). The submission link will be closed after this time.

LOI submission link
LOI Instructions (two-page limit)
The LOI must be within a two-page limit describing the following elements:

- **Description of the science/rationale driving the Alliance effort (approximately one-two paragraphs).**
- **Qualifications of the Alliance chair(s) and a list of the Alliance faculty members, including their departmental and/or research center affiliations.**
- **Identification of Alliance members, including junior faculty.**
- **Brief outline of the proposed metrics/milestones at six-month intervals.**
- **Brief description as to how the Alliance will facilitate the priorities outlined above.**

Additional information needed (not included in the two-page limit):

- Proposed budget, including cost-sharing by participating departments/centers.
- Biosketch of the Alliance chair(s) in NIH format.
- Letter of Support from department chairs/center directors of Alliance chairs, and from leaders of relevant priority area(s).

**Priority Area Leadership Contacts:**

- Neuroscience - [Larry Goldstein](#) and [Linda Van Eldik](#)
- Substance Abuse - [Sharon Walsh](#)
- Cancer - [Mark Evers](#)
- Diabetes and Obesity - [John Fowlkes](#) and [Nada Porter](#)
- Cardiovascular - [Susan Smyth](#) and [Alan Daugherty](#)

**ALLIANCE RESEARCH PROTOCOL SUBMISSION PROCESS**

Based upon review of the LOI, successful applicants will be invited to submit a full application with a six-page limit. Incomplete or incorrectly prepared applications will be returned without review.

*If invited for full application, APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE ASSEMBLED IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER*

**I. Cover Page(s)**

1. Title of the Alliance project and total amount requested.
2. Applicant’s information for Alliance chairs/co-chairs:
   - Name
   - Degree(s)
   - Rank, title(s)
   - College
   - Department/division
   - Campus address
   - Contact information including email and telephone number

**II. Detailed budget and budget justification in NIH format, direct cost only**
Please include budgets for the initial College of Medicine allotment of $50,000 and for each subsequent $50,000 allotment, including department/center cost sharing. The total budget should also be included. Submit a detailed information for the initial budget and the entire budget period.

Letters regarding cost-sharing agreements with departments/centers should also be included in the budget. Include a description of plans for the Alliance to become self-sustaining from a budgetary perspective.

III. Abstract
The abstract should provide a brief (not more than 250 word) summary of the Alliance goals and project(s). Beneath the abstract, each of the Alliance members and their departmental affiliation should be noted. Any additional key personnel should also be included. Each Alliance member and key personnel listed should provide a letter confirming their role (note: include these letters in the appendix).

Explain how this partnership will provide new opportunities for the investigators, any development activities that will be conducted throughout the project, and how these activities will build a sustainable infrastructure for an ongoing partnership (not more than 250 words).

IV. Body of the proposal: (six-page limit)
The format of the application will follow NIH guidelines as outlined below.

**Specific Aims (limited to one page and included in the six pages body proposal)**
State concisely the research goals and projects of the proposed Alliance, and outline how the Alliance aligns with one or more priorities for funding. Include a summary of the proposed metrics/milestones by which success of the Alliance will be measured. Describe briefly how the program will achieve “best in class” status in the selected thematic area.

**Research Strategy**
Organize the research strategy in the specified order and using the instructions provided below. Start each section with the appropriate section heading—Significance, Innovation, Approach. Cite published experimental details in the research strategy section and provide the full reference in the bibliography section. Given the length of the application, investigators should strive to provide a relevant, although not exhaustive bibliographic review (described below).

(a) **Significance**
- Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed Alliance addresses.
- Explain how the proposed Alliance will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad fields.

(b) **Innovation**
- Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms.
• Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies; instrumentation or intervention(s) to be developed or used; and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation or intervention(s).
• Explain any refinements, improvements, or new applications of theoretical concepts, approaches, or methodologies, instrumentation or interventions.

**Approach**

(c) Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project.
• Indicate goals for each phase of the project, along with the milestones to be achieved and/or the metrics by which success will be evaluated.
• Discuss how the proposed research projects will facilitate the development and enhance the funding of junior and/or underfunded faculty.
• Clearly describe how each Alliance member will be engaged in the development and/or implementation of the study.

As applicable, also include the following information as part of the research strategy, keeping within the three sections listed above: Significance, Innovation, and Approach.

• **Preliminary Studies.** Include information on preliminary studies. Discuss the PI’s preliminary studies, data, and/or experience pertinent to this application. Preliminary data can be an essential part of a research grant application and help to establish the likelihood of success of the proposed project.

V. Appendix

• Biosketch for each Alliance member in NIH format.
• Protection of human subjects section and animal assurances, if applicable.
• Letters from department chairs/center directors that include acknowledgement of their financial support (if applicable) and providing assurance that sufficient protected time to complete the research will be available.

➢ All applications exceeding the requested page limit will be rejected and not reviewed.
➢ References- authors, year, title, and journal information are expected for each citation. These are not included in the page limit and can be reported at the end of the body of the proposal.

Follow the steps below to apply for Alliance support:
• For the application, margins must be no smaller than 0.5” at all points.
• Use an Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, or Georgia typeface, a black font color, and a font size of 11 points or larger. (A Symbol font may be used to insert Greek letters or special characters; the font size requirement still applies).
• Type density, including characters and spaces, must be no more than 15 characters per inch. Type may be no more than six lines per inch.
• EACH page should provide the applicant’s name in the upper right hand corner. The application should be numbered consecutively in the center bottom.
AWARDEE RESPONSIBILITIES:
- Successful applicants will be required to provide semi-annual progress reports. A final written report describing project accomplishments must be submitted within 60 days of the project end date.

RELEASE OF FUNDS:
- Funding for successful application will be released upon receipt of applicable IRB/IACUC approval, if applicable.
- If required IRB/IACUC approval is not provided within a period of 90 days after the announcement of the award, the funds will be subject to cancellation.