Neuroscience Research Priority Area
Early Career Investigator Pilot Grant Program
Spring 2021 Request for Applications

The Neuroscience Research Priority Area (NRPA) seeks to provide broad-based support of neuroscience research across the University of Kentucky. As part of this initiative, the NRPA pilot grant program supports the development of innovative, cutting-edge research across basic, translational, and clinical neurosciences. The pilot grants will support teams in developing preliminary data necessary for applications for extramural funding (proposals must address how the project will lead to future extramural applications). Proposed projects should be multidisciplinary or transdisciplinary and involve colleague(s) from more than one UK College/Department.

This RFA is specifically in support of early and new career faculty. Eligibility is limited to applicants in the early stages of their career; assistant level faculty within 10 years of completing their doctoral degree. Applicants who have not previously received R-level funding should include a letter of support from a faculty mentor as an appendix to their application.

Application Format

Instructions: All materials should be combined into a single PDF document. Margins should be at least 1/2 inch and the font size should be between 10 and 12 points. Proposals should be submitted to susannahmstitzer@uky.edu

Applications should include the following documents.

1. Completed Application Form with required signatures
2. Study Background (1 page)
   a. Include research objectives, rationale, hypotheses, and aims
3. Study Design (2-pages)
   a. Describe the significance, innovation and approach
   b. Include methodology, sample size, analysis plan, outcomes
4. Timeline (1/2 page)
   a. Identify milestones for accomplishments described in the Study Design/approach
5. Budget and Budget Justification
   a. Complete the budget worksheet
      (https://www.research.uky.edu/sites/default/files/NRPA%20Pilot%20Grant%20Budget%20Worksheet%20FY%2022.pdf)
6. Plan for extramural funding (1 page)
   a. How will this pilot grant facilitate a future external grant? Include a timeline of
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7. References (no page limit)
8. NIH or NSF-style biosketch for each investigator (5-page limit per investigator)
9. Letters of support as applicable
10. If this application is seeking pilot support to strengthen an application that was previously submitted for external grant funding, but was not awarded, please attach the summary statement of reviewer’s comments.
11. If this application is a resubmission from a previous NRPA pilot submission, applicants may include a 1-page response to previous reviewer’s comments

Budget
The pilot grant program will support 2 grants of approximately $25,000 in direct costs each for a 1-year project period. Projects requiring higher levels of funding are still encouraged to submit an application; the NRPA’s goal is to support the most promising research and may award increased levels of funding to projects as appropriate and with justification, depending on availability of funds.

The following costs are not covered—administrative or office costs, meals or hospitality, travel that is not directly related to the conduct of research, other items typically supported by indirect costs, and monetary clinic incentives.

Salary for 12-month faculty is allowed; up to 1-month of summer salary is allowed for faculty on 9-10 month contracts.

Support for Protocol Design
For researchers seeking assistance in study design, please contact Dr. Christopher McLouth via the NRPA website (research.uky.edu/neuroscience) or CCTS’ BERD services via the CCTS website. The Proposal Development Office can be used for assistance with developing a proposal.

Review Process
Grant applications will be reviewed by investigators with appropriate neuroscience background and expertise and will use NIH-type evaluations (https://grants.nih.gov/grants/peer/guidelines_general/scoring_system_and_procedure.pdf). Applications will also be evaluated based on the potential for the proposal to eventually be competitive for extramural support. Following initial peer review, applications recommended for funding will be reviewed by the NRPA Internal Advisory Council and final funding decisions made by joint agreement.
Review Criteria
Application review will be based on the following considerations:
1. Innovation
2. Significance
3. Approach
4. Environment
5. Investigators
6. Probability that this project will lead to extramural funding
7. Additional review considerations:
   a. Alignment with NRPA strategic goals (emphasis on collaboration)
   b. Budgetary considerations
   c. Regulatory approvals
   d. Letters of support/commitment (if applicable)

Unfunded Grants
Unfunded grants can be considered for funding in subsequent cycles.

Due Dates
- Call For Applications: April 8, 2021
- Application Deadline: June 4, 2021, 5:00pm EDT

Notifications
Reviews and award notifications will be provided within 8-weeks of the grant application deadline.

Term
Funding is for 1 year. Extensions will be considered on a case by case basis

Awardee Responsibilities
- Awardees are expected to submit collaborative extramural grants
- Awardees are expected to publish their findings in scholarly peer-reviewed journals and present their research at professional meetings
- All publications, grants, and presentations resulting from research funded by the NRPA should cite the NRPA as a contributing source of support

A 1-page report summarizing the outcome of the project, extramural funding applications and awards, and the use of the awarded funds is due 1 month after the end of the funding period. Unspent funds are to be returned to the program.