



**LA CaTS Center Grant Development Award Program  
2024-2025 Funding Opportunity  
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

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**I. PURPOSE:**

The Louisiana Clinical and Translational Science (LA CaTS) Center is seeking applications to support Grant Development Awards for LA CaTS investigators with sufficient preliminary data to support collaborative scientific grant-writing teams in clinical and translational research. Support of investigators is central to the aim of the LA CaTS Center to increase the critical mass of investigators performing clinical and translational research. This is a competitive application to identify and select Grant Development Awards, which will lead to subsequent competitive grant proposals to the NIH and other funding agencies. The overall objective of the program is to provide support so that junior and senior faculty can collaborate on planning and preparation for the submission of interdisciplinary and innovative grant applications.

This innovative program will engage other cores (e.g. biostatistics and health literacy), utilize existing LA CaTS and university resources (e.g., grant-writing workshops of the Professional Development Core and scientific publishing workshops), support the preparation and submission of competitive grants aimed at achieving the overall goal of addressing health disparities and improving health outcomes in Louisiana. Competitive proposals for this program will include a list of qualified faculty collaborators representing different disciplines and a timeline for grant preparation with appropriate milestones to submit an external grant application within 6-12 months of the Grant Development Award.

Pilot project awardees and other LA CaTS investigators with sufficient preliminary data will be eligible to apply for a Grant Development Award for **up to \$5000** in total costs for collaborative scientific grant-writing teams.

**II. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:**

A goal of the LA CaTS Center is to provide support for researchers who have a high likelihood of subsequently competing successfully for independent funding from the NIH or a comparable agency in clinical or translational research. The objective of this RFA is to support investigators in planning and developing competitive grant proposals in clinical or translational research and to foster interdisciplinary collaborations by leveraging skills and expertise with leaders in the field within and/or outside of the LA CaTS Center institutions.

**III. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:**

The Grant Development Award Program emphasizes the preparation of grant proposals in basic, clinical, and population/community science that have clinical or translational relevance. It is available to pilot project awardees and other LA CaTS investigators with sufficient preliminary data to support collaborative scientific grant-writing teams in clinical and translational research. Applicants must hold a PhD, M.D., or equivalent degree. Eligible candidates must be faculty or

LA CaTS Roadmap Scholars, at any of the LA CaTS Center member institutions, with an interest in health-related research, and seeking to develop a proposal in translational research to compete successfully for NIH or other extramural funding. Post-doctoral fellows and residents are not eligible for this award.

There is no citizenship requirement for Grant Development Award Program recipients. Visiting scientists with whom the LA CaTS Center's institutions do not have a long-term collaborative relationship will not be considered for support.

#### **IV. SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES:**

The Grant Development Award Program will be coordinated through the Pilot Grants Program and the Administrative Core. The Professional Development Core will assist, when needed, with coordinating successful applicants with experienced researchers/mentors. Funds will be awarded to support reasonable travel and grant planning costs (see below) and be itemized in the budget. The Grant Development Award Program **does not include salary support** for the LA CaTS Center Grantee.

#### **V. FORMAT OF THE APPLICATION**

Applications **must** be submitted online under the applicant investigator's account on the LA CaTS Center's Service Request Page, SPARC at: <https://sparc.lacats.org>.

Instructions on how to submit your application in SPARC can be found here: [https://sparc.lacats.org/doc/Funding\\_Opportunity\\_Submission\\_Instructions.pdf](https://sparc.lacats.org/doc/Funding_Opportunity_Submission_Instructions.pdf)

All materials submitted must follow the font and margin guidance for NIH applications available at: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.pdf>.

Applications must include the following:

1. NIH Form Page 1: Face Page (signed by authorized institutional representative)
2. **Grant Development Plan:** The Plan will consist of two pages (maximum) including:
  - A. Background and goals towards developing a clinical or translational research grant application
  - B. Activities to achieve these goals
  - C. Research topic that fits the LA CaTS Center theme to "address health disparities and improve health outcomes in our underserved population with chronic diseases"
  - D. Identification of appropriate basic science and clinical collaborators
  - E. Timeline for the proposed Grant Development Award activity and subsequent grant application submission to NIH or another agency
3. **NIH Biosketches** of the applicant and key collaborators, 5-page limit for each investigator.
4. **Letters of support** from the collaborators, 2-page limit.
5. **Budget & Budget Justification:** All budget materials submitted must follow the font and margin guidance for NIH applications for Form Page 4 and Form Page 5 available at: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.pdf>.

