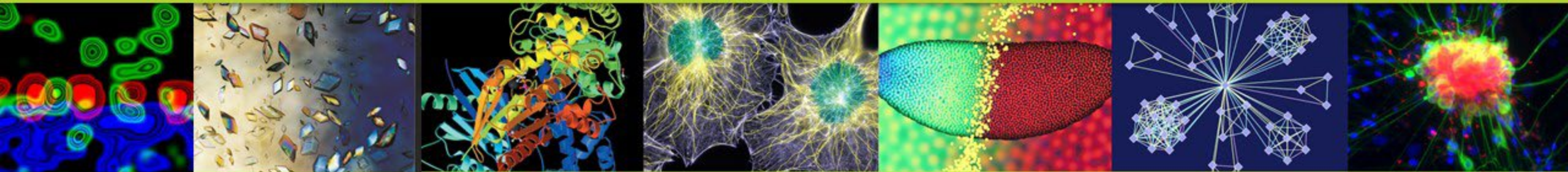


COBRE Phase 1 Pre-application Webinar

September 27, 2022
2:00 – 3:30 PM



NIGMS Staff Participation

- **Michele McGuirl**, Chief, Research Advancement Programs Branch
- **Fed Bernal**, Program Officer and COBRE Phase 2 Lead
- **Nina Sidorova**, Scientific Review Officer
- **Samantha Farrell**, Grants Management Specialist

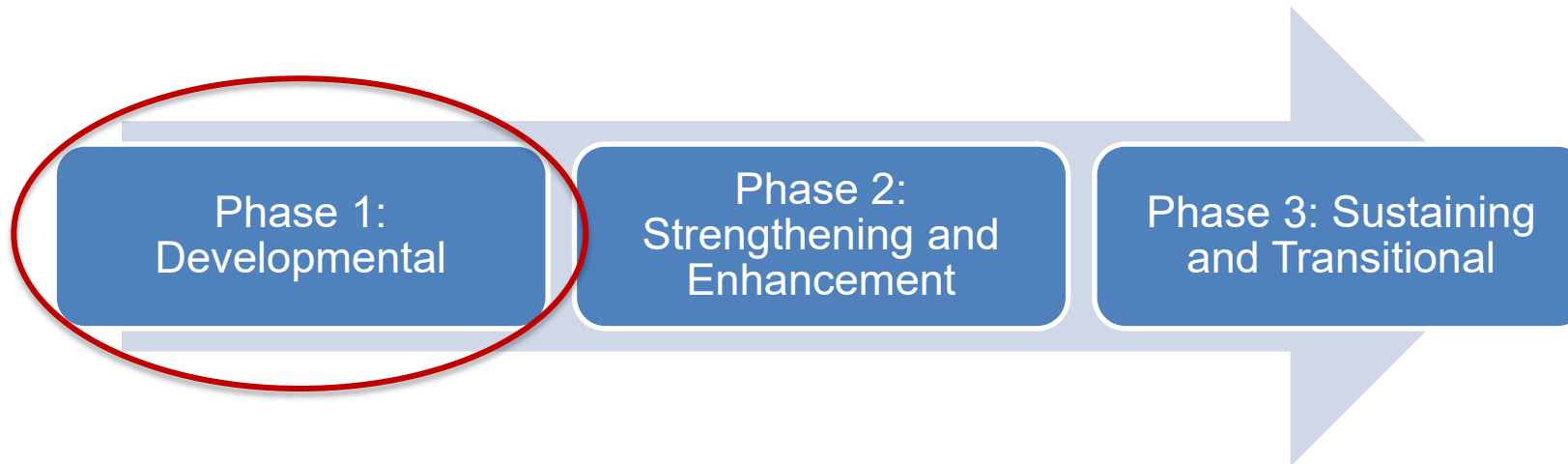
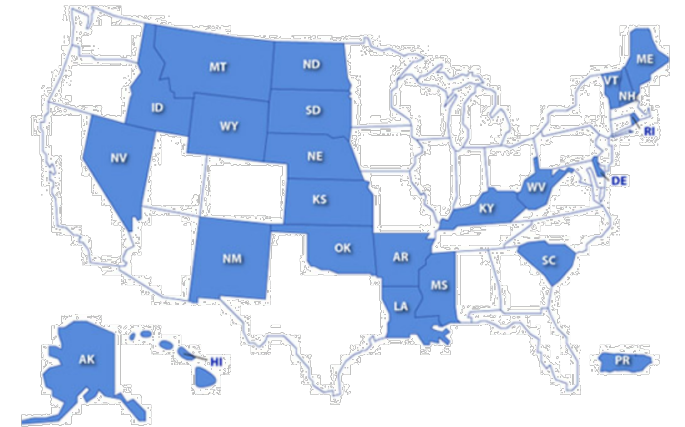
Q&A via Chat Window, moderated by Fed Bernal

