Request for Applications (RFA)
South Carolina Telehealth Alliance (SCTA) Telehealth Translational Research Pilot Project Grants

KEY DATES:
RFA Release: February 20, 2019
Pre-application (required) Due: by 5 PM EST, Friday March 22, 2019
Full application Due: by 5 PM EST, Friday May 24, 2019

OVERVIEW:
The South Carolina Telehealth Alliance (SCTA) has allocated funds for pilot project awards of up to $25,000 direct costs for a 12-month project period for telehealth-based\(^1\) pilot projects that aim to accelerate the adoption, utilization, and investigation of telehealth interventions in South Carolina.

The primary objectives of the funding are to support South Carolina clinicians and researchers in their efforts to develop innovative, scientifically meritorious telehealth projects with an overarching objective of collecting preliminary data for subsequent submission of extramural grant applications as well as publication and dissemination of their research findings. We place a premium on interdisciplinary and/or interprofessional (ID/IP) team science, and cross-institutional and/or organizational collaborations. Therefore, if you are applying for this grant mechanism, you are strongly encouraged to take an ID/IP team approach and include investigators from more than one South Carolina institution/organization. This RFA does not preclude submitting new and innovative project ideas from existing investigator teams. However, the novelty of the research direction needs to be clearly distinguished from the Principal Investigator’s and research team’s past and current research. Further, we encourage submission of applications that may have resulted from SCTA collaborations and/or South Carolina Clinical and Translational Research Institute (SCTR) held scientific retreat/s.

\(^1\)Telehealth may be defined as the use of electronic information and telecommunications technologies to support long-distance clinical health care, patient and professional health-related education, public health and health administration. [https://www.healthit.gov/sites/default/files/telehealthguide_final_0.pdf](https://www.healthit.gov/sites/default/files/telehealthguide_final_0.pdf)

- Applications that are responsive to select priorities outlined in the SCTA Strategic Plan ([http://www.sctelehealth.org/About/StrategicPlan](http://www.sctelehealth.org/About/StrategicPlan)) will be prioritized including research applications focused on rural health, mental health, education/training, and telehealth outcomes research.
- Applicants are encouraged to review the SCTA’s Vision statements and develop aligning research proposals. This includes emphasis on underserved communities, quality of care, collaboration, and cost-effectiveness. Full details can be found at: [https://www.sctelehealth.org/About/CoreValues](https://www.sctelehealth.org/About/CoreValues).
• Please note that the Telehealth Pilot Project Grants will not be awarded to applicants seeking to establish or sustain telehealth services unless embedded in a rigorous scientific proposal.
• A Telehealth Research Services Consult for the potential applicants are available and can be requested via SPARC at https://sparc.musc.edu/ (listed under the MUSC tab, under SCTR).
• Single Concurrent Award: Please note that a PI can have only one active Telehealth pilot award at any given time. PIs with an active award are not eligible to apply until the currently awarded project is complete and the project close out progress report is submitted.
• PIs and Co-PIs with previous SCTA Pilot Project Funding: PIs and Co-PIs who have been previously funded via a SCTA award and if the project is closed, must submit an updated progress report as an appendix to the new pilot project’s Pre-proposal specific aims page (for the Pre-applications) and Research Proposal (for the Full applications). Please see Page 4 of the RFA for more instructions. The report will be evaluated to determine the progress/stewardship of the previous award. Failure to submit a progress report will result in the application being triaged.
• Submission of Full Applications: Selected Pre-applicants will be notified to submit Full applications. A Telehealth Research Services Consult prior to submission of the Full application is required.
• Triage Triggers: Incomplete applications; late applications; applications with no ID/IP team approach (i.e., single investigator applications); or applications that do not have a telehealth component are considered not responsive to the RFA and will not be reviewed. There will be no exceptions.
• Acknowledgement of SCTA and SCTR Grant: By accepting SCTA and SCTR resources and support, you acknowledge the requirement to cite both the South Carolina Telehealth Alliance and the National Institute of Health’s (NIH) National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) grant support to SCTR in each publication, press release or any other document(s) and presentations similar to the following:
  o “This publication (or project) was supported in whole or in part by the South Carolina Telehealth Alliance (SCTA) and the South Carolina Clinical & Translational Research (SCTR) Institute, with an academic home at the Medical University of South Carolina through NIH/NCATS Grant Number UL1 TR001450.”

