



Request for Applications Chronic Disease Research Program (CDRP) WV-INBRE

Release date: FEBRUARY 20, 2025

Letter of Intent: March 7, 2025

Application Due Date: May 30, 2025

Earliest Award Notification Date: ~August 1, 2025

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Section 1. Funding Opportunity Description

WV-INBRE is announcing a Request for Applications for WV-INBRE network investigators to conduct pilot research on projects related to chronic disease (e.g. cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, obesity, addiction, etc.). Proposals are strongly encouraged that would identify and/or validate biomarkers that lead to early detection or improved diagnosis of chronic diseases as listed above. The purpose of these grant awards is to allow investigators to gather data to increase the competitiveness of NIH R15, RO3, R21, R01 and other investigator-initiated proposals in the biomedical sciences. The proposed research should not overlap with other funded research projects. The program is directed by Stan Hileman (WVU).

Section 2. Award Information

- Estimated Number of Awards in Y25/26: 4
- Each award period will be **one year** where applicants may request up to \$50,000 in direct costs.
- Awards are limited to the following:
 - Standard pilot grants – up to \$50,000 direct costs to an investigator(s) located at a single WV-INBRE network institution.
 - WV-INBRE collaborative pilot grants – up to \$60,000 direct costs in one year to be shared between two investigators at WV-INBRE network institutions (up to \$30,000 per investigator)
- Proposals must be received no later than 5 PM on May 30, 2025
- Awardees will be notified in August 2025. Subawards will be made after the official Notice of Grant Award is received.

- Awarded funds must be expended within a given fiscal year. All award recipients must comply with institutional grants management policy.

Section 3. Eligibility

The following classes of investigators are eligible to apply: (1) Tenure track and tenured faculty at WV-INBRE partner colleges and universities, and (2) research track faculty (e.g. research assistant professors) at network colleges and universities. Applications from postdoctoral fellows and students will not be accepted. Applicants must commit to 25% effort and receive appropriate release time from their institution.

Investigators may not receive awards from two or more IDeA programs (WV-INBRE, COBRE and WV-CTSI) in the same time period (even if the proposal aims are nonoverlapping). For example, WV-INBRE funded investigators may not receive simultaneous research project support from a COBRE or IDeA-CTR grant program. However, once their COBRE/CTR funding has been completed, these investigators can be considered in rare cases for pilot funding if there is a strong and compelling justification and rationale. (See NIGMS INBRE Funding Opportunity Announcement.) COBRE and IDeA-CTR investigators may serve and be supported as science advisors or collaborators in WV-INBRE programs as appropriate.

WV-INBRE Thematic Considerations: The current research theme for WV-INBRE is Cellular and Molecular Biology with an emphasis on disease in humans. For CDRP grant applications, the proposed research plan must address problems related to chronic diseases. If the investigator has a question about the suitability of their research idea for this program, please contact Dr. Hileman at smhileman@hsc.wvu.edu.

Limit on Number of Proposals: Individual investigators may only submit one application to the CDRP program per year. There is no limit on the number of proposals a given institution may submit.

Section 4. Application and Submission Information

Notification of Intent to Apply: Applicants should notify Stan Hileman (smhileman@hsc.wvu.edu) of their intent to apply by sending a notification of intent by email no later than **March 7, 2025**. In your letter of intent, please provide the title and a brief summary (3-4 sentences in total) of your proposal. This information is needed to select application reviewers as quickly as possible and is **not** a required prerequisite for submitting a full application.

Application Package

The CDRP grant application must contain the following completed sections:

- a) PHS398 face page with contact information (form page 1) including signature from business/institutional official.
- b) PHS398 form page 2 (complete all sections including project summary, relevance and performance sites)
- c) NIH Biographical Sketches of the Principal Investigator and any co-investigators or collaborators. For the bibliography section, you may provide an actual listing of your publications or provide a link to publications in SciENcv or My Bibliography.
- d) Letter of Support from your mentor if applicable.
- e) Detailed budget page which shows all supply and other costs (398 form page 4) for the first year of the grant and complete a Budget for the Entire Project Period (398 form page 5) which includes year two funding.

