

UAB GREGORY FLEMING JAMES CYSTIC FIBROSIS RESEARCH CENTER

2026 CALL FOR PILOT AND FEASIBILITY PROJECT APPLICATIONS IN CYSTIC FIBROSIS

The University of Alabama at Birmingham Gregory Fleming James Cystic Fibrosis (CF) Research Center is soliciting applications for Pilot and Feasibility Projects. The Center will fund up to two meritorious pilot projects through the CF Foundation (CFF) Research and Development Program, with up to \$75,000 in direct costs awarded per year for each pilot, for up to 2 years. The pilots are renewable for a second year contingent upon a favorable progress review. Awardees will be expected to provide milestone reports on progress as well as present their pilot activities as part of the Cystic Fibrosis Research Center's Seminar Series.

Pilot Program Goals

This mechanism supports basic and translational research initiatives that test innovative hypotheses and/or methods related to both airway and non-airway CF pathogenesis and intervention. Priority will be given to projects that focus on strategies and methods with the potential to: 1) Inform or ultimately translate into novel therapies to restore CFTR protein function or fix/replace the defective *CFTR* gene; 2) Improve our understanding of disease mechanisms and pathophysiology in a manner that will lead to development of new treatment strategies. Human clinical studies/trials are NOT supported by this mechanism. Applications are particularly sought from investigators who are new to CF research. Projects may benefit from a diversity of capabilities offered by CF Research Center Cores ([see our website](#)). The intent of these awards is to enable investigators to obtain the data needed to secure external funding from the CFF, NIH, or other funding agencies.

Eligibility

- 1) An applicant must be an independent investigator, defined as an individual who has completed fellowship training and is allowed to submit applications for research funding as a Principal Investigator (PI) by their institution.
- 2) An independent investigator must meet one of the two following criteria to apply:
 - a) Be an early stage or established investigator with no previous work in CF or CF-related areas who wishes to lend their expertise to a CF-related problem; such investigators may pair up with experienced CF investigators if beneficial; or
 - b) Be an early stage or established investigator in CF or CF-related areas who wishes to test the feasibility of an innovative idea that constitutes a significant departure from their current research.

Submission

Interested faculty should **email a Letter of Intent to cfrc@uab.edu by 5 pm on March 30th, 2026** that includes the following three components:

- 1) A one-page cover letter that contains: a) the project title, and b) the PI name, rank, and institution;
- 2) A one-page summary of the project aims, significance, approach, and core utilization. The document should be formatted with 0.5" margins and 11-point Arial font;
- 3) An NIH-formatted biographical sketch.

Responsive applications will be invited to submit a 5-page research proposal.

RFA Timeline

March 30th, 2026	Letter of Intent due
April 6th, 2026	Applications selected for full applications (5 pages)
May 15th, 2026	Full applications due
June 15th, 2026	Pilots selected for funding
July 15th, 2026	Funding is initiated (contingent upon CFF approval)

Please contact Dr. Kim Keeling (kkeeling@uab.edu) for additional information.