OTHER FREE CONSULTATIONS AVAILABLE TO ASSIST WITH PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT:
The following free consultations are available from the SCTR Institute to help strengthen your pilot project (and other) applications. Please visit https://sparc.musc.edu/ to view consult descriptions and request those of interest.
  o Science Consults
  o Biostatistics, Design & Epidemiology
  o Via SCTR SUCCESS Center: Grant Forms & Budget Services, Regulatory Services, Recruitment Services, Research Navigation Services and Special Populations Navigation
  o Community Engagement & Research
  o Comparative Effectiveness and Data Analytics Research Resource (CEDAR)
  o Nexus Research Coordination and Management
  o Self-service Research Data & Feasibility
  o Mobile Health and TACHL Center
  o Research Data Requests
  o Biomedical Informatics Center
  o Intellectual Property and Commercialization Resources
  o Palmetto Profiles webpage is a great resource for finding collaborators.
ELIGIBILITY:

Principal Investigator (PI)
- PI must have a primary faculty appointment (at the Assistant Professor level or above) at a South Carolina research institution.
- Faculty members may serve as the PI or Co-PI of only one application.
- Faculty members from other academic institutions can be a PI, Co-PI or Co-I as appropriate.
- Clinical trainees, post-doctoral and clinical fellows, instructors and individuals with pending faculty appointments can serve as the PI of an application.

Early Stage Investigator (ESI) PI:
ESI PIs must include the following in their application:
- Qualified senior co-investigator(s) as mentor(s) - include the mentor(s) name, biosketch and support letter(s).
- Dissemination and Implementation plan.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION WEBSITE:
Access the SCTR Pilot Project Program website to submit your Pre-application at:
http://academicdepartments.musc.edu/sctr/programs/pilot_projects

APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCESS:
For Pre-application Submission: Access the SCTR Pilot Project Program webpage and click the appropriate “Apply” link to fill out the online application form and to upload required documents.

For Full Application Submission (by invitation only): The application submission weblink will be sent to each PI who has been selected to submit a Full application after the Pre-application decisions are made.

FOR ALL DOCUMENTS:
- Font Type and Size: Arial, 11pt.
- Page Margins: No less than 0.5” on all sides (one-half inch).
- Document Type to Upload: PDF.

Instructions for Grant Applications using PHS 398 is at http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.pdf

PRE-APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:
- The Pre-application should consist of:
  - Specific Aims Page (1-page limit) should include:
    Specific aims page as similar to the NIH format: State concisely the goals of the proposed research and summarize the expected outcome(s), including the impact that the results of the proposed research will exert on the research field(s) involved. List succinctly the specific objectives of the research proposed (e.g., to test a stated hypothesis, create a novel design, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm or clinical practice, address a critical barrier to progress in the field, or develop new technology).
    SCTR-specific instructions: Each team member’s role; how the project will stimulate new and IP/ID collaborations that would otherwise might not have taken place; translational potential of the proposed research; address potential impact on the priorities outlined in the SCTA Strategic
Plan; dissemination and implementation plan, plans to secure future extramural funding including funding agency and mechanism (NIH, Duke Endowment, Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) grants or any other).

- Early Stage Investigator (ESI) PIs must include the required additional information detailed on page 3 of this RFA.
- NIH biosketches for all academic investigators are required in the NIH format. Detailed instructions on constructing your biographical sketch can be accessed at https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm
  
  **NOTE:** If your project team has non-academic or community members as investigators, they can submit their resume or CV instead of the NIH biosketch.

- Literature Cited should be included at the end of the specific aims page. It is not counted towards the Research Proposal page limit.
- PIs or Co-PIs who have been previously funded via a SCTA Telehealth award must submit an Updated Progress Report (additional 2 pages allowed).

  The progress report should include the following:
  - Funded Project Title/s and each Project Begin/End Dates.
  - Brief Summary of each project including the specific aims, and findings/results of each specific aim, overall results and conclusions.
  - Extramural Funding Activities resulted from the award:
    Please use the subheadings as: Applied, Pending, Awarded etc., as appropriate, and include each grant information in the following order. Name of the funding agency, project title, form of funding (R01, R21 etc.), investigators/team members names, total award amount and duration, grant number – if funds are awarded.
  - Publications resulted:
    Please use the subheadings as: Published, Under review, Submitted etc., as appropriate, and include each publication information in the following order. Title of publication/s, Authors, Journal Name, Year, PMCIDs (and/or NIHMS Manuscript IDs, PMIDs as applicable).
  - If applicable, intellectual property rights such as record of invention disclosure to MUSC Foundation for Research Development, Patent and iEdison number etc.

