LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY
AND AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE
*Division of Biotechnology and Molecular Medicine (BIOMMED)*
*LSU School of Veterinary Medicine*

**August 03, 2016**

# GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENT
# REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

The LSU School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM) and the Tulane National Primate Research Center (TNPRC) are partners in the NIH-funded Center for Experimental Infectious Disease Research (CEIDR) funded by NIH:NIGMS as a Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) (www.cobre.ceidr.lsu.edu). The CEIDR is a Center of Excellence at the LSU SVM administered by the Division of Biotechnology & Molecular Medicine. The goals of the COBRE phase III program is to increase the number of NIH funded investigators at LSU and TNPRC and enhance infectious disease research funded by NIH and other sources.

The CEIDR is now soliciting grant applications from LSU and TNPRC faculty at all ranks (Tenure Track and Research Series) for pilot funding consideration. We would also like to encourage the submission of collaborative proposals with PIs from LSU or LSUSVM and TNPRC. Interested investigators should submit an application conforming to the NIH Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant Program (R21) guidelines that can be found in the website: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/r21.htm. The application should be written as an NIH R21 application intended for submission to NIH, containing an explanation of the type of preliminary results that will be funded by the COBRE phase III pilot funding that are needed to render this application competitive for NIH R21 funding.

In the interests of competitiveness for NIH R21 funding, it is critically *important* for applicants to articulate the potential translational application of the proposed work to human health. The applicant should also consider the overall fit of the aims of the application for the goals of this COBRE, which are to promote excellence in research in the broad area of infectious diseases. PIs can send their queries regarding this to the Coordinator, Dr Ramesh Subramanian.

The completed SF424 application (all sections) should be compiled as a PDF document and submitted electronically to:

Ramesh Subramanian, PhD
CEIDR-COBRE Coordinator
Division of Biotechnology & Molecular Medicine
School of Veterinary Medicine
Room 3 110
Skip Bertman Drive Baton Rouge, LA 70803
Email:ramji@lsu.edu

The **deadline** for submission of proposals is **October 7, 2016**. Budgets should not exceed $50,000 for individual Pilots and $75,000 Joint Pilots (direct costs) for the time period of May 1, 2016 through April 30, 2017. It is anticipated that at least **2 single PI pilot projects and 2 Joint PI pilots projects** will be awarded. An additional 2 single pilots could be approved subject to release of funds by NIH. NIH - PHS 2590 progress reports are required at 12 months. Funding is limited for one year. However, under exceptional circumstances, funding for a second year may be possible where there is evidence that a submitted application on the thematic area of the funded pilot may be at the verge of being funded by NIH

**Additional requirements are as follows:**

All applicants selected to receive CEIDR pilot grant funding are required to submit a NIH R21 application and/or show that they are making significant progress towards submitting a competitive NIH application. Successful applicants are expected to attend the CEIDR monthly meetings, and present project progress reports as appropriate. Recipients will be expected to actively participate in CEIDR seminars. A final report (12 months) is required in the form of NIH 2590 progress report. These reports should state the original objectives of the project and indicate which of the objectives were addressed during the allotted one year time period. Appropriate tables and figures should be included to help clarify these issues. The final report must also include the title of the resulting grant proposal submitted to external federal agencies for funding, the date the proposal was submitted or will be submitted, and should also list any resulting articles submitted or published.

BUDGET SPECIFICATIONS: The total budget requested for each project is not to exceed **$50,000**-direct costs per year for one year (no indirect costs are allowed). In the case of the Joint Pilots the budgets cannot exceed **$75,000**-direct costs per year for one year (no indirect costs are allowed). Each pilot project will receive an additional $3,000 credit for SVM based core facilities and services including GeneLab (next generation sequencing, etc), Protein Core laboratory, and Immunpathology Core (FACS, microscopy, pathology). These funds will be expended to reduce by 75% actual costs of pilot investigators utilizing these Cores. Proposed pilot grant project budgets can include personnel costs EXCEPT for the principal investigators or other faculty members. Equipment requests should NOT constitute a significant portion of the pilot grant budget. All items requested as part of the proposal budget must relate directly to that research project and not be items than can be viewed only as generally useful to the investigator.

FORMAT: The NIH R21 format should be followed. The grant application should be compiled as a PDF document after filling the SF424 form and emailed to the CEIDR-COBRE coordinator. Additionally compile the Specific Aims and Research strategy including preliminary results as a single PCF document and email to the Coordinator.

