

Louisiana Biomedical Research Network - LBRN 2016 Competition for LBRN Pilot Research Project

Deadlines

September 5, 2016	Announcement of RFA
October 3, 2016	Letter of Intent
November 4, 2016	Proposal due
January 16, 2017	Announcement of Award

Objective

The purpose of this RFA is to solicit a new pilot project for the LBRN program. The expected start date for this project is September 1, 2017 for 1 year of funding through August 31, 2018. The selection and distribution of these projects by the Steering Committee will be based on the quality of the proposal and the needs of the LBRN program. Proposed projects should be consistent with the program's focal research areas (listed below). All interested researchers are encouraged to contact Dr. Ramesh Subramanian (ramji@lsu.edu) prior to submitting a proposal to ensure that the proposed research is eligible for inclusion in this program.

Computational & Structural Biology

This area includes themes, for example, bioinformatics, development of new computational approaches to solving significant bio-medical questions, biological modeling or investigations of molecular structure.

Molecular Mechanism of Disease

This area includes investigations focused on understanding the molecular mechanisms of significant human diseases, including, but not restricted to cancer, metabolic disorders, and infectious diseases.

Preventive Medicine

This area includes basic research important in the prevention of major human diseases. Research topics might include work such as the development vaccines, tissue engineering, drugs or new diagnostic tests.

Eligibility

The project is open to investigators at existing LBRN PUI campuses (GSU, LA Tech, LSUS, SLU, SUBR, ULM and Xavier) who:

- have not had previous LBRN full project funding, (researchers with previous LBRN pilot or summer funding, or making a significant change in research focus are eligible)
- currently do not have or previously have not had R15, R21, or R01 or equivalent research funding

Total Funds Available

The full project funding is \$50,000 Total Direct Costs per year for 1 year. Starting September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2018.

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Letter of Intent

Prospective applicants are **required** to submit a letter of intent that includes the following information:

- Name, address, email and telephone number of the Principal Investigator
- Names of mentors and other key personnel
- Descriptive title of proposed research
- State the research area focus in which your project fits

The letter of intent should be submitted via online form via LBRN website no later than 4:30 pm on October 3, 2016.

Proposal Guidelines (Overview)

One of the goals of the LBRN program for Full Project researchers is that by the end of the LBRN funding they will have developed a successful NIH R15 application. To facilitate this process we require all applicants to follow the basic NIH R15 guidelines for developing their application. A detailed description of the LBRN program specific components can be found below. More information can be found at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-d/research-forms-d.pdf>

The proposal should be submitted online application form as a single PDF formatted file to via the LBRN website no later than 4:30 pm, November 4, 2016. **LATE** submissions will **NOT** be accepted.

Proposal Guidelines (Detailed)

For general formatting instructions follow the current **SF 424** forms and guidelines, which can be found on the NIH Grant application website <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-d/research-forms-d.pdf>. The proposal should contain the following items:

- I. PHS 398 Forms (If mentor's Institution is different than the submitting Institution, forms from both Institutions are required)
 1. PHS 398 Face Page, signed by the applying Institution's Authorized Representative (form page 1)
 2. PHS 398 Project Summary (form page 2)
 3. PHS Research Grant Table of Contents (form page 3)
 4. Detailed Budget (form page 4 and 5) and Budget Justification (Continuation Page)
 - a. PI's budget (form page 4) years 1, 2, and 3 (September 1, 2017– August 31, 2018) Budget \$50,000 Total Direct Cost/year (form page 5 and Continuation Page for budget justification). *See Section IV. Allowable Costs for further details and explanation*
 5. PHS 398 NIH Checklist (398 checklist page)
 6. *Fringe / Indirect costs rate agreement (contact your Office of Sponsored Programs for copies of these documents)*

NOTE: While not required by NIH, any voluntary cost sharing and matching commitments of any kind (e.g., private sector, federal, institutional) that are pledged in the proposal must be clearly defined in the budget justification and honored in full if selected for funding.

**Louisiana Biomedical Research Network - LBRN
2016 Competition for LBRN Pilot Research Project**

II. Research Plans/Project Description (12 page limit, use NIH Continuation Format Page):

1. **Cover page (Limit to 1 page)**

- Project title
- Performance site(s)
- Lead project investigator or investigators if more than one person
- Key personnel (personnel who are in the budget); include Collaborators and Mentors
- Identify if the project includes human subjects and if any exemptions are claimed
- Identify if vertebrate animals are included

2. **Abstract and Specific Aims (Limit to 1 page or less)**

3. **Background and Preliminary Results (Limit to 2 pages or less):** Describe rationale, significance, and potential impact. Include preliminary results only as needed to address these topics. Preliminary results are not a required element.

