

 **Pilot Project Grant Program – Overview and Instructions**

**I. Objectives**

The MCCTR Pilot Projects Program supports clinical, translational and population-based research projects on all major diseases that impact Mississippians. The objective of this program is to assist new investigators in generating sufficient data to be competitive for extramural funding. The highest priority will be given to applications that are most likely to lead to future extramural funding.

**II**. **Eligibility**

Employees with a full-time faculty appointment at the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC; includes joint UMMC/VA appointments), University of Mississippi (UM), Mississippi State University (MSU), Tougaloo College, and the University of Southern Mississippi (USM). MCCTR Summer Institute participants are also eligible to apply.

**III**. **Submission of Applications**

Application forms and instructions will be available on the MCCTR Funding Opportunities website. MCCTR Pilot Grants are made for a **one-year period**.

**An electronic copy of the proposal** should be submitted as a single file **in PDF format** to MCCTR@umc.edu. For UMMC investigators, the transmittal form should be signed by the principal investigator, department chair and/or the appropriate dean from schools other than the School of Medicine.

**Please note the following administrative requirements:** Page limitations indicated throughout the application will be strictly enforced. Applications should reflect NIH font sizes only, minimum size 11.0 Arial, Helvetica, Palatino or Georgia. Please attach a copy of the entire summary statement or original review comments from other funding sources for proposed projects that have been reviewed previously. Also, include a brief description of the changes you have made to your submission based on prior reviewer comments or suggestions (1 page maximum). Biosketches are required from all investigators and letters of support are required from all consultants.

***For an application to be complete, the following must be included in the submission:***

1. [UMMC Transmittal Form](https://umc.edu/Research/files/Forms%20and%20Templates%20Files/osp_transmittal_form.pdf) \*UMMC Investigators Only\*
2. [PHS 398 – Face Page](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/fp1.pdf)
3. [PHS 398 Project Summary](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/fp2.pdf)
4. [NIH Biosketch form](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch-blank-format-rev-12-2020-exp-02-28-2023.docx)
5. Specific Aims – 1 Page Limit
6. [Research Plan on a PHS 398 continuation page](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/continuation.pdf) – 6 Page Limit (see supplemental instructions)
7. Expected Results and Future Plans to Secure Extramural Funding – 1 to 2 pages (see supplemental instructions)
8. Bibliography/References Cited
9. [PHS 398 – Detailed Budget](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/fp4.pdf)
10. [Budget Justification on a PHS continuation page](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/continuation.pdf)
11. Letter of support from Department Chair or equivalent
12. Letter from Mentor and Mentoring Plan. Applicants must select a mentor and complete the mentoring plan and mentoring agreement found on our Pilot Projects Program [website](https://www.umc.edu/Research/Centers-and-Institutes/External-Designation-Centers/Mississippi-Center-for-Clinical-and-Translational-Research/Funding-Opportunities/Pilot-Projects-Program/Overview.html).
13. Human subjects information – the following items are required:
	1. Institutional IRB approval or plan to obtain approval **(An IRB application must be submitted no later than 1 week after the application deadline** and investigators should email confirmation to MCCTR@umc.edu to be considered for funding). **Your IRB title MUST match your application title.**
	2. Instructions: Section G.500 <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-f/general-forms-f.pdf>
	3. Complete the Subjects and Clinical Trials Information Form - (extract the Human Subject Study Record from the form.) If not a clinical trial, only complete sections 1-3 of the Human Subject Study Record. If a clinical trial complete all sections of the Human Subject Study Record.
14. Human Subjects Education Certification and Good Clinical Practices (GCP) Certificate (CITI Training Certificates) for any project that includes a clinical trial
15. Institutional IACUC Approval, vertebrate animal 4 points - if applicable (proof of IACUC submission also required within one week of the application due date) [Instructions](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-16-006.html)
16. Institutional Approval from Office of Radiation Safety, if radiation or radioisotopes will be utilized, must be completed prior to project start date.

**IV. Pilot Project Timeline**

Applicants are expected to progress through the following timeline in order to fulfil all aspects of a MCCTR Pilot Project application.

1. Submit a Letter of Intent by the LOI due date (typically 1 month prior to the application due date)
2. Meet with representatives from the BERD, Research Services, and Administrative Cores. This meeting will be brief and “orientation-style” to familiarize applicants with MCCTR support services. These meetings must be completed prior to the application due date. Chevonne Robinson (crobinson12@umc.edu) will provide scheduling.
3. Submit application, with all 14 requirements, to MCCTR@umc.edu.
4. Submit proof of IRB and IACUC application submissions **no later than 1 week after the application due date.**

**V. Method of Review and Funding**

Members of a Review Panel will independently rate the applications based on scientific merit and taking into consideration the applicant's previous research experience, feasibility of the proposed study, scientific and/or medical importance of the proposed work, and potential for securing extramural funding of the proposed research. The MCCTR Director of Scientific Review Panels will assign Primary and Secondary reviewers for submitted applications. The NIH scoring format will be used (scoring 1-9). The reviewer will provide recommendations and comments concerning experimental design, methods, data evaluation, budget, and other considerations. These will be discussed at a convened meeting of the Review Panel and all panel members will score the application. The Pilot Projects Program Director will compile these scores to arrive at an overall rating. Final recommendations and comments will be forwarded to the MCCTR Steering Committee and External Advisory Committee. Awards will generally be made to successful applicants within one month of the application deadline.

**VI. Restrictions on the Use of Funds**

No awards will be made for faculty salary, conference travel expenses (travel is allowable to reach community groups or etc.), or consultant expenses (subawards to businesses or institutions within IDeA states are allowable on a case-by-case basis). Indirect costs are not allowable.

**VII. Monitoring of Expenditures**

The MCCTR Administrative Core will monitor the expenditure of funds in various budget categories. Any changes in originally funded budget categories that are restricted will require prior approval by the Pilot Projects Program Director and MCCTR Operations Committee.

*The committee will have the authority to revoke any award if sufficient progress cannot be demonstrated or if overlap funding for the project is received from other sources. The investigator is obligated to report overlap funding for the project in a timely manner and must relinquish Pilot Grant funds at the time other funding is obtained.*

Extension of time or funds of the original award will generally not be considered. Requests for such extensions under the most extenuating circumstances should be anticipated and submitted at least three months prior to the termination date of the award.

**VIII. Mandatory Reports**

Awardees are required to submit a progress report once per quarter to the MCCTR Tracking and Evaluation Core. The progress report template is sent to all investigators via REDCap, and investigators have two weeks to complete each report. Reports include information on research progress, challenges or barriers to success, mentoring updates, and product updates (publications, presentations, grant submissions, etc).

**IX. Publications**

All publications and abstracts resulting from research supported either directly or indirectly by the MCCTR Pilot Grants Program should acknowledge the support with the following statement:

**“Research reported in this publication was supported by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health under Award Number U54GM115428. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.”**

**X. Mentoring**

Awardees will be required to complete an Initial Mentoring Agreement and Mentoring Plan with their assigned mentors. MCCTR leadership will work with awardees to identify mentors.

Awardees will be asked to present their projects as the MCCTR/COBRE joint meetings.

In addition, awardees are encouraged to attend the MCCTR’s Mentoring Academy. The Mentoring Academy consists of four sessions designed to develop both mentoring skills and grant writing skills as well as auditing the School of Graduate Studies Grant and Scientific Communication (MSCI790) course.