



TO: University of Alabama at Birmingham Faculty (*September, 2015*)

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SUBJECT: RFA FOR PILOT PROJECT RESEARCH FUNDING
The UAB DRC is a NIH research center (P30 DK079626). The DRC is a component of the UAB Comprehensive Diabetes Center (a University-Wide Interdisciplinary Research Center; Anath Shalev, M.D., Director), which may contribute funding to selected pilot grants responding to this RFA.

Research Focus: The pilot and feasibility program is intended to provide seed support for new and innovative research projects directed at basic, biochemical, translational, clinical, and community-based research questions that broadly pertain to diabetes, diabetes complications, and cardiometabolic disease. Pilot projects should be designed to generate sufficient data as the basis for further extramural funding (e.g., R01 applications) in order to substantially pursue and expand the line of investigation. **In fact, in order to respond to NIH criteria for competitive renewal of the DRC, a key priority for your application should be to focus on subsequent extramural or R01 grant funding.** Thus, your application will be reviewed with this in mind so please provide a short paragraph indicating how the award will facilitate R01 application development and the submission of a proposal. We will entertain 2 year projects if justification for the need is made in order to effectively develop an R01 (you will have to reapply in November of 2016 to get funded for your second year).

Eligibility: Funding will be available to full time UAB faculty members who must meet one of the criteria listed below. Please note that applications from post-doctoral fellows will be considered if there is a clear plan and written documentation for transition to a faculty position at UAB before the initiation date of the pilot grant award. Post-doctoral applicants will be asked to identify a faculty member who will provide research advice, but the work should support independent research and career development for the fellow/junior faculty member.

1. Junior investigators (e.g., Associate Professors or below who have not been PI on a previous NIH R01 grant).
2. Established investigators with no previous work in diabetes who wish to apply their expertise to a problem in this area.
3. Established investigators in diabetes who want to pursue high impact/high risk projects to test truly innovative ideas that represent a clear departure from ongoing research interests.
4. Note: We will also consider multidisciplinary projects that involve both basic and clinical scientists who combine efforts in 'translational' research protocols, which could not be conducted by basic or clinical scientist(s) alone.

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FUNDING and REVIEW PROCESS

The P/F program will fund up to five studies at \$20,000 - \$50,000/year. Established investigators whose basic research project is related to the interplay between diabetes and other chronic diseases are encouraged to apply to the specific UCDC seed funding RFA www.uab.edu/medicine/diabetes/research/funding-opportunities.

Criteria: Applications will be selected for funding based on merit using NIH study section criteria. Projects will be favored if consistent with the mission of the DRC (www.uab.edu/DRC) and likely to lead to future NIH R01 funding. Indeed, a cogent grant writing plan should be noted in the application and will be considered as a component of the priority score. DRC core facilities will be available to assist P/F investigators. Applications will be evaluated by the Pilot & Feasibility Grant Review Committee in two stages.

Application Procedure for Pilot Grant: The competitive process for these proposals is two-tiered:

FIRST LEVEL REVIEW -- All basic and clinical investigators interested in pilot project funding are asked to submit a one page description of the project that includes hypotheses, specific aims, and a research design and methods summary including models systems that will be employed, along with the new NIH formatted biosketch. **Remember to include a description of how the pilot award would be used to develop NIH research grants, particularly R01s, in both phase 1 and 2 P&F applications since this will be a criteria used in award selection.** The project description should not exceed one page. Approximately 7-10 investigators will be asked to complete the second level review process. The applications for first level review will be due Monday November 16, 2015. Please send these applications electronically to Ms. Eva Gilliam (evamarie@uab.edu). (Applicants will be notified for full applications in the 2nd week of December 2015.)

SECOND LEVEL REVIEW -- Investigators with the highest rated applications in the first level review will be asked to submit full pilot project applications for review by the committee. This application will use the PHS398 forms, an example of which can be found on our website <http://www.uab.edu/shp/drc/award-programs/pilot-feasibility-program> or on the NIH website <http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html> except that the project description is restricted to 5 pages. The applications must include:

- (i) PHS 398 Face Page
- (ii) PHS 398 Abstract Page
- (iii) Full budget (not modular) using PHS 398 budget pages (first year OR first and second year, as appropriate). The PI can budget up to 10% salary. If the budget allocations do not match the scope of the work, this will be considered as unfavorable in the review process.
- (iv) The new NIH formatted biosketch with the contribution to science section
- (iv) The description of the research, excluding references, is limited to 5 pages
- (v) A list of three possible outside reviewers for your proposal.

Applications for second level review will be due Wednesday February 3, 2016. Funding for those selected is anticipated to begin April 1, 2016. Please send these applications electronically to Ms. Eva Gilliam (evamarie@uab.edu).

Acceptance: Acceptance of the pilot award will require the PI adhere to a plan for submitting grants to extramural funding agencies, to present a research seminar at or near the time of study completion, and to report research progress to Dr. Frank.

Questions: If you have questions concerning eligibility or the submission of these proposals, please contact Ms. Eva Gilliam (evamarie@uab.edu); 996-7433) or Dr. Stuart Frank (sifrank@uab.edu; 934-9877).