



Department of Medicine

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

COLLABORATE DOM (Collaborative Opportunities for Advancing Research and Translational Efforts in the Department of Medicine)

Request for Applications

Program Description

The Department of Medicine Collaborative Opportunities for Advancing Research and Translational Efforts (COLLABORATE) program aims to advance research and discovery efforts across the Department by promoting collaboration between basic, translational, and clinical researchers. Scientific discovery and its translation to the clinic increasingly require interdisciplinary collaboration between researchers with expertise from diverse fields across the translational spectrum. This RFA seeks to support new collaborations among DOM Divisions, along with new collaborations between Department of Medicine investigators and those in other CU Anschutz Departments/Schools.

These awards are designed to facilitate the development of new teams to perform interdisciplinary research in any field. This program has two phases: 1) team formation, and 2) pilot award phases. For the team formation phase, \$3,000 will be awarded for a period of 6 months to develop a proposal describing the team members, their role in the project, and provide specific aims and a description of the needed preliminary data and timeline to submit a multi-principal investigator (MPI) NIH R01 grant, SOM ASPIRE application, or equivalent. Up to six team formation awards are available per year.

The follow-on, pilot award phase will provide \$40,000 over 12 months to develop the preliminary data in support of the MPI application. Up to three pilot awards will be funded per year. Pilot awardees will be expected to: 1) submit a co-authored manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal within 12 months of pilot award initiation (can be a review paper), and 2) submit a MPI R01 or equivalent within 18 months of pilot award initiation or SOM ASPIRE application within 12 months of pilot award initiation.

Eligibility

- All applications must be MPI.
- The contact PI must have their primary appointment in DOM.
- The team should include at least 3 members: at least one junior faculty member, one PhD, and one MD.
 - Principal Investigators must be eligible according to the [PI Eligibility by CU Anschutz SOM criteria](#).
 - Volunteer Faculty positions are not eligible to apply for awards.
 - Post-doctoral trainees are not eligible to serve as a PI but are encouraged to participate in non-PI Roles.
- Each principal investigator must bring their unique skills and experience to the project, resulting in a cohesive interdisciplinary team.

- This award is for new collaborations only. The investigative team cannot have had past collaborations, including other pilot or extramural funding.
 - Adding new member/s to a collaboration between two existing collaborators is allowed to expand research in a new or additional direction that can lead to new extramural grant funding (R01 or equivalent).
 - If adding member/s to an existing team of two PIs, the new member/s must come from outside the existing PIs' Divisions.
- An individual may be included as PI on only one application in an award year
- Projects may span the spectrum of T0 – T4 research provided that they are multi-disciplinary in nature.
- Projects with research sites outside of CU Anschutz will not be considered.

Budget

Team Formation Phase

- \$3,000 over 6 months to explore and focus potential MPI R01 collaborations.
- Funds can be spent on activities to build the team. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Publication costs for manuscripts involving all MPIs to demonstrate collaboration (eg. review papers)
 - Statistical services to perform secondary data analysis
 - Additional assays on a sub-set of stored samples to explore hypotheses
 - Admin support to prepare the full pilot application/budget
 - Meetings to explore the involvement of additional partners and data and establish the break-down of work and funding in the pilot award phase and mini retreats to refine ideas and identify data gaps

Pilot Award Phase

- \$40,000 over 12 months.
- Funds may be used for publication and research expenses, including research staff salaries, supplies, core facility costs, and equipment.
- Funds may not be used for PI salaries, travel, or food and beverage expenses.

Application Requirements

Team formation phase application

[Online submission of a 2-page application](#) document plus current NIH biosketches for all MPIs is required. The two page application should include:

- Project title
- MPI names with Department and Division affiliation, designating the contact PI who must have a primary appointment in DOM.
- Proposed specific aims, the significance and innovation of the proposed work, and a brief description of the interdisciplinary nature of the work.
- Five to ten keywords pertinent to the proposed work.