- f) Detailed budget justification. Your budget justification should be provided on a separate page or on PHS398 form page 5.
- g) Checklist page
- h) introduction and background
- i) Progress Report (if a competitive renewal – see below)
- j) goals and specific aims
- k) methods of analysis
- l) expected outcomes and timeline of proposed research
- m) plans for external grant applications based on the data obtained in the proposal
- n) achievement milestones (see below) and experiment timeline
- o) literature cited
- p) VAS 4 Points and/or Human Subject Protection if needed

Please use the most recent version of all PHS forms including the NIH Biographical Sketch. All PHS398 forms can be found at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>

The combined narratives of sections (h) through (m) must not exceed 6 pages.

CDRP Renewals

Investigators who have received a CDRP grant are eligible to submit a competitive renewal application for their current project. A progress report of a maximum of 2 pages is required. The progress report should appear after the introduction section and before the methods portion of the approach.

Use of Animals or Human Subjects

Applications that depend on animals must address the four points of animal welfare (VAS 4 points) in the application and receive IACUC approval before an award can be made. Applications that involve the use of human subjects must include the PHS398 sections for human subject research and have IRB panel approval before an award can be made. NIGMS administratively reviews Administrative Core-recommended proposals and requires IACUC and IRB approval letters before giving their approval.

Achievement milestones. Applicants must list expected proposal-specific achievements (deliverables) at the end of the application. Examples of achievements include completion of specific aims, acquisition of new methods, presentations and/or publications. At a minimum, WV-INBRE requires a presentation at scientific meeting in each year of the grant. While the WV-INBRE summer symposium is a recommended venue, other national/international meetings are acceptable and encouraged.

Single-cell genomic analyses: Investigators who propose the use of single cell analysis, e.g., single cell RNA-seq, should discuss experimental design and costs with the directors of the SMART Core.

Submission process: Please combine all components of your application into a single pdf and email the document to Stan Hileman at smhileman@hsc.wvu.edu.

Proposal Due Date: All proposals must be received by 5PM on May 30, 2025.

Section 5. Allowable Costs:

CDRP grant funds may only be used for (1) salaries for the principal investigator, students and technicians up to 25% of the total directs, (2) supplies, reagents and research-relevant software, (3) services such as animal care and next generation sequencing, (4) travel costs for attending research

conferences up to \$2000 if the traveler is presenting and (5) publication costs. Equipment up to \$5000 is allowable. Mentors are required for applications from primarily undergraduate institution (PUI) investigators and will be paid \$2500 per year for their services from the WV-INBRE program. Mentor fees should not be included in your application budget.

WV-INBRE seeks to promote research collaborations between lead and PUI investigators. To encourage these collaborations, a principal investigator may name a collaborator from another PUI in the application. Collaborative grants are eligible to request up to \$30,000 per institution (direct costs), not to exceed \$60,000 total. These funds may only be used for supplies, animal related costs and student labor. Applications must make clear which funds are for the principal investigator and which funds are for the collaborator (co-investigator); preparation of separate budget pages for the prime awardee and the collaborator is recommended. WV-INBRE will use this information to make the appropriate subawards to the principal investigator and collaborator.

Indirect costs are allowed for applicants at the undergraduate partner institutions and will be incorporated into the subaward agreement at the time of the award. Indirect costs will be based upon the applicant's current indirect cost rate agreement with a cognizant federal agency. If the partner institute has no negotiated rate, applicants may request the NIH de minimis rate of 15% of modified total direct costs. Award of the de minimis rate is subject to the availability of funds under WV-INBRE. Inquiries regarding allowable costs should be made to Stan Hileman (shileman@hsc.wvu.edu).

Institutional Matching Funds: Not required or expected.

