

OAK Pilot Award Program

Call for Proposals

The Osteoarthritis Alliance of Kentucky (OAK) is now accepting applications for Pilot Projects. The purpose of this funding mechanism is to provide new opportunities and resources to support innovative, collaborative research relevant to the onset and treatment of posttraumatic osteoarthritis (PTOA).

SCOPE

Within the general guidelines outlined below, the types of pilot projects that will be considered within this mechanism includes projects that:

- Provide support for new investigators that have not received R01-level funding as a PI
- Stimulate the development of new clinical and translational, inter- and multidisciplinary teams
- Develop new methodologies to better diagnose or treat those with PTOA
- Pursue high-risk, high-reward studies that will provide pilot data to support applications for federal funding within six months of the completion of the study

OAK PILOT AWARD

These awards are intended to support pilot studies by new investigators (NIH definition) to obtain preliminary data for an extramural grant submission. The maximum award will be \$10,000 which must be spent over 12 months, as it is our intent to fund multiple projects based on the number and merit of proposals submitted. Applicants must identify an OAK mentor to assist with the investigator's training.

- Eligibility is limited to full-time faculty (all title series including regular, research, clinical and special) of the University of Kentucky that are still considered New Investigator in accordance with NIH policy (An investigator who has not previously competed successfully as PI for a substantial NIH/DOD independent research award)
- Investigators who are PIs on R01-level funding are not eligible
- 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

Key Dates

Cycle	Call for Proposals	Full Application	Funding Decision	Funding Period
1	Sept 11, 2020	Nov 1, 2020	Dec 1, 2020	Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2021
2	March 1, 2020	April 1, 2020	May 1, 2020	Jun 1, 2021 – May 31, 2022

PRIORITIES FOR FUNDING

The main priorities for funding are:

- Clear clinical and translational relevance in the area of posttraumatic osteoarthritis
- The likelihood that funding will result in a competitive application for extramural funding
- Priority will be awarded based upon the strength of the research and mentorship team
- Multidisciplinary research teams representing the basic, clinical and/or applied sciences with an emphasis on bridging the divisions between basic and clinical scientists

FUNDING INFORMATION

Budgets for awarded pilot projects will include only direct costs. Proposed costs should be commensurate with the work. Sufficient justification and detail should be provided to validate the need and cost of each item. The budget will be comprehensively reviewed to ensure that the funds being requested are relevant to the research being proposed.

ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

- Funds are to be used for the conduct of the project, including equipment, supplies, subject payments, assays, etc.
- To support collaborations between basic scientists and clinician scientists a research DOE supplement of up to 5% effort may be requested for a clinician scientist applying the NIH salary cap

NON-ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

- Funding is not available for thesis or dissertation projects
- Funding will not be awarded as bridge funding for ongoing projects
- No funds will be provided for publication costs
- No funds will be provided for professional memberships
- Funding will not support travel
- Facilities and Administrative costs, also known as indirect costs are not permitted

In the event that additional intra/extramural funds are secured to support the study outlined in your application you must immediately notify Cale Jacobs (859-797-8197, cale.jacobs@uky.edu). Funds will be held by the OAK and the budgets invoiced for a period of 12 months maximum, dependent on the nature and scope of the study. **Individual principal investigators will not be allowed to hold more than one OAK pilot research award at any one time.**

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

APPLICATION STYLE GUIDELINES

- 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.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Investigators are encouraged to contact Cale Jacobs (859-797-8197, cale.jacobs@uky.edu) to schedule a meeting with an OAK Full Member/Mentor to review the basis of your submission, to learn how the OAK Pilot Research Program operates, and to devise a budget for your protocol. Full Application page content and page order are defined below. **Late or incomplete applications will be returned to the investigator and will not be considered for the funding opportunity.**

Cover Page(s): (not included in the 4-page limit)

- Title of the Project and Total Amount Requested
- Applicant's information for Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators:
 - Name
 - Degree(s)
 - Rank, Title (s)
 - College
 - Department /Division
 - ERA Commons Username
 - Contact Information including e-mail and telephone number
 - Please verify that you are an NIH new investigator (not having a previous R01 as a PI)
 - Please indicate clinical privileges
 - Current percentage of unfunded Distribution of Effort (DOE) protected for research
- Abstract, 250-word limit
- Mentor's information (Applicable only for early career investigators): Name, Degree(s) and Rank, Campus Address, and Contact Information
- Applicant's Chair Information for each collaborator: Name, Campus Address, and Contact Information

Detailed budget and budget justification in NIH format, direct cost only

NIH budget template (detailed budget for initial budget period)
<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/fp4.pdf>

NIH budget template (budget for the entire budget period)
<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/fp5.pdf>

Allowable expenses include:

- Equipment essential for the conduct of the study
- Data analysis costs
- Participant reimbursement/recruitment costs

- Research assistant salary support
- Faculty or non-faculty personnel salary support
- Project specific specimen collection/analysis or testing
- Chemistry and biological lab supplies
- Purchase of cell lines, culture reagents etc.
- Animal purchase and housing costs
- Specimen collection/analysis or testing

Please review the allowable costs section and contact Cale Jacobs or Brian Noehren (b.noehren@uky.edu) with questions. Applicants must account for fringe benefit costs when considering research assistant salary levels. No indirect costs are assignable through this mechanism.

