Pilot Project Funding Opportunity in Aging and Regeneration research

The NIH Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) in Comparative Biology of Tissue Repair, Regeneration and Aging is pleased to announce a 2022 Pilot Project Grant Program. Funded by the NIH/NIGMS (COBRE grant P20GM104318), this program will provide support for pilot project grant applications from Maine scientists and clinicians working broadly in the fields of regenerative and aging biology and chronic degenerative diseases. Scientists and clinicians working at all Maine R&D organizations and education institutions are eligible to apply. Inter-disciplinary and inter-institutional collaboration, including collaboration between nonprofit and for-profit organizations, is encouraged.

Funding of up to $60,000 for one year (total costs) is available for scientifically meritorious projects. Pilot grant applications should focus on a one-year plan with experiments feasible for this time frame.

Goals and objectives: The Davis Center for Regenerative Biology and Aging at the MDI Biological Laboratory supports research in comparative animal models of regeneration and aging with NIH COBRE funding. The goal of this funding announcement is to support fundamental research statewide in Maine on the topics of tissue repair, regeneration and aging as well as early-stage development of technologies that stimulate tissue repair and regeneration or improve the function of damaged tissues and organs. We aim to support investigators to generate preliminary data that will lead to competitive applications for external funding.

Eligibility: Eligible investigators must hold an academic faculty appointment in Maine. Preference will be given to early-stage investigators who do not yet have an R01 grant or equivalent. Established investigators who want to start new lines of research in aging and regeneration are also encouraged to apply. Pilot Project Leaders are not allowed to receive simultaneous research support from other IDeA awards, including an INBRE, an IDeA-CTR, or a different COBRE.

Application dates and instructions: Proposals are due July 15, 2022. The start date of the award will depend on the timing of approval by NIGMS, but we are targeting August 15, 2022, as our projected start date and an end date of May 31, 2023.

Interested investigators are encouraged to direct questions to the COBRE Director Iain Drummond Ph.D. at idrummond@mdibl.org.

The completed application should include the following components:

1. A research plan in the format of an NIH R01 proposal, using single-spaced Arial 11-point typescript and 0.5-inch margins, which includes the following sections:
    a. Abstract/Summary (30 lines max)
    b. Specific Aims (1 page)
    c. Research Strategy (4 pages max), with the following subsections:
        - Significance (including background and any preliminary data)
        - Innovation
        - Approach (including plan for ensuring rigor and reproducibility)
2. An NIH-style biosketch. Include relevant details of applicant's career trajectory as relating to this proposal. For instructions and Biosketch form template page see: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm.
3. IACUC approval for any research involving vertebrate animals, and a narrative that addresses the four points of use of vertebrate animals as required by NIH (if applicable).
4. IRB approval, human subjects protection section, human subjects education certification, and Targeted/Planned Enrollment Table (if applicable).
5. A letter from an appropriate institutional representative confirming that the institution will support the project leader's commitment to the proposed research project. This letter should detail the percent effort that the applicant can commit to the project and indicate the applicant's qualifications and support for the development of a biomedical research career.

6. A *draft* budget that provides information on how the project will use the proposed funding during the one-year project period. If your project is selected to go forward to NIH for approval, we will request a final budget that will need to be approved by the financial office at your institution. For this *draft* budget, we request that you use two NIH forms (Form Page 4 and Form Page 5, followed by budget justification on page 2 of the Form Page 5). NIH grant forms may be found at: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html
    a. Funding may be used to support the following:
        - Research personnel
        - Supplies
        - Animal purchase and housing
        - Travel to one scientific meeting per year
        - Core services
        - Statistical consultation
        - Publication costs
        - Other justifiable direct research costs
7. A plan for authentication of key biological and/or chemical resources (<1 page).
8. Bibliography / References Cited

A Progress Report is due at the end of the funding period. Successful pilot awards may be eligible for further support contingent on the availability of funds.