#### ***Expenditures Allowed:***

- Travel costs (domestic ONLY)- support travel of external experts, industry partners, and academicians to attend grant preparation and writing meetings to

foster a multidisciplinary focus on improving health outcomes and reducing health disparities

- Coordinator time to support scientific team-writing activities (e.g., literature searches, meeting coordination, minutes and conference calls)
- Materials and supplies directly related to the planning process
- Meals for group planning activities
- Honoraria for outside experts to review the new grant application

***Expenditures NOT Allowed:***

- Salary support for the grantee or collaborators
- Foreign Travel
- Computers
- Dues and membership fees in scientific societies
- Collection of preliminary data

**\*\* Other expenditures not listed, please contact [info@LACaTS.org](mailto:info@LACaTS.org).**

Although facilities and administrative costs are allowed under the terms of the prime award, we believe that these funds should be used in the spirit intended (i.e. direct costs in support of this project). It is anticipated for an award of this type, your institution will consider these costs as matching funds to your project.

**VI. TIMELINE:**

**Full Application Deadline: This annual RFA has an open application period through June 30, 2025 or until the maximum number of awards allowable are issued for this current fiscal year, whichever comes first. This is a competitive application process. Awards will be based on merit and on a first come, first served basis. We encourage you to apply early in each fiscal year (July 1 – June 30).**

Applications **must** be submitted online under the applicant investigator’s account on the LA CaTS Center’s Service Request Page, SPARC at: <https://sparc.lacats.org>.

- Please submit in **PDF format in color** on the LA CaTS Center website.

**Award Notification Date: Approximately 1 month after submission.**

**VII. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS:**

The LA CaTS Center Administrative Core will coordinate the application process for the Grant Development Award Program and the Pilot Grants Program will undertake the reviews. Final decisions on the Grant Development Award reside with the LA CaTS Center Executive Council.

Applications that are complete and responsive to the RFA will be evaluated for scientific merit. Each of the criteria below will be addressed and considered in the review. Note that an application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have a major scientific impact.

**Significance:** Does the proposal address an important gap in clinical and translational research that would be filled by grant award resulting from the Grant Development Awards process? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will the field be advanced? What will be the potential effect and impact of the proposed activities on the clinical and translational career of the applicant? What are the unique technologies, services, or resources provided by the collaborators that will significantly impact the career development of the applicant?

**Approach:** Is the conceptual framework for the time that the applicant will spend on Grant Development Award activities adequately developed, well integrated, well-reasoned, and appropriate to the aims of the proposed program? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics? Is the likelihood of successful completion high given the described environment and the applicant's abilities? Are the proposed timeline and interim milestones appropriate, feasible, and technically sound?

**Investigators:** Are the proposed collaborators appropriately trained and matched to carry out this work? Do the collaborators bring complementary and integrated expertise to the project (if applicable)?

**Milestones and Product Development Plan:** Are the defined objectives/milestones and future career development plans appropriate and feasible? Feasibility should address the requirement that work be completed before the end of the funding period.

**Additional Review Criteria:**

In addition to the above criteria, the following items will be considered in the determination of scientific merit and the priority score:

Budget: The reasonableness of the proposed budget and the requested period of support in relation to the proposed Grant Development Awards. The priority score will not be affected by the evaluation of the budget but the programmatic objectives of the LA CaTS Center to support a variety of investigators across the region will be considered in the Executive Council's recommendations for funding.

**VIII. REPORTING**

Awardees will be required to submit a Progress Report using a format provided by the LA CaTS Center no later than 30 days after the end of the Grant Development Award activity. Standard financial reports will be required per NIH guidelines. Awardees may be required to present their progress at LA CaTS Center retreats, External Advisory Committee meetings, or another specified LA CaTS Center event. Awardees will also be required to submit a specified progress report at 6 and 12 months following the award start date, to provide updates, on the collaboration and status of the grant submission.

Awardees will be required to sign the LA CaTS Center Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), agreeing to cite the LA CaTS Center IDeA-CTR grant (U54 GM104940) on future publications and presentations that are associated with this funding opportunity.

**IX. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

**Award Notices**

The applicant will be notified of the decision approximately one month from the time of the submission. With the exception of applications from Pennington Biomedical Research Center, awards will be made by LSU Health New Orleans, School of Medicine under the parent grant #U54 GM104940 from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS).

**Additional Questions**

Please contact [info@LACaTS.org](mailto:info@LACaTS.org) for any additional questions on this opportunity.