Overview of IDeA COBRE Program

IDeA Program: Build research capacity in states and territories with lower levels of NIH funding

Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE)

- Support a broadly themed research center
- 3 sequential phases, 5 years each – **no “Phase 4s”**
- [IDeA Dashboard](#) tracks all funded awards



COBRE - Phase 1 (P20 Clinical Trial Optional)

PAR-22-250

due date: January 30, 2023

Due Date	Scientific Merit Review	Advisory Council Review	Earliest Start Date
January 30, 2023	July 2023	October 2023	December 2023
January 30, 2024	July 2024	October 2024	December 2024
January 30, 2025	July 2025	October 2025	December 2025

All applications must come in as NEW submissions

Resubmissions are NOT ALLOWED

COBRE Phase 1: Program Objectives

Establish a center of excellence to build research capacity in an area of biomedical research

- Develop a critical mass of investigators who can compete effectively for external research funding
 - Must propose 3 – 5 Research Project Leaders (RPLs); Pilot Projects are optional
 - Provide project leaders with career development and scientific mentoring
- Center's scientific area must align with the institution's strategic plan
- **Key Measure of COBRE Success:** RPL graduation with pubs and independent funding

Improve institutional infrastructure for the research area at the applicant institution

- Establish Research Cores (or improve existing facilities) to support the work of the Research Projects
- Up to \$300K in Alterations and Renovations is allowed in Year 1

General Considerations Before Applying

- Read the [FOA!](#)
- **COBREs are NOT training grants** – non-independent researchers cannot lead projects
- **COBREs are NOT P01s**
 - PI receives salary support (minimum LOE of 3 months) but no research support from the COBRE
- **PI should communicate with institutional leadership prior to applying**
 - COBRE PI is providing a service to the institution that deserves recognition and support
 - PI must maintain independent research grant support to be eligible for the next phase
 - Success of the COBRE is dependent on institutional commitments, especially to replenish the pipeline of quality Research Project Leaders
- **Leverage other NIH-supported resources, especially current COBRE, INBRE, and IDeA-CTR programs**

Institutional Eligibility

- **IDeA institutions** that award doctoral science degrees or are independent biomedical research institutes/medical centers with externally funded research programs
- At the time of submission:
 - **Hold ≤ 2 active COBRE Phase 1 and/or Phase 2 awards** (includes no-cost extensions)
 - **Have ≤ 5 active research projects and/or cores via subcontracts** from COBRE 1s & 2s from other institutions (includes no-cost extensions)
 - **List all current/past COBREs & current subcontracts in Letter of Support from Senior Official**
- **Low programmatic priority** if the scientific area is closely related to an institution's prior COBRE award or if the institution already has a critical mass of funded investigators

PD/PI Eligibility (applies to all PD/PIs if MPI COBRE)

Established biomedical or behavioral research scientist

- Must have mentoring and administrative experience to lead the COBRE
 - *Include in Biosketch*
- Primary appointment must be at the applicant institution at the time of submission

PD/PI of an active, peer-reviewed research grant awarded to the applicant institution and related to the COBRE scientific area at the time of submission

- Grants in no-cost-extension (NCE) are considered active
- Qualifying research grant can be from federal or non-federal source
- *Current and Pending Support Attachment required* – used to determine PD/PI eligibility

