



COBRE Center for Nervous System Function PILOT PROJECT APPLICATIONS

The Carney Institute for Brain Science's COBRE Center for Nervous System Function (CNSF) aims to increase the quantity and quality of research on the nervous system in Rhode Island. One means of attaining this goal concerns identifying and nurturing talented young investigators and enabling established investigators to create a new research line.

We announce the availability of **up to six** 12-month grants of between \$75,000 and \$100,000 for research related to nervous system function to be funded through our COBRE grant. We particularly welcome projects that explore the neural basis of attention, decision-making, learning, memory, or other cognitive functions, though any area of fundamental or translational neuroscience will be considered.

We will consider work with humans or pre-clinical model systems, including invertebrate models. We aim to enable an investigator to collect preliminary data in support of grant applications for independent external research funding, especially from the NIH. Pilot project investigators can take advantage of the CNSF community to help guide their science and career development. Pilot project investigators will have access to the CNSF's Behavior and Neuroimaging Core to provide expertise for study design and data analysis.

The pilot project will be funded for 12 months, with an earliest possible start date of **September 1, 2023**.

Eligibility: Faculty at any rank or senior post-doctoral fellows who will have a faculty appointment (tenure or research track) by September 1, 2023 at a Rhode Island academic institution are eligible to apply. Early-Stage Investigators (defined [here](#)) must identify a mentor with expertise related to the proposed research. Established investigators must propose a *new area* of research. Because the pilot project funds derive, in part, from our NIGMS-funded COBRE, awarding of a COBRE-funded Pilot Project will require one to relinquish any other NIGMS sponsored NIGMS IDeA programmatic funding.

Application Process: This call will include a **short Pre-proposal** which, if acknowledged as falling within the scope of the COBRE pilot program, should be followed by a more formal *Application*.

Pre-proposal (due date: July 7, 2023, 5pm)

The pre-proposal should include two items and not exceed one page:

- Abstract
- Specific Aims: Describe the project goals for a 12-month pilot project period

The purpose of the pre-proposal is to provide an opportunity for applicants to receive near immediate feedback regarding the suitability of the proposed project as it relates to the goals and aims of the COBRE before an entire application is prepared.

Application (due date: August 4, 2023, 5pm)

Applications will follow a shortened version of the NIH grant proposal format with minor modifications. Use [PHS Form 398](#) for all sections of application, including facilities, human subjects, vertebrate animals, etc., as applicable. The Face Page should include investigator name, academic title, institution, address and the project title; there's no need to fill in other information on the Face

Page. As per COBRE policy, an applicant having Early-Stage Investigator status should identify a mentor.

Abstract: One-half page summary of the proposal.

Budget: Itemize and include brief budget justifications. Costs for equipment (>\$5,000) or renovations are not permitted. Only **direct costs** will be funded, even from non-Brown institutions. Carry forward of funds unexpended 12 months after project initiation will not likely occur.

Facilities: Use the Resources section of NIH PHS Form 398 to describe available infrastructure.

Biosketch: A biosketch for the PI, key personnel, and mentor should be provided.

Other Support: Please submit the NIH Other Support document for the PI including current and pending grants.

Specific Aims and Research Plan: Limited to **four single-spaced pages**, excluding references, but including the Specific Aims. Follow NIH PHS Form 398 outline and guidelines. The Research Plan should include the following sections:

- Specific Aims: Describe the project goals for a 12-month pilot project period. No more than one-half page recommended.
- Significance: Include overall significance of the project, including relevance to goals of the CNSF, and plans for use of data from pilot project for subsequent independent funding.
- Innovation: Include both conceptual and any technical innovation.
- Approach: Preliminary data, as applicable, and research plan, including expected results and alternative approaches, and general methods.
- Literature Cited: Not included in the four-page limit.

Protection of Human Subjects/Vertebrate Animals: Per PHS Form 398. Indicate IRB and IACUC approvals. Funding will not commence until IRB and/or IACUC approvals are in place.

Biosafety/Select Agents: Per PHS Form 398. Indicate Institutional Safety Committee approvals.

Additional Documentation:

- Letter(s) from the Department Chair and/or supervisor documenting availability of protected time for research and plans for mentoring of the junior pilot project investigator. Not required for more established investigators.
- For junior investigators only, a letter from the mentor agreeing to advise on the conduct of the proposed research and describing a plan for career development should be included with the application. The mentor should be a senior faculty member typically having an appointment at the Pilot Project Leader's institution. In special circumstances, we may permit mentors from other institutions, but this situation would typically require a local co-mentor. No support can be requested for the mentor.

Review Process and Selection Criteria: Pre-proposals will be reviewed by the Internal Advisory Committee and assessment of the suitability for potential funding will be made soon after receipt of the pre-proposal, on a rolling basis. Full applications will be reviewed for scientific merit including significance, investigators, innovation, and approach. In addition, proposals will be evaluated for relevance to the COBRE goals of enhancing research in nervous system function, potential for future independent funding, and institutional support. Funding is dependent upon review and approval by the CNSF External Advisory Committee and the NIGMS Capacity Building Branch.

Contact: Address inquiries regarding COBRE CNSF Pilot Projects to the Deputy Principal Investigator: David Sheinberg at David_Sheinberg@brown.edu

Pre-proposal Submission: Please submit a single page pdf document to cobre-cnsf@brown.edu.

Application Submissions: Prepare a single PDF document and submit through the [UFunds](#) platform under “COBRE Center for Nervous System Function”. This funding opportunity will be available by invitation only, you will receive a notification from UFunds to the email used to submit the pre-proposal.

Application Deadlines:

Pre-proposals: Friday, July 7, 2023, 5:00pm

Applications: Friday, August 4, 2023, 5:00pm