Pilot award phase application:

The project team should [submit online the following](#):

- Completed online project information form, which includes: proposal title , MPI names, titles, DOM division(s) and any non-DOM departments, contact PI designation and contact information, and name and contact details of the designated pre-award administrator who will work with you to submit the extramural grant application at the end of the pilot award period. Ideally, your pre-award administrator should have experience in completing NIH ASSIST requirements for multi-PI applications.
- Specific Aims page (max 1 page) containing the proposal title, a short background for the proposed project as well as current limitations and/or data gaps that need to be addressed.
- Research Plan (max 3 pages) describing research rationale, significance, innovation, approach, and timeline (up to 1 year) of the proposed project. This section should include:
 - A description of the preliminary data that is needed and that will be collected using these funds.
 - A detailed and achievable timeline that does not exceed 1 year.
 - Application should specify the grant mechanism for funding that would result from this collaboration (i.e. NIH MPI R01 or other similar grant proposal to an external funding agency).
 - Any figures and citations must be included within the 3 page limit.
- NIH Biosketch and Other Support documents for each PI.
- One page multi-PI plan, including a description of the collaboration involved, the roles of the MPIs and the overall leadership plan, using the NIH SF424 instructions for the multi-PI plan (from SF424 instructions: “The governance and organizational structure of the leadership team and the research project should be described, including communication plans, processes for making decisions on scientific direction, and procedures for resolving conflicts. The roles and administrative, technical, and scientific responsibilities for the project or program should be delineated for the PD/PIs and other collaborators”).
- One page integration plan describing how the individual components will be coordinated and work together to address the overall aims of the program. If possible include a schematic overview of the interactions and collaborations among the components and team members.
- Project budget in Excel format.
- Budget justification (1 page) outlining estimated expenses up to \$40,000 over one year. The funds to be utilized per PI should be clearly delineated and justified.

Review Criteria

Scoring criteria will include:

- Potential for building long-term working collaborations across Divisions/Departments
- Responsiveness to the RFA requirements
- Project potential for extramural funding at the R01 or equivalent level, including significance and impact of the proposed research collaboration.
- Priority will be given to projects that represent a higher number of different DOM Divisions.

- Priority will be given to projects that are translational in scope, particularly those that involve both quantitative and qualitative or basic and clinical research.
- Funding recommendations will be based on an assessment of the merits and potential impact of each application, which will be reflected in a numerical score by which applications will be ranked. Scoring will use NIH scoring scales and criteria with three additional scorable elements that will contribute to the overall score: 1) Number of DOM divisions represented; 2) research across the translational spectrum, with a higher score for projects that encompass both basic/pre-clinical and clinical research elements or quantitative and qualitative research; 3) feasibility within the specified one year award period.

Award Requirements

- Awardees must submit progress reports at month 4 of the Team Formation period and at 9 months post-Pilot award initiation. A follow-up survey will be sent 12 and 24 months after pilot award completion and must be completed in a timely manner.
- Awardees are expected to submit at least one co-authored manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal within 12 months of pilot award initiation.
- Awardees are expected to apply for a NIH R01 or equivalent grant within 18 months of pilot award initiation or an SOM ASPIRE proposal within 12 months of pilot award initiation. Grant proposals resulting from this award must be routed through DOM.
- Awardees are expected to publish their findings in scholarly peer-reviewed journals, present at professional meetings, and share findings with relevant communities through established communication channels (i.e., newsletters, local news publications, etc.). Investigators are responsible for submitting any peer-reviewed journal articles resulting from research funded by this award to PubMed Central, the NIH digital archive of biomedical and life sciences journal literature.
- Institutional Approvals: Awardees must obtain research approval from appropriate institutional review bodies, such as COMIRB, IACUC, IBC, and any other regulatory group relevant to their project.
- Speed Type Account Setup: one speed type account will be established for each project. The contact PI is expected to oversee distribution of funds between PIs and ensure spending according to the budget described in the application. If redistribution of funds is necessary, prior approval is needed by contacting DOMResearch@cuanschutz.edu
- Awardees may be asked to present their research findings to the Department after the conclusion of the award, either through a presentation at the departmental REACH Forum or at the next annual DOM Research Day.

Team formation proposals will be reviewed by the DOM Research team with extra expertise added, as necessary. Pilot applications will be reviewed by a non-conflicted committee of DOM faculty. Questions may be submitted to DOMResearch@cuanschutz.edu

Key Dates for applications that are accepted yearly:

Team Formation Awards

May 12, 2025, [applications for team formation phase due](#)
July 1, notification of team formation award
August 1, 6-month funding period begins

Pilot Awards

May 12, 2025, [applications for pilot awards due](#)
July 1, notification of pilot award
August 1, 12-month funding period begins

RFA updated 15 April 2025