



PBRC NUTRITION OBESITY RESEARCH CENTER

“Nutrition, Obesity and Metabolic Health Throughout the Lifespan”

2017 PILOT/FEASIBILITY GRANT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Purpose:

Approximately \$90,000 is available to fund P&F grants (Minimum 1, maximum 3). The major objective of this program is to provide research support to test innovative hypotheses from individuals or multidisciplinary teams involving **nutrition/obesity-related research** and other pilot studies related to the function of the NORC.

The NORC will give **highest priority to translational research related to nutrition/obesity**, but anticipates funding excellent projects that do not necessarily relate to this theme. The hope for a Pilot and Feasibility Award is that it will generate enough preliminary data for the investigator to obtain funding for the research by conventional mechanisms (e.g., R01).

This program will **encourage young investigators** to approach problems relevant to our understanding of metabolism and function while increasing our understanding of the basic and clinical aspects of nutrition in the prevention, etiology, pathophysiology, and therapy of diseases.

Applicants should note that the theme of the PBRC NUTRITION OBESITY RESEARCH CENTER is “Nutrition, Obesity and Metabolic Health throughout the Lifespan.” In accord with our NORC award from NIDDK-NIH, we will be developing collaborative research teams focusing on three critical periods of the life cycle:

- 1) *Maternal/Infant nutritional status and metabolic consequences;*
- 2) *Pediatric and adulthood obesity and metabolic health;*
- 3) *Nutritional status at older age to preserve physical and cognitive functionality.*

Areas of research may be related to but not limited to:

1. Molecular mechanisms underlying the predisposition to chronic diseases, as a result of altered *in utero* and/or postnatal environments.
2. Nutritional influences on brain development and function, including fMRI.
3. Nutrition/obesity-related research of adipose tissue.
4. Nutrition/obesity-related research of beta cells and insulin secretion capacity.
5. Nutrition/obesity-related research of skeletal muscle metabolism
6. Nutrition/obesity impact on inflammation
7. Study of the interaction of genes, behavior, and environmental factors that determine energy balance.
8. Differential response to dietary interventions.
9. Role of peri-natal environmental conditions on energy metabolism and insulin resistance.
10. Research utilizing existing biological samples. It is encouraged that all pre-clinical and clinical projects contribute samples to the biorepository.

Note that facilities and administrative costs for such NORC Pilot & Feasibility grants are STRONGLY discouraged.

Who is Eligible?

Full-time Associate or Assistant Professors, Instructors, and senior post-doctoral fellows at Pennington Biomedical Research Center and/or part of the LSU system, and Tulane University.

- Junior investigators who do not have current or previous NIH (or other federal agencies) research support (excluding fellowship or career development awards) and who wish to establish their own independent research program. Senior postdoctoral fellows need to be part of the institution for longer than 1 year and have the potential for a full faculty position, as documented in a Letter of Support from the applicant's mentor or institutional official.
- More established investigators who wish to initiate a new research direction will be judged with higher scrutiny. Applicants should clearly delineate how different the research direction is compared to their ongoing research.

There is no citizenship requirement for P/F recipients, BUT visiting scientists with whom the CENTER will not have a long-term collaborative relationship will not be considered for support. Applicants must hold a Ph.D., M.D., or equivalent degree, and have completion of at least one year of postgraduate work relevant to the desired research experience.

Collaborative projects with multiple areas of expertise are strongly encouraged.

Initial Email Announcement **October 14, 2016 at the latest**

Letter of Intent **Due: November 1, 2016**
<http://norcfunding.pbrc.edu>
(Mentor needed for Postdocs and Instructors)

FULL APPLICATION **Due: January 6, 2017**
<http://norcfunding.pbrc.edu>

Please submit ONE DOCUMENT Electronically (PDF format in color) on the NORC website

Letter of Intent Guidelines:

- One page
- Project title, Principal Investigator, and inter-institutional collaborations
- General description of intended work including a statement of intended PBRC scientific core usage
- For applicants from other LSU System institutions, a letter of commitment from the Chairman or Dean.
- For senior postdoctoral fellows who have been part of the institution for longer than 1 year, a Letter of Support from the applicant's mentor or institutional official documenting institutional commitment, the potential for a full faculty position, and support for a plan to establish an independent research career for the applicant.

