DOM Clinical and Innovative Therapeutic Award Pilot Program (2022-2023)

Due Date: An LOI is recommended to be submitted by November 9, but is not required. Questions on the application process can be directed to Dr. Kumar Sharma and/or Ms. Michelle Batilla batilla@uthscsa.edu. Full applications are due by 11:59 pm on December 7, 2021. Budget will be $20,000/project and start date may be as early as March 1, 2022. Full proposals submitted via the Survey Monkey platform at **https://apply-uthscsa.smapply.io**.

Please refer questions to Michelle Batilla, Research Administration Specialist-Sr., in the Vice Chair of Research of DOM office, at 210-567-4805.

Mission: Clinical research and novel therapeutics will likely have the greatest impact for patient care and will engage a large number of clinical and research faculty in the Department of Medicine and across the Health Care System. To stimulate a culture of research and academic inquisitiveness the DOM has allocated funds to support pilot projects that will lead to the submission of more competitive applications for extramural funding. This funding opportunity supports the DOM Strategic Plan.

Description: This is a call for pilot studies to collect preliminary data in preparation for submission to NIH and other extramural funding sources requiring preliminary data. Clinical trials and novel therapeutic ideas are encouraged. Investigator-initiated clinical trials or studies for understanding pathophysiology, biomarkers or therapeutics are encouraged as well as basic science studies to develop or test a novel therapeutic for disease indication relevant to the Department of Medicine.

Eligibility: Applications must be submitted by investigators whose primary faculty appointment is the Department of Medicine. Faculty are encouraged to collaborate with individuals from other Departments within the UT Health Science Center and associated institutions, including UT Medicine, South Texas Veterans Health Care System, University Health System, UTSA, San Antonio Military Health System, Texas Biomedical Research institute, and Southwest Research Institute.

Amount and Term: Requests for funds of $\leq$ $20,000 will be considered for project periods of up to 1 year. Funds are available to fund up to 4 projects, contingent upon submission of a sufficient number of scientifically meritorious applications. Matching funding from non-DOM departments or outside institutions will be encouraged but must include a letter of commitment from outside department or institution.

Applications Submission: A letter of intent (LOI) is not required but recommended to be submitted by 11:59 p.m. CST on November 9, 2021 and should include the title of the project, principal investigator (PI) and co-investigator names, and a very brief (one paragraph) summary of the project. The LOI is required only for planning purposes, but will not serve as a screening tool for proposal submission (i.e., all PIs submitting an LOI are eligible to proceed for full proposal preparation). The deadline for receipt of the full application is 11:59 pm CST on December 7, 2021. Both the LOI and full proposal should be submitted electronically via Survey Monkey Apply. Any questions can be directed to Michelle Batilla (batilla@uthscsa.edu) or at 210-567-4805.

Applications should be submitted via Survey Monkey Apply. Documents should be uploaded as Portable Document Format (PDF), use Arial 11 point font, single spacing, and .5-inch margins in all directions. Failure to follow these or the following guidelines may result in the application being administratively withdrawn. The application should include the following:
• Project Summary/Abstract (NIH form page)
• Budget (NIH form page

- Budget justification - no faculty salaries (NIH form page)
- Specific Aims (1-page maximum)
- Overall project narrative (3-page maximum)
- Literature citations (1-page maximum)
- Target funding mechanism and description of plans for obtaining external funding (1-page maximum)
- NIH Biosketch for all investigators (new NIH format, limit 5 pages/investigator)
- Program announcement (if applicable)
- Summary Statement(s) (if applicable)
- Letters of Support (if applicable, maximum three)

Budget and financial policies: Awards will be made for a project period of up to one year and can start as early as March 1, 2022. The *maximum* budget for these one-year awards is $20,000; all funds requested must be clearly justified. Facilities and Administrative (F&A, indirect cost) expenses will not be reimbursed. Salary (plus associated fringe benefits) may be requested for non-faculty support staff, including postdoctoral fellows. Salary support for graduate students or faculty co-investigators is not allowable.

For projects involving the use of human subjects or vertebrate animals, expenditures will only be permitted upon Vice Chair of Research Office receipt of a copy of the official letter of approval by the appropriate institutional review Board (IRB) or the Institutional Animal Care and use Committee (IACUC). **The expectation is that institutional approvals (INCLUDING IRB and/or IACUC) will be promptly obtained and projects initiated/funds disbursed within 60 days of award. If a different timeline is anticipated, address this in the application.**

Applicants must also be in compliance with institutional conflict of interest disclosure policies. UTHSCSA Certificate of Proposal (COP) is required upon award.

Review process and criteria: Applications will be peer-reviewed by an NIH-like study section. Scientific merit will be scored based on the following criteria:
- Significance
- Innovation
- Strength of the study protocol, including: Design, Feasibility, Preliminary Data (to the extent available but not required), Integration with ongoing research, quality of the investigative team, contribute to career development of clinical/translational scientists, inter-disciplinary collaboration, likelihood of extramural funding within 24 months of award
- Fit with DOM Research priorities including any Division within the DOM including hematology-oncology, nephrology, diabetes, cardiology, pulmonary/critical care, GI/hepatology, infectious disease, rheumatology, endocrinology, geriatrics and palliative medicine, dermatology, general medicine and hospital medicine.

Funding decisions will be based on scientific merit, likelihood of securing extramural funding, as well as programmatic considerations, such as breadth and depth of the overall pilot study portfolio, interactions among partners, community involvement, and balance among program areas and disciplines.

Administrative management: Progress reports will be requested 6, 12, and 24 months after the initiation of funding. One progress report presentation will also be required during the initial 12-month funding period.

Continuation of the pilot program is contingent upon evaluation of return on investment (i.e., extramural funding) of the funded pilots and the availability of funds.