Clinical and Translational Science Institute
Request for Applications for Shark Tank Awards

PURPOSE

The Wake Forest Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) is seeking clinically relevant project ideas for consideration in a virtual "shark tank" competition. Projects should address an existing issue or problem currently affecting our patient population and should propose a new practice, treatment, tool, approach, etc. that has the potential to improve patient care. Projects should consider ways to disseminate changes or new best practice to the affected patient population.

ELIGIBILITY

This award is open to both faculty and non-faculty researchers throughout Advocate Health. Non-faculty researchers are required to have a faculty mentor from the Wake Forest University School of Medicine.

KEY DATES

Date	Detail
10/30/26, 11:59 pm ET	Application Deadline
11/09/26	Investigators Invited for Shark Tank
11/20/26, 3:00 pm ET	Shark Tank Presentations
12/02/26	Selection of Awardees
01/01/27	Project Start Date
12/31/27	Project End Date

FUNDING

The Clinical and Translational Science Institute will fund up to **$5,000** in direct costs per project to be spent within a 12-month period. One project will be funded. See section on Budget Guidelines for more details on allowable and non-allowable budget items.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Application Requirements
Deadline: 10/30/2026, 11:59pm ET
Submission/Applicant Information

- Project Title
- Submitting Investigator and Faculty Mentor (if applicable)

Project Summary (300 word max)

- Provide a brief summary of your project or improvement idea.

Real-World Challenge

- In 3-10 sentences, describe the "real-world" issue or problem that your research addresses.

Impact Statement

- One sentence to help the average person understand your projects impact. Emphasize your impact, not your research.

Budget and Justification (budget template plus 1-page justification

- Complete the budget template form provided along with a brief justification for the funds requested for this RFA. Please include explanation of other resources that may be leveraged to support the project.
- Sub-awards to other institutions to carry out work on a project are not allowed.

CTSI Services

- Identify CTSI Services needed to implement your project.

Click here to access the Research Shark Tank Electronic Submission Form

BUDGET GUIDELINES

The budget period is for 12 months ending no later than 12/31/2027. Up to $5,000 in direct costs may be requested.

Grant funds may be budgeted for:

- Salary support for the PI or faculty collaborators (using NIH salary cap)
- Research support personnel (including undergraduate and graduate students)
- Small equipment, research supplies and core lab costs, or
- Other purposes deemed necessary for the successful execution of the proposed project

Grant funds may **not** be budgeted for:

- Office supplies or communication costs, including printing
- Meals or travel, including to conferences
- Professional education or training
- Computers or audiovisual equipment, unless fully justified as a need for the research
- Manuscript preparation and submission, or
- Indirect costs

Awarded funds must be used to conduct the work proposed. All direct charges to this award must adhere to federal regulations and requirements regarding the use of CTSI funds. The Clinical and Translational Science Institute reserves the right to revoke funding in the event it is determined that funds were not spent in accordance with the approved protocol. The general criteria for determining allowable direct costs on federally sponsored projects is set forth in 2 CFR Part 200: Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (The Uniform Guidance).

REVIEW CRITERIA AND PROCESS

CTSI Sharks and Leadership will review projects with the following items being considered during review:

- The quality of the science and potential for further project development.
- Research feasibility and innovation.
- Potential impact and demonstrated need.
- Appropriateness of budget.

PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

If any significant issues arise, the study team will be required to work with the CTSI to define an intervention strategy for the study to be successfully completed (or in rare cases, terminated).

1. CTSI staff will work closely with funded teams throughout the grant period to monitor progress and, when necessary, provide assistance. A final progress report will be required. We expect PIs to report over the lifetime of the work the outcomes achieved due to the shark tank award, e.g., subsequent external funding, publications, presentations and patents.
2. All publications that are the direct result of this funding must reference: “Research reported in this publication was supported by the Clinical and Translational Science Institute at Wake Forest University School of Medicine.” Publications must also be registered in PubMed Central.
3. Any awardee who leaves his or her position should contact the CTSI to discuss future plans for the project.

GRANT ADMINISTRATION

The Principal Investigator is responsible for the administration of grant funds. Projects will be for a 12-month period of time.

CONTACTS

Questions about your research project or the electronic submission system should be directed to Katelyn Still at Katelyn.Still@Advocatehealth.org.