LIMITED SUBMISSION: NIH: NIAMS Rheumatic Diseases Research Resource-based Centers (P30)

******PLEASE NOTE: ONE (1) PROPOSAL FROM TUFTS- HEALTH SCIENCES CAMPUS and ONE (1) PROPOSAL FROM TUFTS-MEDFORD/SOMERVILLE CAMPUS MAY BE NOMINATED******

DEADLINES:
Tufts Internal Email of Intent Deadline: May 29
Sponsor Deadline: October 3

For those interested, please send an **email of intent** to the Limited Submissions Team at limitedsubmissions@tufts.edu informing us of an intention to apply. EOI's received after the deadline will not be considered. The email of intent must include:

1. *The name of the solicitation,*
2. *The name of the Principal Investigator, and any co-PI's,*
3. *The biosketch of the PI,*
4. *An appropriately detailed description of no more than 500 words outlining the PI's qualifications and a description of the proposed project.*

An internal selection process will be conducted by the Office of the Vice Provost for Research. All candidates will be notified of results. NB: Successful applications must include official notification from the Limited Submissions Team in order to submit. For more information, please see http://viceprovost.tufts.edu/resources/funding/limited-submissions/

PROGRAM INFORMATION:

The National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) requests applications for the NIAMS Resource-based Centers Program (P30) for rheumatic diseases research areas within its mission. The Resource-based Centers will provide critical research infrastructure, shared facilities, services, and/or resources to groups of investigators conducting research on rheumatic diseases, enabling them to conduct their independently-funded individual and/or collaborative research projects more efficiently and/or more effectively, with the broad overall goal of accelerating, enriching, and enhancing the effectiveness of ongoing basic, translational, and clinical research and promoting new research within the NIAMS mission.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

The NIAMS uses a number of centers grant mechanisms to support research that require synergistic, integrated groups of investigators, significant infrastructure, and/or technological innovations. Recently, NIAMS convened a Centers Evaluation Working Group (CEWG) to advise the Institute as to how the Centers programs could be more responsive and supportive to current research needs and opportunities. The CEWG concluded that NIAMS should allow flexibility and dynamism in the design, structure, and conduct of its Centers, to accommodate the variable needs of NIAMS research areas that differ with respect to investigator community, resource availability, and knowledge depth and breadth (see NIAMS Centers Evaluation Working Group
Report; http://niams.nih.gov/Funding/Centers_Evaluation/centers_report_May2013.asp.) The CEWG recommended that the "NIAMS Centers should prioritize improving access to resources, using as review criteria i) the importance of the resource and ii) the potential impact of providing access to that resource".

NIAMS expects that the Resource-based Center Program will:

- Efficiently provide critical research infrastructure to advance fields within the NIAMS mission
- Include Cores that offer resources and services in addition to equipment and other infrastructure

- Serve basic, translational and/or clinical research
- Contribute and/or facilitate significant innovations in research and technology
- Facilitate expansion of research fields within the NIAMS mission
- Foster innovative exploratory projects and junior investigators
- Have flexibility to adopt and adapt to emerging needs and opportunities

NIAMS Resource-based Center Program Description

The emphasis of the NIAMS Resource-based Center Program is to improve access to critical research infrastructure, shared facilities, services, and resources. Each Center will contain one or more Resource Cores that serves a strong research community. For the purposes of this particular announcement, the research community is defined as those investigators (and their funded projects) who will use Center resources for research within the focus of the Center which should be within the NIAMS mission. Successful Resource-based Centers are expected to expand the chosen field(s), provide new research opportunities, and increase the efficiency and impact of research due to resource access.

The focus of the Center is determined by the Program Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) and may encompass basic, translational, and/or clinical research. For this particular announcement, the Center focus is restricted to rheumatic diseases research. The focus may be very broad, e.g. mechanisms of autoimmunity underlying rheumatic disease, and serve a diverse group of investigators that share the need for critical shared core services. Alternatively, a Center may have a narrow disease or biology focus or theme. In some cases, the relevant research community may share a highly specialized resource such as a well-defined patient cohort with associated patient data and biospecimens and/or may share a need for highly specialized technologies and services (e.g. advanced imaging or single cell analysis). However, in all cases the focus of the Center must be within the NIAMS mission. Potential PDs/PIs are strongly encouraged to contact the Scientific/Research Contact listed in Section VII. Agency Contacts early in the application planning process to discuss NIAMS mission relevance.

It has become increasingly common and practical for investigators at different institutions to collaborate to achieve common goals. Therefore, to facilitate collaborative and interdisciplinary research, resources and investigators may be distributed at different institutions and different geographic regions, particularly for resources that do not need to be duplicated at every research site. Similarly, the research community may be defined at the national, regional, or local institutional level, and may include foreign collaborators.

The NIAMS Resource-based Centers will provide support for:

- One or more Resource Cores
- An Administrative Core, that includes a Center Enrichment Program

Resource Cores

Each Center must include one or more Resource Cores. A Resource Core is a facility and/or resource shared by or providing services to multiple research community investigators, enabling them to conduct their independently-funded individual and/or collaborative research projects more efficiently and/or more effectively. The selection of Resource Cores is left up to the PD/PI, but should be justified by the needs of the research community and should be appropriate for the focus of the Center which should be within the NIAMS mission. Resource Cores may be located at multiple institutions separated geographically.

