

## COBRE PILOT PROJECT GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT 2023

The NIH/NIGMS Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE grant P20GM144265) in Extracellular Regulation of Cellular Behavior 2023 Call for Pilot Projects.

### Overview

This pilot project program will provide seed money for additional innovative research projects related to the theme of cellular signaling in response to extracellular cues. Two Pilot projects will be chosen for funding for one year. Pilot projects may be renewed through a competitive renewal process in the next year's call for pilot projects. Funding of pilot projects will not exceed \$50,000, projects may be funded at lower levels. In order to enhance the synergy between the [COBRE grant](#) and GSBSE, UMaine will provide a fully funded assistantship for one GSBSE student per pilot project. In addition, UMaine will waive tuition for all graduate students involved in pilot projects.

### Eligibility

Investigators from all University of Maine System campuses, the University of New England, The Jackson Laboratory, Maine Health Institute for Research, and the private colleges that are part of the [Maine INBRE](#) network. Projects involving early career faculty will be given highest priority.

- Investigators must hold an academic faculty appointment in Maine
- Investigators will be asked to identify a mentor, include a letter of support from their mentor, and provide a mentoring plan
- 25% effort towards the pilot project is strongly encouraged, please include letter from department chair indicating effort is available
- Investigators with a RO1 or equivalent are not eligible
- Investigators with current funding from an IDeA research grant - another COBRE, CTR, or INBRE are not eligible

### Criteria for funding through this program are:

- Pilot projects must be scientifically related to goals of this COBRE program or provide new technology or methodological development related to the imaging and data analysis core facility.
- Pilot projects will have objectives that can be accomplished within one year, with defined and measurable milestones. Extension of pilot project funding may be considered, but will undergo a second review process that evaluates progress within the first year of funding.
- Budgets for a one-year pilot project will not exceed \$50,000 and may be less, depending on the scope of research.
- If projects utilize human subjects or vertebrate animals, prior appropriate training and institutional approvals through IRB or IACUC are required.

Investigators are encouraged to use shared core facilities and services at IDeA institutions in Maine <https://maineinbre.org/research-resources/maine-regional-idea-shared-core-services-facilities/>.

Those include:

[MDI Biological Laboratory Scientific Resources](#)  
[Bates College Imaging Center](#)  
[The Jackson Laboratory Scientific Research Services](#)  
[Maine Health Research Institute](#)  
[The University of Maine](#)  
[University of New England](#)  
[Colby College](#)

## Evaluation

In addition addition to the standard overall evaluation that considers:

- Significance
- Innovation
- Investigator
- Approach
- Environment

Reviewers will use the above established review criteria for assessment

- Relation to goals of this COBRE program or new technology or methodological development related to the imaging and data analysis core facility.
- Collaboration, with a co-investigator structure to enhance scientific interaction.
- Defined and measurable milestones including objectives that can be accomplished within one year.
- Prior appropriate training and institutional approvals through IRB or IACUC required for projects utilizing human subjects or vertebrate animals.

## Key Dates

**Due date** August 1, 2023

Please submit as single PDF document to [umainecobre@maine.edu](mailto:umainecobre@maine.edu)

Applications will be evaluated by the OBRE ERCB Steering Committee and considered for final approval by the COBRE - ERCB External Advisory Committee and NIGMS

**Earliest Start Date** September 1, 2023

## Application Process

1. Project summary/abstract, relevance to health, list of key personnel
2. Detailed budget for the initial budget period
3. NIH-style biographical sketches for the PI, other key personnel, and the PI's mentor
4. Facilities and other resources, equipment, and planned core facility use
5. Other Support (current and pending support)
6. Research Plan

## Research Plan

- Specific Aims - 1 page
- Research plan (no more than 5 pages overall)

- Significance - In addition to overall significance, include a description of the relevance of the proposed work to extracellular regulation of cell behavior
- Innovation:
- Research Approach:
- Future Directions: Include a proposed plan for future funding. As the purpose of this pilot project grant is to promote career development and future funding, please clearly state the intended grant submissions.
- References (not included in the page limits for the research plan)
- Mentorship/career development plan (recommended, not more than 1 page) This is additional space for the investigators to carefully consider how the proposed research fits into their research goals, the mentoring needed for this to happen, and how they will obtain said mentoring.
- Human subjects if applicable (indicate IRB approval status)
- Vertebrate animals if applicable (indicate IACUC approval status)
- Biosafety/select agents if applicable (indicate IBC approval status)
- Letter from department chair: This letter should highlight the potential of the applicant for a successful career in biomedical research and detail the percent time available to be devoted to this project (ideally 25%).
- Letter from mentor: This letter should affirm the willingness of the mentor to meet with the mentee monthly and aid the mentee in their research program.
- Budget
  - May include support for research personnel, animal care, supplies, core services, publication costs, travel to one meeting a year, and other justifiable direct costs.

**Progress Reports will be required in February 2024** and will include research progress, presentation, grant submission, and manuscripts submitted.

**Awardees of the funds will be expected to:**

- Participate in monthly COBRE professional development meetings
- Participate in a grant writing workshop
- Document monthly interaction with mentors
- Participate in weekly meetings with Clarissa Henry (COBRE PI)