Request for Applications

CLINICAL & TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCE (CTS) PILOT GRANT PROGRAM *

A JOINT INITIATIVE
SPONSORED BY INDIANA CTSI PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
AND
PURDUE UNIVERSITY
AND
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME
AND
REGENSTRIEF INSTITUTE

IMPORTANT DATES

- **LOI Due:** **June 30, 2026**
- **Application Submission:** **August 31, 2026**
- **First Review:** **October 23, 2026**
- **Feedback out:** **October 30**
- **Presentations:** **November 13, 2026 from 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm EST**
  Applicants must attend
- **Funding Begins:** **May 1, 2027**

***Please note this grant mechanism has some unique criteria for scope of proposed work. As such, each applicant MUST meet with Tammy Sajdyk after submission of the LOI, but prior to submitting the full application.**

You will be submitting through the Indiana CTSI's grants management software WebCAMP.
The WebCAMP user's guide is available under the funding announcement on the Indiana CTSI website

Modified March 2026

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

WHAT IS CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCE AND HOW IS IT DIFFERENT FROM TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH?

This grant mechanism is focused on translational science and *NOT* translational research.
What is the difference?
Translational science is the field of investigation focused on understanding the scientific and operational principles underlying each step of the translational process and is not focused on any specific disease state. It is the process of turning observations in the laboratory, clinic and community into interventions that improve the health of individuals and the public — from diagnostics and therapeutics to medical procedures and behavioral changes. The goal is to reduce, remove or bypass significant bottlenecks across the entire continuum of translation (https://ncats.nih.gov/translation).

Projects are intended to:

Prioritize Initiatives That Address Unmet Needs

- **Scientific Needs:** Contribute to research advances in under-investigated areas of science or on scientific questions that present unique research challenges or disincentives (e.g., currently untreatable diseases; de-risking targets).
- **Patient and Population Health Needs:** Advance research to develop solutions for unmet patient and population health needs.

Produce Generalizable Solutions for Common and Persistent Challenges

- **Across Multiple Projects or Initiatives:** Advance research by identifying, developing and/or testing solutions to common bottlenecks or roadblocks that have stymied multiple projects. These may be scientific, operational, or administrative in nature.
- **Across Diseases or Conditions:** Approach research challenges and develop solutions by seeking commonalities across research projects on a range of diseases or conditions.
- **Organizational Environment:** Enable development and testing of generalizable solutions through organizational policies, organizational structure, and shared resources.

Emphasize Creativity and Innovation

- **Research Design and Implementation:** Pose innovative research questions and develop and implement innovations in research methods, technologies, and approaches that increase the impact of the research, as through pursuit of paradigm-changing goals, or innovations that are generalizable to advancing research across multiple initiatives, diseases and conditions.
- **Research Processes and Structures:** Develop and implement innovations in research team interactions, leadership and management, partnerships, and operations that facilitate and support the quality and impact of the research.
- **Organizational Environment:** Enable creativity and innovation through policies that encourage innovations and do not penalize failures.

Leverage Cross-Disciplinary Team Science

- **Leverage Broad Expertise:** Engage colleagues from across disciplines, fields, and professions to advance research along the translational continuum. This may involve leveraging scientific, administrative, financial and operational expertise.
- **Integrate Knowledge:** Integrate concepts, theories, methods, technologies, and approaches from the range of disciplines, fields, and professions that can contribute to advancing the research goals. Leverage knowledge integration to produce more holistic research designs and findings that are therefore more relevant to real-world applications.
- **Organizational Environment:** Enable team science via organizational policies, team leadership and management, shared instrumentation and space, and recognition and reward systems.

Enhance the Efficiency and Speed of Translational Research

- **Scientific Efficiencies:** Develop and implement innovations in scientific approaches, methods and technologies that accelerate the pace of translational research.
- **Collaboration Efficiencies:** Implement evidence-informed practices to enhance the speed at which collaborations and teams form, develop a shared vision and goals, effectively communicate, and coordinate work tasks.
- **Project Management Efficiencies:** Implement milestone-based decision making to enable rapid agreement on go/no-go decisions, to enable resources to be used most efficiently.
- **Organizational Environment:** Reward efficiency, enable rapid failures and encourage redirection of resources to subsequent attempts.

Utilize Boundary-Crossing Partnerships

- **Cross-Sectoral Partnerships:** Form partnerships across government, universities, and industry to leverage varied expertise and resources to accelerate translational progress. Implement evidence-informed practices for effective cross-sectoral partnerships.

- **Patient and Community Engagement:** Involve impacted patients and communities as research collaborators to enable research advances across the translational continuum (e.g., via disease registries, clinical trials participation, intervention design). Implement evidence-informed practices for patient- and community-engaged research.
- **Organizational Environment:** Enable and incentivize boundary-crossing partnerships via leadership, policies, and recognition and reward systems.

Use Bold and Rigorous Research Approaches

- **Bold Scientific Approaches:** Explore ambitious research goals that have the potential to produce major advances and/or paradigm shifts. These may be in areas of research that have been historically intractable or where there are high risks of failure.
- **Rigor and Reproducibility:** Employ rigorous and robust approaches to generate reproducible findings and high-quality FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable, reusable) data that will enable the research to advance translational progress regardless of whether the initial research objective is met (e.g., learning from failures). To the maximum extent possible, disseminate all parameters utilized to conduct the research (e.g., materials, subjects), research methods and conditions, authentication of reagents and biological resources, data sets, metadata, analytic approaches and statistical tools used for experimentation and data interpretation, results and conclusions, to facilitate reproducibility and/or inform future study designs.
- **Organizational Environments:** Enable rigorous testing of bold, paradigm-challenging ideas, including high-risk high-reward opportunities. Encourage reporting of information necessary for reproducibility toward informing future studies.