For the purpose of this FOA, examples of Resource Cores include, but are not limited to, Cores providing the following:

- A technology that lends itself to standardized procedures, automation or preparation in large batches (e.g., histology, tissue culture, biobanking, high throughput sequencing, genotyping, and other genomic, epigenomic, and microbiomic assays) or that requires complex instrumentation (e.g. electron microscopy, flow cytometry, confocal microscopy, intravital microscopy, whole animal imaging, and mass spectrometry).

- Animal preparation (including transgenic, knockout, and other forms of genetic engineering/gene editing) and care.
- Highly specialized technologies, tools, and expertise such as epidemiology, outcomes, genetics, medical informatics, bioinformatics, biostatistics, systems biology, pharmacogenomics, clinical trial design and support, regulatory affairs, etc.
- Critical infrastructure to support broad sharing of accessible pre-existing patient cohorts and registries as appropriate, including appropriately-consented patient samples and associated clinical data.

A single Center may propose multiple Resource Cores offering different types of technologies, services, and/or critical resources. However, applications proposing a single methodology core supporting outcomes, epidemiology, clinical trials, and/or health services research exclusively are not responsive to the goals of this FOA and will not be reviewed. The NIAMS Core Centers for Clinical Research (CCCR) (RFA-AR-17-002) would be a more appropriate funding opportunity. Prior consultation with the NIAMS Scientific/Research staff is strongly recommended.

Although the Cores themselves are not required to be innovative, they should be "state-of-the-art" and drive innovation within the research community. In addition, Cores are encouraged to support limited research focused on technology development and/or adaptation of technologies to meet the needs of the research community through new and/or unique state-of-the-art core services. Resource Core support may include personnel, equipment, supplies, services, and facilities. It is expected that the Resource Cores will receive some reimbursement for the cost of providing services or other resources through user fees.

Cores are encouraged to leverage existing resources, such as existing registries, tissue banks, and cohorts, and to coordinate with other Cores at the same and/or nearby institutions, particularly if they provide similar or overlapping technologies and services. Cores may support existing service cores, but should add value beyond the normal use of a resource by fee-for-service or simple access. Whenever possible, generic services (e.g. histology, flow cytometry, transgenic animals, etc.), whether offered by new or existing cores, should be customized to meet the needs of the research community. Examples of such customization include the provision of relevant reliable monoclonal antibodies (e.g. for immunostaining of cells and tissue, for flow cytometry, or for ChIP-seq) and tissue or cell type-specific promoters and cre-drivers for transgenic animal studies. All Cores are strongly encouraged to enhance the value of the resources they offer through education and training on technologies and other resources offered by the Core, as well as consultation on experimental design and data analysis and interpretation. Applicants from institutions that have a Clinical Translational Science Award (CTSA) funded by the NIH may wish to utilize the CTSA as a resource for conducting the proposed research.

Administrative Core

The Administrative Core has oversight responsibility for the entire Resource-based Center (P30) and also plans and carries out activities that promote the goals of the Center. These goals and activities are selected by the PD/PI of the application, but at the very least need to include outreach activities that promote use of the resources offered by the Center as well as enrichment activities that expand the research community and/or promote innovative research on the topic of focus of the Center and within the NIAMS mission. Where appropriate, outreach may be national. The Administrative Core should have a Director, an Associate Director, and an Advisory Committee to coordinate the Center activities and to evaluate and improve the Center. The Director of the Administrative Core is also the Director of the overall Center. The Advisory Committee should include users of the scientific cores and experts outside the Center with expertise in the management of scientific core facilities. This Committee should help the Director and Associate Director to regularly evaluate and optimize strategies to meet the scientific needs of the research community over the course of the grant award.

The following are examples of additional goals that would be appropriate for a Resource-based Center. This list is neither mandatory nor inclusive. PDs/PIs are encouraged to propose other innovative goals.

- Provides leadership at an institutional or broader level for research on the topic of focus by the Center
- Expands the research community by attracting new investigators and established investigators from other fields
- Enhances the research environment and promotes synergistic collaborations and/or interdisciplinary research

The Administrative Core must include an Enrichment Program that is designed to expand the research community and/or promote innovative research on the topic of focus of the Center. The Enrichment Program should include outreach activities for the Resource Core(s). Each Center may choose the activities that best suit the needs of the research community, but all activities should occur within the context of and/or with the involvement of the Resource Core(s). Through this Enrichment Program, the Administrative Core can utilize the Resource Cores to foster the development of new investigators, attract investigators from other research fields, develop new technologies, and/or foster new collaborations with investigators who have not previously engaged in research within the focus of the Center. The Enrichment Program may include a Pilot and Feasibility (P&F) grant program, but this is optional. Innovative approaches to the Enrichment Program are encouraged.

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION:

All PD(s)/PI(s) must have an eRA Commons account. PD(s)/PI(s) should work with their organizational officials to either create a new account or to affiliate their existing account with the applicant organization in eRA Commons. If the PD/PI is also the organizational Signing Official, they must have two distinct eRA Commons accounts, one for each role. Obtaining an eRA Commons account can take up to 2 weeks.

AWARD INFORMATION:

Application budgets are limited to $500K direct costs per year. The scope of the proposed project should determine the project period. The maximum project period is 5 years.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-AR-18-004.html

NOTE: Program announcement instructions supersede instructions delivered in this document.