Body of the proposal: (limited to 4 pages)

- The format of the application will follow NIH guidelines as outlined below.

Specific Aims (limited to 1 page)

- State concisely the goals of the proposed research and summarize the expected outcome(s), including the impact that the results of the proposed research will exert on the field of posttraumatic osteoarthritis research
- List succinctly the specific objectives of the research proposed, e.g., to test a stated hypothesis, create a novel design, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm or clinical practice, address a critical barrier to progress in the field, or develop new technology

Research Strategy

- Organize the Research Strategy in the specified order using the instructions provided below. Start each section with the appropriate section heading: Significance, Innovation, and 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)

Significance

- Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field of PTOA
- Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad fields
- Describe how the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field will be changed if the proposed aims are achieved

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

- Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted as well as any resource sharing plans as appropriate
- Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve the aims
- If the project is in the early stages of development, describe any strategy to establish feasibility, and address the management of any high-risk aspects of the proposed work
- As applicable, also include the following information as part of the Research Strategy, keeping within the three sections listed above: Significance, Innovation, and Approach
- Include information on Preliminary Studies if available. 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
- Include a timeline or Gantt chart with clearly defined deliverables and the anticipated dates of completion for each deliverable

Appendix

- Biosketches in NIH format (must use the current NIH Biosketch template)
NIH Biosketch guidelines - <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>
- References- Authors, year, title and journal information is expected for each citation. Given the length of the application, investigators should strive to provide a relevant, although not exhaustive review
- Letters of Support from the PI's department chair and significant collaborators must be included
- Relevant assessment materials may be included if they are of reasonable length and significantly enhance the review of the application
- DO NOT submit published manuals, materials in the public domain or similar materials. This is NOT a means of extending the length of the proposal itself

Mentoring plan:

Role and qualification of mentor(s). Inclusion of a clinician (physician, dentist, pharmacist, clinical psychologist, physical therapist, etc.) mentor is highly desirable in studies involving direct interaction with human participants.

Letter from supervisor/department chair:

A letter signed by the immediate supervisor (e.g. Division Chief) and/or Department Chair that includes acknowledgement of their support for the project and providing assurance that sufficient protected time to complete the research will be available. No specific amount of protected time is required, but the review committee will consider the distribution of effort and other activities of the applicant.

REVIEW PROCESS & CRITERIA

Incomplete applications will not be reviewed. The application will be sent to a minimum of two reviewers with expertise in fields relevant to the science in the proposal. Full proposals will be subject to a standard NIH-type study section assessment. The reviewers will then provide written feedback addressing the merits of the application. All applications will be scored based upon the written reviews, relevance to the Priorities and Scope outlined above, and the overall relevance to the long-term goals of the OAK. You will be notified of the outcome.

The general criteria for review include:

Overall Impact	What is the project's likelihood to have a sustained, powerful influence on posttraumatic osteoarthritis?
Clinical Significance	Is the study relevant to human health and the health of Kentucky citizens?
Innovation	Are the aims original and concepts novel? Are novel methodologies proposed?
Approach	Do the specific aims test the hypotheses? Are statistical considerations provided? Is the risk/benefit ratio acceptable?
Investigators	Is this an early career investigator? If so, a mentorship team must be identified. The qualification and experience of the mentor, and their plan for career development for the early career investigator, will be an important aspect of review. Does the investigative team have training, expertise, and experience to conduct the proposed study?
Environment	Is the environment strong? Do the investigators take advantage of available expertise? Is there a transdisciplinary team involved in the study?
Feasibility	Is the study feasible from the perspective of recruitment and availability of resources?
Potential	Will the pilot study generate new knowledge that can be published? Will completion of the study lead to external funding or development of a novel or translational methodology? Is there a clear plan to move towards federal funding within six months after completing the pilot project?

AWARDEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Once your protocol is fully approved and funding awarded, you should contact Cale Jacobs (cale.jacobs@uky.edu) and/or Brian Noehren (b.noehren@uky.edu) to schedule a working meeting with the OAK members involved with your protocol. Successful applicants will be required to provide written quarterly progress reports and a final written report describing project accomplishments must be submitted **within 60 days** of the project end date. In addition, successful applicants will be asked to give brief status updates on their project at the monthly OAK meetings.

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 60 days after the announcement of the award, **THE FUNDS WILL BE SUBJECT TO CANCELLATION**