4. **Research Plan and Timeline (Limit to 5 pages):** Describe research approach(es) and innovation

- a. Describe the specific aims of the research project in an area that is a focus of the INBRE. Delineate the hypotheses to be tested. Preliminary studies are NOT required for INBRE applications, but applicants with preliminary results should describe them. In the absence of preliminary results, applicants should describe the rationale and scientific basis for the proposed research and provide a strong research plan. Concisely state the importance and health relevance of the proposed research to the specific aims.
- b. Describe the nature and scope of any scientific research collaborations
- c. Project Timeline (September 1, 2017-August 31, 2018)

5. **Investigators (limit to 1 page; use tables to present information where possible):** For project leaders, mentors, key personnel, and collaborators: Identify the institution, education level(s), and role in project.

a. The candidate (Mentee)

- i. A single investigator at the awardee or network institutions should supervise each research project. Each investigator is responsible for ensuring that the project's specific aims are met. The research excellence of these projects will be enhanced by effectively using the scientific and technical strengths of collaborating investigators and/or mentors.
- ii. Individual development plan, including plans for developing a sustainable research program. See NIGMS website for more information.
<http://www.nigms.nih.gov/Training/StrategicPlanImplementationBlueprint/IndividualDevelopmentPlans.htm>
Note while the website describes these IDPs for post-doctoral researchers NIGMS has asked that we develop these for the INBRE researchers. This also replaces the requirement for a mentoring plan found in previous LBRN RFAs.

**Louisiana Biomedical Research Network - LBRN
2016 Competition for LBRN Pilot Research Project**

b. Mentor/collaborator

- i. Mentor should have research expertise relevant to the scientific area(s) to be developed within the INBRE. The mentor may be a collaborator on the faculty investigator's research project. Mentor will help oversee the proposed training and career development of promising investigators. Each project investigator should be assigned at least one mentor.

The mentor is an established faculty member who has demonstrated the ability to advise others through the acquisition of external support and the maintenance of an independent research laboratory. In most instances, mentor should be selected from outside investigator's institution and within the State at one of the INBRE mentoring institutions. If a suitable mentor is not available then it is acceptable to enlist appropriate mentors from the investigator's institution.

Mentor may request up to 1.0 person month and should be listed in the Administrative Core's budget section of the application and not in the individual projects' budget sections. The faculty investigators should clearly designate in the text the identity of their mentor(s) and describe the qualifications, both scientific and advisory, that make them appropriate to assist in the oversight of the project. In some cases, where appropriate, may serve as mentors to INBRE investigators and/or students. Letters of commitment from mentor(s) should be included in the application.

2. Environment and Resources (use Resources format page) (Limit to 2 pages or less):

Provide details; use table format where possible.

- a. Research environment
- b. Research and Institutional Commitment
- c. Technical support
- d. Details of LBRN/COBRE infrastructure that will be utilized during the project
- e. Other

Additional Information. As appropriate to the project, include the following sections; There are no page limits on these sections.

- a. Human Subjects*
- b. Inclusion of Women, Minorities, and Children
- c. Vertebrate Animal Care and Welfare*
- d. Biohazards*
- e. Literature Cited/Reference List

**(if applicable, approval letter needs to be attached)*

**Louisiana Biomedical Research Network - LBRN
2016 Competition for LBRN Pilot Research Project**

III. NIH Biographical Sketch

- Research project investigators and mentors must provide a biographical sketch as indicated in the PHS 398 instructions. This section must not exceed four pages per person. Note that the NIH Biographical Sketch format changed in 2015. (biosketch form and instructions)

Allowable Costs:

Funds will be provided to continue building and strengthening research infrastructure and capacity at the lead and partner institutions. Funds allocated to partner institutions are to cover expenses including but not limited to salary, research support, and equipment acquisition.

Sharing resources between LBRN and COBRE investigators is strongly encouraged. If a core facility already exists for equipment and instrumentation supported by a COBRE program, these should not be proposed de novo in the LBRN application. However, if duplicate equipment is to be requested under this FOA, it should be appropriately justified. Under this FOA, COBRE investigators are not eligible for research funding from LBRN as project investigators. Similarly, LBRN investigators may not receive simultaneous research project support from a COBRE program. COBRE investigators may serve and be supported as mentors in LBRN programs as appropriate.

Salary costs are allowable to the extent that they are reasonable; conform to the established policy of the organization consistently applied regardless of the source of funds; and reflect no more than the percentage of time actually devoted to the NIH-funded project. If full-time 12-month salaries are not currently paid to comparable staff members, the salary proposed must be appropriately related to the existing salary.

For this pilot project, which is considered half of a full project in which 6 months total professional effort is required, the expectation is research project investigators will devote at least 25% (half of the effort required for a full project) of their professional effort (equivalent to 3.0 person months) to career development and research activities. Applications must include a letter signed by the appropriate Dean, Department Chair or Supervisor ensuring the applying PI will have this level of protected time - at least 25% of their professional effort (equivalent to 3.0 person months) to career development and research activities.

Other Allowable Costs Include:

- Research equipment and instrumentation for laboratories
- Supplies for research
- Salary support for undergraduate and graduate students and technical staff

Pilot Project Selection Criteria

See the appropriate LBRN DRPP Application Review form for a detailed view of the review criteria.