**FULL APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:**

- In addition to the components listed under the Pre-application submission, following components should be submitted:
  1) Research Strategy/proposal (1 page Specific Aims page + 3-page research proposal)
  2) Budget and Justification: Using the PHS 398 format

**BUDGET AND ALLOWABLE COSTS:**

The Budget and Justification. Applicants must use the PHS 398 Form Page 4: Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period for the budget page, and use the Continuation Format Page for the budget justification. Each budget line item must be clearly justified. **Combine your budget and justification into a single PDF file** to submit via the online application.

- **Faculty Salary Support.** Faculty members’ effort, related to the proposed pilot project, must be clearly listed in the budget. Support of faculty salary and fringe benefits is allowed up to 5% effort for each faculty member subject to the NIH salary cap. It should be noted that personnel salary
requests and all other budget item requests should be clearly justified and appropriate to conduct the proposed research properly.

- **Effort Reporting.** For institutional compliance purposes, it is the PI’s responsibility to make sure all faculty effort listed in the budget is in compliance with their institutional effort policy. Investigators are not required to accommodate their effort on the pilot project budget. However, they have to be in compliance with their respective institution’s effort policy should they choose to charge the effort to other funding sources.

- **Other Personnel Support.** Salary and fringe benefits are allowed for technical support, such as: Research Fellows, Research Assistants/Coordinators, Research Nurses, etc.

- **Students.** Pilot project funds cannot be used to cover student tuition, fees or health insurance costs, either directly or indirectly as a stipend. If an application proposes a student stipend as undergraduate or graduate student research assistant, funding support will be deemed inappropriate and not funded. If an application proposes a graduate student as a research assistant, you must provide a justification as to why a student is included in the proposed project and how work on this pilot project is related to the student’s thesis/dissertation research project. Proposed student(s) – undergraduate and graduate – must be identified by first name and last name (i.e., TBD/TBN is not allowed).

- **Ancillary Personnel.** Salary support for ancillary personnel, such as Mentors and Administrative Assistants is not allowed.

- **Non-personnel Research Expenses.** Some allowable expenses are: supplies, equipment (under limited circumstances), animal purchase cost and care, study subject compensation, study subject transportation costs, in- and out-patient care costs, and statistical and computational services including personnel and computer time. All expenses must be directly related to the proposed research.

- **Unallowable costs.** General office supplies and equipment, computers and laptops (unless specifically requested and justified), membership dues and fees, travel costs to meetings, publication and subscription costs, mailing costs, and rent.

- **Facilities & Administrative (Overhead/Indirect) Costs.** Facilities and administrative costs, also known as indirect/overhead costs, are not permitted.

- **Subawards.** Please indicate potential subaward(s) to other institutions clearly on the budget. No signed documents from subaward institution(s) are needed at the time of Full application submission. If needed, the SCTR Finance Office can assist the PIs and their Business Managers to establish subawards once an application is approved for funding. However, the PI and PI’s department will be responsible for establishing the subaward on time to start the project without delay, and managing it. If the subaward is not processed on time and delay is due to the negligence by the PI and PI’s department, SCTR may deny the funding for your project.

- **Business Manager Responsibilities.** The PI’s Department/Division Business Manager is responsible for all human resources, subaward (if applicable), procurement and reconciliation activities, and providing proper finance reports as requested for the funded project account(s).

**APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS:**
The Pre-applications will be reviewed by the SCTA/SCTR committee only to decide whether the PI should be invited for a Full Application submission or not. A minimum of two Scientific Review Committee members and/or an approved ad hoc reviewer will review the Full applications. The Full Applications will also be reviewed by a biostatistician. Review critiques of the Full Applications will be sent to the appropriate PIs.
Review Criteria for the Full Applications will be similar to the NIH review criteria and scoring system at https://grants.nih.gov/grants/peer/guidelines_general/scoring_system_and_procedure.pdf

- **Significance:** Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved? How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field?
- **Investigator(s):** Are the PD/PIs, collaborators, and other researchers well suited to the project? If the project is collaborative or multi-PD/PI, do the investigators have complementary and integrated expertise?
- **Innovation:** Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions?
- **Approach:** Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Are potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented?
- **Environment:** Will the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Are the institutional support, equipment and other physical resources available to the investigators adequate for the project proposed? Will the project benefit from unique features of the scientific environment, subject populations, or collaborative arrangements?

**Additional Review Criteria:**
- Potential for successful extramural grant applications that may be generated from the proposed research.
- Plan for dissemination and implementation

**CONTACT:**
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