Research Project Leader (RPL) Eligibility - at Time of Submission

- **Must be an NIH Early Stage Investigator (ESI) or a New Investigator (NI)**
 - ESI: Completed terminal degree or post-graduate clinical training within the past 10 years and never been PI of a substantial NIH independent research award (R01-like)
 - NI: Never been PI of a substantial NIH independent research award (R01-like)
 - Smaller grants/awards are allowed: including *all Ks, R00, R03, R15, R16, R21, SCORE*
 - **High Program Priority for applications proposing RPLs who are ESIs**
- **Must hold an independent multi-year faculty appointment (or equivalent)**
 - Includes tenure-track and other types of multi-year appointments
 - Must be leading an independent research program
 - Postdocs and others without independent appointments are not eligible
- **More than half must have primary appointments at the applicant institution**
 - 3 of 4 RPLs is acceptable but 2 of 4 RPLs is not

COBRE 1 Application Components

REQUIRED

- Overall Section – 12 pages
- Administrative Core – 12 pages
- 3-5 Research Projects – each RP gets 1 page for its Specific Aims and 6 pages for its Research Strategy

OPTIONAL

- Research Cores – 6 pages each
- Alterations and Renovations – 6 pages

Overall Section Requirements

- **Justification for Establishment of the Center**
- **Center Organization and Management Plan**
- **Plan for an Advisory Committee (AC)**
 - Three external and senior scientific experts (do not name in the application)
 - One senior institutional official and one senior faculty member appointed by the senior institutional official (identify in the application)
- **Mentoring Plan for RPLs: include how mentors will be trained** in mentoring best practices, and how mentor performance will be assessed
- **Letter of Support from Senior Official**
 - List of current/prior COBREs, describe the institutional research base
 - Provide institutional commitment of resources to support the COBRE and to maintain these resources beyond the 5 years of grant support

Administrative Core Requirements

- **Management Plan:** administrative, fiscal, and scientific activities
- **RPL Development Plan:** develop and transition RPLs to independent research funding
- **Plans for identifying Replacement RPLs**
- **Evaluation Plan:** monitor performance of all Center components and RPL progress
- **Pilot Projects Program** (optional) – *describe program but do not include research plans for individual pilots*
 - Should be a pipeline for future RPLs (ESIs/NIs) but open to faculty at all ranks
 - Each pilot: up to \$100K for a 1-year project, no more than 2 pilots per 5-year grant period
- **Faculty recruitment** (optional, for any rank) - up to \$400K/yr DC
- **No Letters of Support Allowed**

Research Project Requirements

A Research Project is not an R01!

- **Describe a research question appropriate for 2-3 years**
 - Can address a small but significant part of a larger question
 - Assess existing knowledge and describe approaches to address the key goals
 - Describe how COBRE support will advance the long-term goals of RPL's research program
- **Preliminary data are helpful but not required** – reviewers gauge this by career stage
- **Milestones**
 - RPLs are required to submit a research grant application by the end of Year 2
 - RPLs are expected to get a research grant and graduate from COBRE funding by the end of Year 3

Advice for Research Projects

- **Projects should make good use of the Research Cores** – Both RPs and Cores should describe their expected interactions
- **Identify any new areas for scientific growth** and ensure appropriate mentorship is provided
 - External mentors are allowed, if needed
- **If the RP involves Human Subjects and/or a Clinical Trial**, include a mentor with extensive experience in clinical research
- **Personal Statement of the RPL Biosketch** should describe the RPL's current and prior peer-reviewed research grant funding and note the role (PI, project leader, collaborator, etc)
- Tip: Avoid naming RPLs who are proposed/supported as RPLs on other COBREs

Important Details for Research Projects

Individualized Letter of Support from home institution for each RPL is required

- Written by Dean, Provost, or another Senior Official
- Must demonstrate multi-year commitment to the RPL whether or not the COBRE is funded
- Examples of strong institutional commitment: start-up package, independent research space

Mentor's Letter of Support: describe mentor qualifications, frequency of interactions

BUDGET should request 5 years of support for each RPL slot so that the replacement RPL can be funded after the initial one graduates, but...

