

Frequently Asked Questions Translational Science Pilot Award

Translational Science

Q: What is translational science?

A: Translational science is a disease-agnostic approach to understanding common causes of inefficiency and failure in research. It seeks to develop innovative solutions to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of all translational research and ultimately benefit research across a range of diseases and conditions.

Q: What is the difference between translational research and translational science?

A: Translational research focuses on a particular step in the translation process for a particular disease, while translational science is focused on the general case that applies to many targets or diseases. It looks for innovations and solutions to address barriers across the translational pipeline and across diseases.

Q: What kinds of barriers does translational science seek to address?

A: Translational science seeks to address barriers that are common across targets, diseases, and therapeutic areas. This includes, but is not limited to, barriers around:

- toxicity predictions,
- applying AI,
- data interoperability,
- non-adaptive trial designs,
- regulatory burdens, and
- methods to recruit more diverse and representative participant populations.

Q: Where can I find other resources on Translational Science?

A: Visit the Irving Institute's translational science page [here](#) for more guidance and links to resources from National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS).

Pilot Award and Pre-Proposal Requirements

Q: How can I design a pilot study that is generalizable or not focused on a particular disease if my research is in a particular domain or disease area?

A: While translational science is disease-agnostic, your study *can* focus on a particular disease. You can conduct a translational *research* project focused on a particular disease and have a translational *science* component that aims to learn something that is generalizable to similar types of studies focused on other diseases.

Your study would have two hypotheses. One focused on a particular disease (a translational research hypothesis), and a second focused on how you're implementing the research to overcome a translational science barrier (i.e., how your generalizable intervention or innovation will address the barrier).

Q: What is the submission process?

A: Applicants will submit a brief pre-proposal in Survey Monkey Apply by February 28, 2024. The Irving Institute will review pre-proposals and select eligible projects to continue to the next stage.

Selected pre-proposal applications will be provided with consultations to further develop their translational science project and invited to submit a full proposal for funding consideration. The Irving Institute will help those teams develop the translational science and generalizable component of their project.

Q: Do I need to have IRB approval to apply?

A: No. Pre-proposal applicants do not need to have IRB approval to apply. Invited full proposal applicants must submit their protocol to the IRB at the time of their full proposal submission. IRB and NCATS prior approval are required for awarded projects before the study can begin or award funds can be released.

Q: The RFA says that subawards are not allowed. Can we set up service agreements and/or work with collaborators outside of Columbia?

A: Yes. Awardees can use pilot award funds to pay for services and experts, including those outside of Columbia, as needed.

Q: What if my budget needs to change after I submit my pre-proposal?

A: Invited full proposal applicants will be able to update the submitted pre-proposal budget, as the project needs may change as the full proposal is developed. The Irving Institute will work with invited applicants to ensure that their budget aligns with the RFA requirements and meets project needs.

Q: Who should I contact with other questions?

A: Please send your questions to Kayla Zalcgandler, MSPH, Senior Program Manager for the Pilot and Collaborative Studies Resource at kz2397@cumc.columbia.edu.