

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 Research Center. This document also provides the framework for a renewal application of an existing center. Research Centers support mature areas of research that reflect depth in translational, clinical and/or basic science research. A separate RFA is available for Emerging Research Centers.

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 members;
- Rationale and alignment with institutional priorities;
- Expertise, resources, and strengths present within the enterprise;
- A strategic vision for growth;
- A summary of the current extramural portfolio;
- 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

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 should outline a detailed plan for growing the extramural research portfolio in this area. Other components of the plan may include: organizational structure, leadership, membership criteria, and plans to include and engage members; connections with clinical teammates to identify patient- and health system-oriented research questions, if relevant; mentorship of early career research faculty and students; team

training and development; support of the academic learning health system; initiatives focused on equity, diversity, justice, and inclusion. A description of unique needs may be included such as faculty recruitment, infrastructure, or technologies, although the budget may not necessarily allow for the support of these elements. Representation of members from multiple markets of Advocate Health is required.

Biosketches of the director(s) and core team members are required in NIH format. The application will include a budget and budget justification for 5 years. Usual components of a budget will include administrative staff (limited support), pilot funding, symposium costs, team training, 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:

- Goals support and align with institutional research priorities and the mission to improve health;
- Involves members whose research and practice cross the translational spectrum (preclinical, clinical, population sciences) and includes multiple markets;
- A plan to grow the extramural funding portfolio that would not be possible without Center leadership and infrastructure;
- Serves as an intellectual home to support and engage its members, including early career investigators, around a thematic focus;
- Has a plan to solicit, review, and evaluate pilot projects, and to track Return on Investment;
- Disseminates new knowledge to internal and external audiences.

Annual Progress Report

An annual progress report including a budget is required. The progress report will include a budget for the subsequent year. The budget 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 5.

Accountability and Expectations

Institutional support of Research Centers is not guaranteed indefinitely. Centers are required to show outstanding stewardship of institutional resources, and growth in extramural funding and collaborations. The resources available to Centers is finite and so in order to support new initiatives, other Centers may need to constrict, hopefully because extramural support is growing and providing a substitute for institutional support. The following lists some examples of expectations for continuing Center support.

- Created a high level of national visibility for Atrium Health/Wake Forest University School of Medicine;

- Pursued investigator initiated awards (R01s or equivalent) to support research, research infrastructure, and/or implementation/dissemination projects including grants emanating from pilot funds;
- Pursued Program Project type funding and/or Center-level funding;
- Provided outstanding Return on Investment of Center resources, particularly pilot funding;
- Developed early career faculty through mentorship programs and/or collaborative project opportunities;
- Routinely engaged Center members and gave them voice in Center activities;
- Included EDJI principles and initiatives in all Center activities;
- Continuation (renewal) applications should include a progress report section.

Contacts

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