



## 2026 Pilot and Feasibility Program University of Colorado Diabetes Research Center (DRC)

**SUBJECT:** Request for Applications for the DRC Pilot and Feasibility Awards

**FROM:** Jane EB Reusch, MD, and Paul Rozance, MD, Co-Directors of the Pilot and Feasibility Program, University of Colorado Diabetes Research Center

**Letter of Intent (LOI) DUE: Tuesday February 17, 2026, 5:00 pm MST**

**Full Application DUE: Tuesday, March 17, 2026, 5:00 pm MST**

**Purpose of Awards:** The UC Denver DRC Pilot and Feasibility Program funds diabetes researchers distributed across the spectrum of basic science, translational, clinical, and health disparities research who investigate Type 1, Type 2, or Gestational Diabetes and associated complications. This program is a key element in recruiting and training promising diabetes research scientists and accelerating their diabetes research programs.

**Duration of Awards:** One year with a second year of funding contingent on acceptable progress in year 1.

**Funds Available:** \$50,000 per year, up to two years (\$100,000 total).

**Eligibility:** CU-AMC or DRC affiliated institutions full-time MD, MD-PhD, PhD, DO and PharmD Faculty. **Candidates must hold a Faculty position on the Award start date of April 1, 2026.**

The primary objective of the University of Colorado DRC Pilot and Feasibility Program is to fund early career investigators. As such, applications from junior faculty will be given priority. Applicants who hold or have previously held NIH R01, VA Merit, DOD Project Award, or analogous research awards in diabetes-related areas as a principal investigator are not eligible.

Applications will be considered from established investigators if those investigators are new to diabetes research OR if those investigators propose innovative, high-risk projects that would not be competitive through the usual granting agencies. In the latter categories, priority will be given to interdisciplinary projects. These applicants may have previously held an NIH R01, VA Merit, DOD Project Award, or analogous research awards as long as it was not in the field of diabetes or related to their proposed innovative, high-risk projects. Out of respect for investigators' time, it is recommended that PIs reach out to Drs. Reusch and Rozance to discuss innovative, high-risk projects - these are permitted but not the priority of this program.

Early career Investigators who hold NIH K, R21, R03 awards, and/or career development or young faculty awards from JDRF, ADA or AHA are encouraged to apply.

**Funding Support:** Project support not including subcontracts or tuition; limited PI salary support on a per project basis



## Instructions

### Letter of Intent (LOI)

The LOI must be received by **Tuesday February 17, 2026, 5:00 pm Mountain Time**. LOI participants who pass the first screening will be invited to submit a full application.

**Informational Zoom Meetings:** Applicants are encouraged to attend at least one of the informational sessions. These meetings provide an excellent opportunity to ask questions directly to the program directors. No RSVP required.

- **Meeting 1: January 23, 2026, Friday, 8 am to 9 am (Meeting ID: 596 165 1442)**
- **Meeting 2: January 30, 2026, Friday, 8 am to 9 am (Meeting ID: 596 165 1442)**
- **Meeting 3: February 9, 2026, Monday, 2 pm to 3 pm (Meeting ID: 596 165 1442)**

To submit LOI, click [here](#).

The following information will be needed to complete the LOI form:

- Title and summary of your project
- Five key words related to your project
- The names of three or more external (non-CU Denver) reviewers who could provide an unbiased critique of your proposal. [Do NOT contact the reviewers yourself.]

### Full Application

The Full Application should be submitted to the online portal by **Tuesday March 17, 2026, 5:00 pm Mountain Time**. LOI participants who pass the first screening will be invited to submit a full application.

The Application should contain:

- 1) **Cover letter** (1 page) - Describe career goals and how the DRC Pilot Award will help in attaining them.
- 2) **NIH Biosketch** for the applicant (new 2025 format).
- 3) **Budget and justification** (1 page) - Include a detailed budget request for the award with all costs justified. The award can be used for salary support and/or project support. It may not be used for subcontracts or tuition. Budget for direct costs for two years (\$50,000 per year direct costs, indirect costs will not be reimbursed)
- 4) **Career development plan** (2 pages, single spaced). This is for early career investigator applicants and not established investigators new to diabetes or high-risk innovative projects. Describe career path to date, long-term goals in diabetes research and how the P&F project will support successful transition to independence and future diabetes research career. If there are DRC cores that will be leveraged, mention here as a training opportunity.
- 5) **Specific aims and research plan** (5 pages total, single spaced) - A complete description of the applicant's ongoing and proposed work must be included. Separate sections should be devoted to Specific Aims and Hypotheses, Background and Significance, and Experimental Design and Methods. Preliminary Studies can be included in any of the sections. All figures, tables and other relevant data should be included within the body of the proposal (i.e., no appendices). **The importance of the proposed work, its relevance to diabetes, and potential for generating further funded research should be included.** Explanation of interdisciplinary approaches, innovative ideas and use of technological approaches within the research should be provided when applicable. Additionally, please describe whether the project will utilize any [DRC core resources](#).
- 6) **List of cited references** (no page limit).
- 7) **Letters of support** from:
  - For new investigators, their scientific advisor (1 page) - Describe the mentor's role during the period of the award, including a mentorship plan.
  - For new investigators, their Division Head (1 page) - Document the applicant's protected time, space, and resources to carry out the research plan and that it is anticipated that the applicant will pursue a career in diabetes-related research.
  - For projects that are leveraging samples, models, or databases which require collaboration; a letter of support for the project from the collaborators (1 page each).

Please address questions to Jane Reusch, MD ([jane.reusch@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:jane.reusch@cuanschutz.edu)), Paul Rozance, MD ([paul.rozance@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:paul.rozance@cuanschutz.edu)), and/or Clara Tang ([clara.tang@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:clara.tang@cuanschutz.edu)).