- An RPL's research plan, timeline, and budget is for 2- 3 years total RPL support
- Remaining budget years are designated as "For Replacement RPL"
- Make it clear that the RPL will continue the project after Year 3 with independent grant support
- Also address this in the Budget Justification

Research Cores Requirements (optional)

- **A Core should support the RPL projects and the scientific theme**
- **Core Director** must have appropriate expertise and experience to manage the Core
- **Using/modifying/expanding existing resources is encouraged**
- **Funds for equipment/instrumentation** are allowed
- **Business plan** to manage use of the core should be provided

Alterations and Renovations Requirements (optional)

- **OPTIONAL COMPONENT**
- **Must be relevant** to the scope of proposed research
- **Up to \$300,000** in DC allowed only in year 1 of the award
- **Direct Costs only** – no F&A
- **Provide line drawings** (not blueprints) to show feasibility
- **Cannot support**
 - New construction, including completion of shell space
 - Movable equipment/instrumentation
 - Equipment for teaching or non-research use

Anticipated Notices of Special Interest for COBRE 1

Supporting Women's Health Research in the IDeA States through the COBRE1 Program

- Women and children in IDeA states have poorer health outcomes
- Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH) coordinates WH research across the NIH
- Intends to support one COBRE
- Broadly themed, address 1 or more goals of the Strategic Plan for WH Research "Advancing Science for the Health of Women"

Supporting Data Sciences in the IDeA States through the COBRE1 Program

- Need innovative approaches to working with large research datasets
- Office of Data Science Strategy (ODSS) leads the NIH Strategic Plan for Data Science
- Intends to support one COBRE
- Broadly themed in multiple areas of data science, including machine learning, deep learning, artificial intelligence and virtual reality technologies

**Applications to these NOSIs also receive full consideration for funding by NIGMS
NOSIs currently in preparation**

The COBRE Review Process: STEP 1 - ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

- Review of all COBRE applications is organized by the NIGMS Scientific Review Branch (SRB)
- All applications go through Administrative Review by the Program Officers and Scientific Review Officers
- All applications deemed non-compliant/not eligible are withdrawn

To avoid your application from being withdrawn:

- **Read and follow the instructions in the [current FOA](#) carefully!**
- Try to apply a few days prior to the deadline, check your application, and make corrections if needed
- Common issues: ineligible PI, an ineligible RPL, RP with a co-investigator or clinical trial site in a non-IDeA state

STEP 2 – SCIENTIFIC REVIEW

Applications are divided among Special Emphasis Panels (SEPs)

- Number of panels depends on the number of applications
- Reviewer Orientation Meetings: same material is given to all reviewers

Reviewer Assignments

- At least three reviewers are assigned to each application – usually more
 - Overall: three primary reviewers
 - At least two reviewers are assigned to each of the components
 - Administrative Core, Research Cores, Individual Research Projects, A&R

Process

Assigned reviewers comment on each component, then the panel discusses the Overall

Voting: All panel members vote on the Overall Center only (not individual components)

Preparation Advice to Applicants

- **Read the FOA's review criteria** – the critique templates contain these criteria/questions
- **DO NOT duplicate** letters of support. Avoid including letters of support that do not add substance – it can limit the pool of reviewers and usually annoys reviewers
- **List the names of people submitting letters** at the start of each component
- **Include the Core or Project Title at** the beginning of each component summary. Reviewers have access to full applications **but not in Recruitment Phase** when only summaries are available.
- **Use the PHS Assignment form** to indicate expertise needed but **DO NOT** suggest reviewer names. You may provide names of those who **SHOULD NOT** review your application.

IDeA Funding Restrictions

The PD(s)/PI(s) may not use COBRE funds to support research activities in his/her laboratory. **This includes supplements unless allowed by the NOSI or FOA.**

- He/she is not eligible for research project support from this COBRE or any other COBRE (including all three phases), INBRE, or IDeA-CTR award.

COBRE Research Project Leaders cannot receive simultaneous support from the same COBRE award as Pilot Project Leaders, nor can COBRE Pilot Project Leaders receive simultaneous support from the same COBRE award as Research Project Leaders.

COBRE RPLs and PPLs cannot simultaneously lead projects supported by other parent IDeA awards, but may be eligible to lead IDeA projects funded by supplements

- Includes INBRE, IDeA-CTR, and COBRE

Thank you!

Please enter your questions into the chat box.

