



Pilot Projects Program

General Information, Eligibility Requirements & Expectations

Thank you for your interest in submitting a Letter of Intent (LOI) for consideration of funding from our Pilot Project Program. We encourage you to contact the Pilot Project Core Program Lead at your institution (or either of the Pilot Project Core Program Leads if you are from a different institution) to discuss your project proposal before developing your LOI. They will connect you with one of our experienced Research Navigators and provide you with advice as to how to best frame your proposal.

Pilot Projects should be designed to be conducted over a one-year duration, produce publishable results and provide preliminary data for an external grant application. We encourage proposals that involve collaborations between IDeA-state investigators at the lead institutions (MH, UVM) and/or partnering institutions/programs (examples include University of Southern Maine, University of New England, Dartmouth, the NNE-CO-OP PCBRN or other institutions in IDeA states in the region. We encourage collaborations between basic/translational scientists and clinical investigators, and between population health scientists and community practitioners. While budgets are not required at the LOI stage, please note that direct costs for a project are capped at \$40,000, regardless of the number of sites in the project.

Expectations and Priority Topics:

Awards will support projects that have a highly significant impact through innovative approaches that can ultimately improve health care for at-risk populations. Such pilots could include development of novel monitoring systems, and novel assays or interventions that could impact patient awareness or health needs. Preclinical and clinical translational proposals that are aligned with the mission of the NNE-CTR are welcome. NNE-CTR encourages pilot studies addressing questions related to:

- Addiction Medicine
- Cancer (lung, prostate, breast, and others)
- Cardiovascular Disease (including disease affected by obesity and diabetes)
- Chronic Diseases
- COVID-19 Impacts
- Health Equity and Health Care Disparities
- Research that addresses health care issues relevant to rural communities and our vulnerable populations

Eligibility Requirements:

To qualify for an NNE-CTR Pilot Project Research Award, you must meet the following criteria:

- Project will take place in and consist of partners from IDeA states (e.g., Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire). No funds from the NNE-CTR can be spent in a non-IDeA state. You may collaborate with investigators at an institution in a non-IDeA state if no grant funds are being expended there. Thus, non-IDeA state partners cannot be included in the budget and would need other sources of funding. Each collaborating institution receiving NNE-CTR funds must be incorporated in an IDeA

state; branches or sites of an institution whose parent organization is NOT in the IDeA state are not eligible to serve as a site for a pilot project.

- At least one member of the team must hold a faculty or affiliation appointment at MH, UVM, or USM. Junior faculty are encouraged to apply with input from an experienced mentor.
- The Pilot Project Lead may not concurrently have research funding from other IDeA Program award mechanisms (e.g., INBRE, COBRE)
- Project are intended be translational or clinical in nature; and basic research projects that are clearly related to the diagnosis, prognosis, or targeting of disease will be considered.
- The Pilot Project Lead must hold a faculty level (or equivalent) appointment at their home institution. For purposes of the Pilot Project Program, this means that the Pilot Project Lead must be eligible to apply for independent funding at their home institution.
- For experienced faculty with established research extending into clinical and translational investigation with a community-based physician, the research must be distinct from their currently funded projects.
- For community-based physicians to be eligible for Pilot Project research awards, they must have an affiliation, appointment or a collaborating partner or academic researcher from either UVM or MH.
- The Project Lead and principal members of the study team must be members of the NNE-CTR.

After Submitting an LOI:

Letters of Intent will be reviewed by the NNE-CTR Pilot Project Program and Administrative Core Leads. Letters deemed to be eligible based on eligibility criteria and scientific/programmatic criteria, and that further the mission of the NNE-CTR, will be invited to submit full proposals. We will inform you of the decision by September 1, 2023. If you are invited to submit a full proposal, we will provide detailed instructions for full applications, and will offer guidance and support as you develop your proposal, including the assistance of NNE-CTR Navigation services.