

May 29, 2024*

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS
SOM-SPHIS JOINT PILOT PROJECT PROGRAM
LETTER OF INTENT DUE DATE (REQUIRED) 06/17/24
INVITATIONS FOR FULL PROPOSAL BY 07/01/24
FULL PROPOSAL DUE DATE 08/15/24**

Introduction: The UofL School of Public Health and Information Sciences (SPHIS) and School of Medicine (SOM) are soliciting applications for pilot projects funded with support from Deans Cardarelli and Bumpous. The Pilot Project Program was implemented to foster novel research forming the basis for new NIH R01 grant applications. The Pilot Project Program provides resources supporting collaborations between SOM and SPHIS investigators bringing new skill sets to address major health/public health problems, new avenues of health-related research, and community-engaged and community-led research in collaboration with faculty members.

General Information: The due date for pilot project applications in response to this RFA is 08/15/2024, with required Letters of Intent due on 06/17/2024. Project funding will be up to \$75,000 in direct costs, with no indirect costs. The project period will be for 15 months from date of award with an anticipated start date of 10/01/2024 and end date of 12/31/2025. No-cost extensions will only be allowed under extreme circumstances and subject to approval by the Joint Executive Committee. Each application will be required to demonstrate collaboration between faculty from the SPHIS and SOM, with faculty from each unit serving as multiple PIs. Awardees will be required to sign an award notice committing to the terms of the award: using the data to support a grant application to NIH, post-award reporting, submitting pilot-related summary statements of external grants to the Joint Executive Committee, and to present results of the project at a university symposium and/or at Research!Louisville in 2025. In addition, Pilot awardees with animal studies will be asked to make tissues from animal experiments available to other investigators. A faculty member can be contact-PI on only one application.

Letter of Intent (2 pages maximum): A letter of intent with due date 06/17/2024 is **required** for each application. Submission of letters of intent will assist with 1) ensuring that projects are appropriate for the program before applicants invest effort in preparing a full proposal; 2) planning the review of applications; and 3) organizing interactions with potential applicants during the application preparation period. Letters of intent should acknowledge that you will be applying for an NIH R01 grant within 6 months of pilot project completion and include the names of other investigators and key personnel, the title of the project, an abstract summarizing the proposed work, and keywords related to the project. Letters of intent should be submitted by email to the Research Office service account (hscro@louisville.edu). Letters of intent will undergo administrative and scientific review by a Joint Review Committee. Both of these will factor into selecting applicants from whom full proposals will be invited. These applicants will be informed of their selection to submit a full proposal by July 1.

Proposal Format: Once applicants have been invited to submit full applications but before the deadline, they will be required to consult with the Joint Review Committee. This will help applicants identify other potential collaborators and resources that could enhance and strengthen the project. Applications for pilot projects will contain the following elements: Cover Page, Abstract, Biosketches, Detailed Budget, Budget Justification, Specific Aims, Research Strategy, Bibliography and References Cited, Vertebrate Animals (if applicable), Letters of Support (if applicable), Resource Sharing Plan(s), Authentication of Key Biological and/or Chemical Resources (if applicable), and PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information (if applicable). Submit the application as a **single pdf file** attachment by email to the Research Office service account (hscro@louisville.edu).

Cover Page- Complete the cover page form distributed with the RFA.

Abstract- Provide a succinct description of the project including its relevance to SOM and SPHIS priorities (limit: 400 words).

Biosketches- Provide NIH-style biosketches (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>) for all key personnel.

Detailed Budget- Provide budget information for the project period (10/01/24-12/31/2025) on NIH Form Page 4 (Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>). The following costs will be allowable for pilot projects: supplies, core facility user fees, animal per diems, costs for human subjects research, publication costs, one open access fee, travel costs to present at one national or international conference, and salary/tuition/benefits for students, trainees, and technical personnel. *Major equipment and faculty salaries are not allowed.* List and provide amount of effort for all personnel, including faculty. Although faculty salaries are not allowed, it is expected that faculty involved on the projects will be spending time working on the projects (i.e. dedicating effort). Provide salary/tuition/benefits information for students, trainees, and technical personnel. For faculty, include the name of each faculty member involved in the project and the amount of effort devoted to the project, but leave the Salary Requested and Fringe Benefits columns blank and fill in the Total column with zero for all faculty personnel.

Budget Justification- Justify expenses and provide additional detail as needed to clarify how the requested funds will be spent.

Specific Aim(s)- Describe the overall goal of the project and the specific aim(s) that will be accomplished to achieve the goal (limit: 1 page).

Research Strategy- Describe the research strategy for the project in the format of a NIH R03/R21 application (limit 6 pages) and include all information required in NIH grant applications. Preliminary data are expected for pilot projects to demonstrate feasibility. Include Significance, Innovation, and Approach sections. The ultimate success of the Pilot Project Program is the generation of new NIH R01 grants. **Thus, every application should clearly make evident the feasibility of achieving the aim(s) and how the results will lead to an R01 application to NIH.** If applicants intend to apply in response to a Program Announcement or RFA, please provide this specific information.

Bibliography and References Cited- No defined page limit.

Vertebrate Animals- If vertebrate animals are to be used, address the three criteria required by NIH (Description of Procedures; Justifications; Minimization of Pain and Distress): <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/VASchecklist.pdf>

Letters of Support- Letters of support may be included if applicable to assist with establishing feasibility of the project.

Resource Sharing Plan(s)- Include a data sharing plan and, if applicable, plans for sharing model organisms and genomic data (https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/data_sharing/).

Authentication of Key Biological and/or Chemical Resources- Include this section if applicable based on NIH instructions: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.pdf>

PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information- If applicable, complete the PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information form (pdf version available here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/r-r-family.html>)

Review Process: An administrative review of pilot project applications will be performed, and those that meet the requirements specified in this RFA will be reviewed for scientific merit. Each application will be assigned to two external reviewers (one from SPHS and one from SOM) and will be scored for scientific merit on the 9-point NIH rating scale. NIH review criteria of Significance, Investigator, Innovation, Approach, and Environment will be scored, and an overall impact score will be given. A component of the overall impact score will be the likelihood that completion of the proposed research

would lead to submission of a competitive R01 application.

Post-Award Administration of Pilot Projects:

Reporting- Awardees will be required to submit an interim progress report at 6 months into the project period and a final report at the conclusion of funding. The 6-month reports will contain a brief summary of scientific progress, spending, presentations, publications, data sharing, grant applications submitted, and grants awarded. The subsequent final report will contain information on presentations, publications, grant applications submitted, and grants awarded. Additionally, investigators must report 1 and 2 years after award completion to allow tracking of subsequent funding.

Research!Louisville Symposium- Pilot project awardees agree to submit an abstract as part of Research!Louisville in Fall 2025.

Strategies for New Grant Funding- A central goal of the Pilot Project Program is to expand health/public health research at UofL by facilitating the procurement of new NIH funding. Pilot project awardees will be required to submit a proposal for NIH R01 funding to continue the project within 6 months after the original end date of the award.

Program Contacts

For additional information about the Pilot Project Program and the application process, contact either:

J. Christopher States, Ph.D.
Interim Vice Dean for Research
School of Medicine
University of Louisville

OR

W. Paul McKinney, MD
Associate Dean for Research
School of Public Health and Information Sciences
University of Louisville

*updated June 26, 2024