SELECTION: All proposals will be screened initially by the COBRE Administrative core for thematic fit. The CEIDR-COBRE EAC will review all applications that fall within the thematic focus of CEIDR, will be required to make an oral presentation for review by the CEIDR-COBRE EAC in November, 2016. Selected applications will be issued a notice of award subject to NIH approval. It is anticipated that funding will begin **May 1, 2017**. Wherever applicable, applications are required to have an approved IACUC protocol prior to EAC review.

MAJOR REVIEW CRITERIA: The goals of this NIH-supported research are to advance our understanding of infectious diseases, to improve the prevention and control of infectious diseases, and to enhance human health throughout the lifespan. Diversification of the biomedical research workforce and developing the next generation of independent investigators are also important objectives of the NIH extramural research portfolio and a specific goal of the NIH:NIGMS COBRE

funding mechanism. A single-digit score and a bulleted list of strengths and weaknesses for each of the six review categories, as well as an overall priority score, using the following NIH-based scoring scale will be used. (Note that an application does not need to be strong in all listed categories to be judged)

| Impact | Score | Descriptor | Additional Guidance on Strengths and Weaknesses |
|---|---|---|---|
| **High** | **1** | Exceptional | Exceptional strong with essentially no weaknesses |
| | **2** | Outstanding | Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses |
| | **3** | Excellent | Very strong with only some minor weaknesses |
| **Medium** | **4** | Very Good | Strong but with numerous minor weaknesses |
| | **5** | Good | Strong but with at least one moderate weakness |
| | **6** | Satisfactory | Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses |
| **Low** | **7** | Fair | Some strengths but with at least one major weakness |
| | **8** | Marginal | A few strengths and a few major weaknesses |
| | **9** | Poor | Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses |

Collaborations and Utilization of Cores: Applications that demonstrate a trans-disciplinary approach and show convergence of expertise between two or more investigators and/or collaborating institutions will be considered highly responsive to this RFA. Use of CEIDR Cores should be included in the overall experimental design. A timetable should be provided that outlines plans for seeking subsequent or supplemental extramural support.

Significance: Does this study address an important health problem? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge or clinical practice be advanced? What will be the effect of the study on the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventive interventions that drive this field?

Innovation: Is the project original and innovative? For example: Does the project challenge existing paradigms or clinical practice or address an innovative hypothesis or critical barrier to progress in the field? Does the project develop or employ novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools or technologies?

Investigators: Are the investigators appropriately trained and well suited to conduct the proposed collaborative study? Is the proposed research appropriate to the experience level of the principal investigator and collaborators? If the principal investigator is a junior faculty member, has the applicant designated a senior mentor and a brief description of a mentoring plan? Does the investigative team bring complementary expertise to the project?

Approach: Are the conceptual or clinical framework, design, methods and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, well-justified and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problems and propose alternative strategies?

Environment, Collaborations and Partnerships: Does the scientific environment in which the study will be performed contribute to the probability of success? Does the proposed study benefit from unique features of the scientific environment, or subject populations, or employ useful collaborative arrangements? Will there be collaborations to address the scientific questions in the proposed

research area? Will the research fit into the Department and Institutional strategic plans and research priorities? Is there evidence of departmental and institutional support (i.e. matching funds, support letters, etc)?

**Additional Review Categories*:*** In addition to the above criteria, the following items will be considered in the determination of merit and priority score.

Protections for Human Subjects: Justification for the involvement of human subjects should be evaluated according to the following five review criteria: 1) risk to subjects, 2) adequacy of protection against risks, 3) potential benefits to the subjects and others, 4) importance of the knowledge to be gained, and 5) data and safety monitoring for clinical trials. If the application involves the use of human subjects, is a Targeted/Planned Enrollment Table format page included?

Inclusion of Women, Minorities, and Children: If the proposed project involves the use of human subjects, are minorities and members of both genders, as well as children, eligible for participation? If not, what are the justifications for their exclusion?

Vertebrate Animals: If the proposed research involves the use of live vertebrate animals, are the five points addressed adequately: 1) proposed use of the animals, and species, strains, ages, sex, and numbers to be used; 2) justifications for the use of animals and for the appropriateness of the species and numbers proposed; 3) adequacy of veterinary care; 4) procedures for limiting discomfort, distress, pain and injury to that which is unavoidable in the conduct of scientifically sound research including the use of analgesic, anesthetic, and tranquilizing drugs and/or comfortable restraining devices; and 5) methods of euthanasia and reason for selection if not consistent with the AVMA Guidelines on Euthanasia.

Biohazards: If the proposed research involves the use of materials or procedures, which are potentially hazardous to research personnel and/or the environment, are adequate protections proposed?

**Additional Review Consideration:** The following item will be reviewed but not considered in the determination of the impact score.

Budget. Is the proposed budget reasonable and well justified? Is the requested period of support reasonable in relation to the proposed research?