

## **Emerging Research Centers Request for Applications (RFA)**

### **For New and Renewal Applications**

#### **Purpose and Definition**

An Institutionally-Supported Research Center is an interdepartmental unit focused predominantly on translational, clinical and/or basic science research which facilitates development of a common, focused research agenda aligned with strategic priorities, coordinating contributions from multiple disciplines (other centers, divisions/departments, and programs).

The purpose of this RFA is to invite applications to develop an Institutionally-Supported Advocate Health/Wake Forest University School of Medicine Emerging Research Center. This document also provides the framework for a renewal application of an existing center. Emerging Research Centers support new ideas in need of investment for growth. The investment is intended to catalyze the formation of a team for the specific purpose of developing a strategic vision in order to grow a critical base of extramurally funded research. This research can be established in translational, clinical and/or basic science research.

#### **Letter of Intent**

Interested applicants are required to submit a 2-page Letter of Intent which addresses the following:

- Center title, mission and vision statement;
- Names and affiliations of leaders and potential key members;
- Rationale;
- Resources and strengths that can be leveraged;
- A reflection on missed opportunities if Center was not created;
- Areas of focus for future pilot funding;
- Summary of current funding portfolio and potential opportunities for growth;
- An estimated budget that includes personnel and non-personnel costs (a detailed budget is not required for the LOI).

The LOI will be reviewed by a subcommittee of the Dean's Cabinet in order to determine whether a full application should be submitted. An LOI may be submitted at any time to the Dean's Office (see contacts below).

#### **Full Applications**

Some flexibility will be provided in the format of the applications because applicants may be at different stages of Center planning and evolution. The general structure should follow a short NIH format (maximum 6 pages) including specific aims (1 page), and a research strategy (5 pages) to include significance, innovation, approach, investigators, and timeline. It should also respond to feedback from the review of the LOI.

The approach for the first year should be dedicated to generating the foundational elements for creating a successful and sustainable research center. These elements are likely to include, but are not limited to:

- Leadership development;
- Member engagement;
- A SWOT analysis that will drive Center focus and activities;
- Strategic planning;
- Clearly articulated milestones for Years 1, 2 and 3;
- Evaluation plan;
- A description of special needs such as faculty recruitment, infrastructure, or technologies that would be necessary in order to fully realize the potential of the center. These elements will not be funded within an Emerging Center, however.

Biosketches of the director(s) and core team members are required in NIH format. The application will include a budget and budget justification for 3 years. The budget for an Emerging Research Center should be quite modest reflecting the exploratory scope of work. Usual components of a budget will include administrative staff (limited support), pilot funding, symposium costs, and honorarium. Support for the center director(s) will be provided from another funding source and is not to be included in the budget.

### **Review Process and Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals will be reviewed by a subcommittee of the Dean's Cabinet and recommendations will be forwarded to the Dean and Academic Finance for final decisions. Evaluation criteria include the following:

- A vision that, if achieved, will uniquely position Advocate Health/Wake Forest University School of Medicine toward significant advances in research capabilities;
- Availability of a sufficient depth of faculty and institutional resources (e.g. technologies) from which to leverage the Center;
- Goals support and align with institutional research priorities and the mission to improve health;
- Strategies for generating the foundational elements for creating a successful and sustainable research center;
- Plans to develop links to the clinical enterprise for advancing the academic learning health system;
- A proposed leadership team with the potential to successfully guide the development of the Center;
- Plans for engaging and growing a multi-disciplinary membership which includes multiple markets;
- Inclusion of EDJI principles and initiatives in the Center activities.

### **Annual Progress Report**

An annual progress report including a budget is required and the budget for the subsequent year will be reviewed and may be adjusted based on progress toward goals. In addition, Center members are contacted annually to provide feedback; these data are reviewed by the Dean.

**Renewal**

A renewal application is due in Year 3. An Emerging Research Center is expected to have advanced sufficiently in a 3 year period to warrant consideration for a transition from an Emerging Research Center to a Research Center. As such, an LOI is required to receive permission to submit an application in Year 3 for a Research Center.

**Contacts**

Direct questions and applications to Lynne Wagenknecht, Vice Dean for Population Health Research, and/or Lindsay Trost, CTSI Administrative Director.