COBRE Phase 2 Pre-application Webinar
May 12, 2022
3:00 – 4:30 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 Michele McGuirl**
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
- **129** distinct COBRE awards
- 3 sequential phases, 5 years each
- **IDeA Dashboard** tracks all funded awards

Phase 1: Developmental
Phase 2: Strengthening and Enhancement
Phase 3: Sustaining and Transitional

https://www.nigms.nih.gov/Research/DRCB/Pages/DRCB-IDeA-Interactive-Portfolio-Dashboard.aspx
Renewal of Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) - Phase 2 (P20 Clinical Trial Optional)

PAR-22-163

due date: September 27, 2022

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**CURRENT FOA: PAR-22-163**

FOA in preparation
COBRE Phase 2: Program Objectives

*Continue* the development of a critical mass of investigators with expertise in the Center's scientific interest areas

- Support Research Projects within in the COBRE’s scientific area
- Get RPLs ready to compete for peer-reviewed external funding

*Strengthen* the Center through further improvement in research infrastructure

- Support existing or establish new core facilities that are essential to support the research of the Center
- No Alterations and Renovations are allowed for Phase 2
General Considerations Before Applying

- Read the FOA – APPLY AS A RENEWAL!

- COBREs are NOT P01s
  - The PI receives salary support (minimum LOE of 3 months) but not research support from the COBRE— a service to the institution that deserves recognition and support

- COBREs are NOT training grants

- Communicate with institutional leaders
  - Success of the COBRE is dependent on institutional commitments

- Leverage other NIH-supported resources, especially current COBRE, INBRE, and IDeA-CTR programs at your institution/state
  - Cores should not be duplicative of existing resources
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
- Must be a faculty member at the applicant institution at the time of submission
- PD/PI may be the current Phase 1 PD/PI or a different one may be appointed

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

- Qualifying research grant can be from federal or non-federal sources
- Current and Pending Support Attachment required – used to determine PD/PI eligibility
- For MPI COBRE applications, each PI must meet the eligibility requirements. See the FOA for specifics.
Research Project Leader (RPL) Eligibility

RPLs must hold an independent faculty appointment (or equivalent) at the time of submission

• Includes tenure-track and other types of *multi-year* appointments
• Postdocs and others without independent appointments are not eligible
• More than half must be appointed at the applicant institution

RPLs must qualify as either an NIH Early Stage Investigator (**ESI**) or as a New Investigator (**NI**) — *NEW IN PHASE 2*—

• ESI: PI who completed terminal research degree or post-graduate clinical training (whichever is later) within the past 10 years *and* has not previously competed successfully for a substantial NIH independent research award.
• NI: PI who has not previously competed successfully for a substantial NIH independent research award

Application Requirements - Overall

Overall Plan for the Center

• **Program Accomplishments** during COBRE Phase 1 support

• **Center Organization and Management Plan**

• **Plan for an Advisory Committee (AC) —NEW IN PHASE 2—**

  Three external members, one senior institutional official, and one senior faculty member appointed by the senior institutional official

• **Mentoring Plan** for RPLs

• **Evaluation Plan** for the Center

• **Letter** that outlines the institutional commitment of resources to support the COBRE throughout Phase 2 and to maintain these resources beyond the period of grant support
Application Requirements for Cores

Administrative Core

- Management plan that covers administrative, fiscal, and scientific aspects; should include an RPL Development Plan
- Pilot Projects Program (optional; open to faculty at all ranks, ESI/NI preferred) —do not include research plans for individual projects
- Faculty recruitment (all ranks) funds are available (up to $400K in annual DC)

Research Cores (Optional)

- Core Directors must have appropriate expertise and experience to manage the Core
- Using/modifying/expanding existing resources is encouraged but duplication is not
- Cores should support the RPL projects and the scientific theme
- Page limit reduced to six pages for each Research Core —NEW IN PHASE 2—
Application Requirements for Research Projects

Research Projects – not an R01

- Six pages to describe research question, approach, and connection to COBRE scientific area
- 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 their second year on the award. RPLs are **expected** to get a research grant and graduate from COBRE funding by the end of the third year of COBRE support.

**Must include 2 - 5 Research Projects**

- Avoid naming RPLs who are proposed/supported as RPLs on other COBREs
- Projects should make good use of the Research Cores
- Identify any new areas for scientific growth with appropriate mentorship
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

Request 5 years of support for each RPL slot so that the replacement RPL can be funded after the initial one graduates

- An RPL’s research plan, timeline, and budget is for 3 years total RPL support (Phases 1+2)
- Remaining budget years are designated as placeholders for replacement RPLs
- Make it clear that the RPL will continue after Year 3 with independent grant support
- Also address this in the Budget Justification
The COBRE Review Process

Nina Sidorova, PhD
Sonia Ortiz-Miranda, PhD
Scientific Review Branch
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
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

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
- **List the names of people submitting letters** for each of the components
- **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.
• Reviewers will evaluate the progress and outcomes of Phase 1 and will have access to the Phase 1 Summary Statement to cross-reference the original goals

• The outcomes for Phase 1 RPLs should be detailed and include grant applications submitted/awarded, presentations at meetings, publications, tenure/promotion, currently held positions

• Projects from RPLs continuing from Phase 1 and from new RPLs should fit within the scientific area of the COBRE and make effective use of the Research Cores

• Cores should continue to develop strong user bases that include RPLs, PPLs, COBRE personnel, and others at the institution and beyond
Thank you!

Please enter your questions into the chat box.