Section 6. Application Review Process

The primary review criteria for these applications are (1) significance and relevance to chronic diseases, (2) qualifications of the investigator, (3) quality of the experimental approach, (4) environment (e.g. equipment and resources) and (5) likelihood of generating publishable data and leveraging additional grant funding. Applications will initially be reviewed by 2-3 external experts. Scores will be assessed and recommendations for funding will be discussed by the CDRP Program Director and the WV-INBRE Administrative Core (AC). Applications from Early-Stage Investigators (ESIs) will also receive a 0.5 point reduction. An ESI is defined by the NIH as "a new investigator who has completed his or her terminal research degree or medical residency—whichever date is later—within the past 10 years and has not yet competed successfully for a substantial, competing NIH research grant" (e.g. NIH R series award). Applications will be scored using the standard (1-9) scoring system with a lower score being better; point reductions would therefore improve the overall score. The AC will then submit the review panel recommendations to the WV-INBRE External Advisory Committee (EAC) and the NIH/NIGMS for final approval. The review process will take 8-12 weeks to complete but is largely dependent upon the time period it takes the NIH/NIGMS to review and approve the recommendations. We hope to notify all applicants in August 2025. Previous recipients of CDRP awards may apply for new awards. In these cases, the investigator's productivity in the form of publications and grants will be considered in the review criteria.

Section 7. Award Administration Information

CDRP grant awards and amounts are dependent on the receipt of the parent grant at the requested levels. We hope to announce awards in August 2025. **All funds must be expended no later than July 31, 2026.** Applicants must follow institution regulations regarding supply purchase and receipt deadlines. Questions about the application process (eligible projects, allowable costs, etc.) should be addressed to Stan Hileman. He can be contacted by phone (304-293-1502) or by email (shileman@hsc.wvu.edu), though email is checked more frequently and is preferential.

Section 8. WV-INBRE Program Contacts

WV-INBRE Program Officers:

David Gozal, MD, Interim Principal Investigator, 304-691-1700, gozal@marshall.edu

Gary Rankin, PhD, WV-INBRE, 304-696-7313, rankin@marshall.edu

Stan Hileman, PhD, WV-INBRE, Program Coordinator, 304-293-1502, shileman@hsc.wvu.edu

Travis Salisbury, PhD, Smart Core Director, 304-696-7314 tsalisbury@marshall.edu

Scott Levick, PhD, WV-INBRE Mentoring Coordinator, 304-293-2418, scott.levick@hsc.wvu.edu

Section 9. Notification

Notification of awards will be made to the submitting PI and the applicant's organization. PIs whose proposals are declined for funding will be advised as promptly as possible. Copies of anonymous reviewer comments will also be provided.

Section 10. Responsibilities of CDRP pilot grant recipients.

1. As with other WV-INBRE developmental awards, pilot grant recipients from undergraduate partner institutions will be paired with a **mentor** to provide advice in experimental design, data analysis and planning of future projects. Recipients may recommend a mentor as part of their application or request a recommended mentor from the WV-INBRE Mentoring Coordinator (Dr. Scott Levick) who will advise on required interactions between the awardee and the mentor.

2. Recipients of any award with a Next Gen Sequencing component are required to consult with the SMART Core staff before any experimentation or sample preparation begins.

3. **All recipients of WV-INBRE funding including CDRP grants are required to provide a written report to the WV-INBRE Administrative Core to be submitted as part of the annual progress report (RPPR).** As part of the progress report, recipients are expected to summarize the impact and results of their work, describe progress toward specific aims, describe the work of graduate and undergraduate students involved in the project, and list presentations, publications and grant proposals to other programs such as federal, private, or state programs. **Completion of the Undergraduate Student Tracking Form (available from Dr. Dasgupta) is also required. It is expected that these requests will be attended to in a timely fashion.**

4. Recipients may also be asked to give oral or poster presentations at the WV-INBRE Summer Symposium and/or Steering Committee/External Advisory Committee meetings.

5. **The WV-INBRE program and SMART Cores are evaluated based on their productivity which includes presentations, publications and grants. Recipients are strongly encouraged to present and publish their findings. Investigators must acknowledge support from the SMART Core Facility and WV-INBRE (NIH grant P20GM103434) in all presentations and manuscripts.**

6. The CDRP Program Director will review and evaluate the CDRP and investigator progress towards milestones as part of the internal WV-INBRE program review and at the Steering Committee meetings.