Format of Application:

The application packet must include the following (Applicants are required to use the NIH 398 forms):

- NIH Face Page
- NIH Budget page + 1 page budget justification
NOTE: clinical protocols MUST be budgeted through the standard procedures. Contact your Sponsored Projects Office for details.
- Research plan (**5-page maximum including references, Arial 11, single-spaced, .5 inch margins**).
 - A) Specific Aims
 - B) Background and Significance,
 - C) Preliminary Data
 - D) Research Design and Methods
 - E) Relevance of the Proposed Project to the theme of nutrition/obesity and metabolic health
 - F) Description of how the results of this study will lead to future investigations/grant applications.
 - G) References.

Any additional materials including the anticipated use of the cores, relevant reprints (1 maximum) or letters should be submitted as an appendix.

- If project requires a sponsor, consultant or collaborator, this individual must write a letter of support for the application and clarify any potential overlap between their support and the subject of the proposal. This letter should accompany the application.
- NIH Biographical Sketch including “Other support” if currently independently funded.

Additional Instructions:

1. Please list the Principal Investigator's (PI) name on the top right-hand corner of every page of the application.
2. When completing the budget page, please refer to the list of expenditures allowed and not allowed included with these instructions.
3. Although facilities and administrative costs are allowed under the terms of the prime award, it is our belief that these funds should be used in the spirit intended i.e. direct costs in support of this project. It is hoped that for an award of this type, your institution will be willing to forego the facilities and administrative costs and consider these costs as matching funds to your project.
4. Mention how your study may contribute to the extension of the biorepository for both clinical or pre-clinical bio samples (see F below)
5. The following headings should be used for the research plan (sections A-G should be 5 pages maximum).
 - A. Specific Aims:** State concisely the hypothesis to be tested and the specific aim(s) to be achieved during the grant period. The aims must be reasonable to achieve during the one-year period of the grant. While it is possible to receive grants for 2 year proposals, the PI must define a quantitative, intermediate milestone that can be evaluated at the end of the 1st year of research.
 - B. Background and Significance:** State the relevance of the proposed project to basic, clinical or prevention and control of chronic diseases. Discuss the use of one or more NORC Core Facilities.
 - C. Preliminary Studies/Progress Report:** Discuss the pertinent research findings that will help to establish the experience and competence of your project.
 - D. Research Design and Methods:** Concisely present your experimental design and the methods to accomplish your specific aims relating it to chronic disease and to longer term funding objectives. Also indicate how the results will be interpreted and how they will lead to future investigations.

Well-known methods and standard procedures may be described very briefly or referenced, but novel experimental approaches should be outlined in more detail. This section should represent the bulk of the application.

- E. Relevance of the Proposed Project to Nutrition/obesity-related research** (see “Areas of research” above), **use of NORC cores and contribution to the NORC biorepository.**
- F. Description of how the results of this study will lead to future investigations/grant applications.**
- G. References**

Appendix:

- One recent pertinent publication if necessary
- Letters of support

Allocation and Expenditure of Funds:

Testing available at the NORC Cores are provided; however, supplies (when applicable) for the testing have to be budgeted.

Expenditures Allowed:

- Technical staff salary support
- Research supplies and animal maintenance
- Equipment costing less than \$5,000.
- Special fees (pathology, photography, etc.)
- Supplies
- We want to encourage the use of next generation sequencing (please see Dr. Michael Salbaum for details)

Expenditures NOT Allowed:

- Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator salary support
- Secretarial/administrative personnel salary support
- Office equipment and supplies
- Computers
- Tuition
- Domestic or Foreign Travel
- Publication costs, including reprints
- Dues and membership fees in scientific societies
- Purchasing and binding of periodicals and books
- Honoraria and travel expenses for visiting lecturers
- Rental of office or laboratory space
- Construction or building maintenance
- Recruiting and relocation expense
- Indirect Costs

Additional Information:

If the project involves human or animal subjects submission to IRB or IACUC must be within one month after receipt of notice of grant award. IRB/IACUC approval will be requested as per the NIH practice of just-in-time mechanism before funding is released.

Please check our NORC website <http://NORC.pbrc.edu> or contact Randy Mynatt or Jacqueline Fox (NORC Executive Secretary) at jacqueline.fox@pbrc.edu or 225-763-2686 if you have questions about the P&F application process. Please contact the Directors of the NORC Cores if information is needed regarding a specific Core (Human Phenotyping - Corby Martin, Molecular Mechanisms - Michael Salbaum, and Animal Models - Randy Mynatt)