Because Quality Improvement (QI) is a core component of Translational Science, we welcome QI-focused project proposals. Staff at the listed institutions are encouraged to collaborate with faculty investigators to develop and submit QI projects that align with the stated program priorities.

Examples of Recently Funded Projects:

Investigator	Project Title
Greenfield	3D Spheroid Platform for Oncology
Kolbinger	AI for Pancreatic Cancer Detection
Leung	Functional Screening for Retinal Disease
Lim	CPET Data Platform (FIT-INDY)
Bondesson Bolin	Toxicoproteomic Tool for Pollutants
Das	Stem Cell Regenerative Medicine
Henderson	Albumin Knockdown Model
Stephens	Team Science Support Framework

If you have previously been funded and are ready to move toward implementation of you project reach out to Tammy Sajdyk and discuss another application.

For additional information about translational science and whether or not your study is a good candidate for this mechanism, please, contact Tammy Sajdyk tsajdyk@iu.edu.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The four premier research institutions within the State of Indiana – Indiana University, Purdue University, the University of Notre Dame, and Regenstrief Institute with support from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), have formed an institute called the Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute (CTSI); conceived as a statewide laboratory to conduct innovative research and education in health sciences. The mission of the Indiana CTSI is "to bring together Indiana's brightest minds to solve the state's most pressing health challenges".

The objective of the new Indiana CTSI Clinical and Translational Science (CTS) pilot grant mechanism is to initiate or continue translational science projects that help identify translational methods and processes relevant across a range of diseases, treatments, and interventions. The key objective of the projects should be to develop methodological innovations and/or produce crosscutting solutions for common and persistent challenges to reduce, remove, or bypass significant bottlenecks across the continuum of translation.

Applications through this mechanism will be evaluated on the quality of the proposed science as well as the application's strength in clarifying the plan for achieving the primary CTS objective.

Applications to this program are limited to a total of **$40,000** and are **12 months (1 year)** in duration. There will be **no** ability to apply for a no cost extension with this new grant. Because these awards are (NIH) NCATS awards, they must comply with NIH guidelines. Previously funded CTS projects are eligible for new CTS funding if the previous translational impediment has been addressed and a new one identified. NIH has specified that **ALL PROJECTS MUST BE COMPLETED IN 12 MONTHS.**

WHO MAY APPLY

IUSM: All full-time faculty, regardless of tenure status, having a primary appointment within the School of Medicine as Assistant Professor or Assistant Scientist and above. This includes those faculty appointed as part-time Assistant Professor or above, if they are geographically full-time. Faculty at the IUSM regional centers for medical education are eligible to apply (assuming they meet all other eligibility criteria) and are considered IUSM faculty for purposes of identifying the sponsoring affiliate as described above.

IUI / IUB: All tenured or tenure-track faculty at or above the Assistant Professor level regardless of tenure status, if approved to serve as a PI by the institution's central research office; faculty at all levels of the Scientist or Scholar tracks.

Purdue / PUI: All tenured or tenure-track West Lafayette faculty at or above the Assistant Professor level; all research professors; all clinical faculty. Non-faculty approved for PI status.

University of Notre Dame: All tenured or tenure-track faculty; all research faculty; all special professional faculty.

Regenstrief Institute: All Regenstrief investigators eligible to receive funding according to the institution's central research office.

APPLICATION PROCESS

LOIs are due by the end of day June 30, 2026. Email them to: trnsldev@iu.edu.
If you have any questions about the LOI please contact Tammy Sajdyk at tsajdyk@iu.edu.

Once the LOI is submitted, you will be scheduled for a brief (30 minutes or less) zoom meeting with Tammy Sajdyk to go over the LOI. Following the meeting, you will receive an email with a link to start your full submission.

Full applications are due on August 31, 2026.

APPLICATIONS SEQUENCE

You **MUST** use the application form available under the funding information on the Indiana CTSI website.

1. **Face Page**
   Department / School support must be indicated by **completion of all appropriate signatures on the face page(s) FOR EACH PI and CO-PI (if applicable).** As submission will be electronic only, facsimile or electronic signatures are appropriate.

2. **Abstract & Keywords**
   - The abstract should be a brief (500 word maximum) abstract in layman's terms.
   - Provide 5 keywords that describe the research content of your project

3. **Budget**
   Budget page listing all direct costs. This page may be duplicated and a separate budget page included for each performance site / collaborating institution. Requested grant funding period cannot exceed **12 months**.
   - Projects should have a start date no earlier than **May 1, 2027.**
   - Supplies and other costs must relate directly to performance of the project.
   - All costs should be specifically justified, and expenditures clearly denoted. Limit budget justification to ½ page.
   - **NEW FOR THIS MECHANISM**: Salaries for PIs and co-investigators may be included for Indiana CTSI investigators and affiliates (Visiting status not eligible).

The **Specific Aims and Research Plan** should have at least 1/2 inch margins (top, bottom, left and right) and must NOT exceed **6 single-spaced pages**, excluding references. Font must be clear and readily legible and reasonable size. *Use an Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype or Georgia typeface, a black font color and a font size of 11 points or larger*. Make every effort to write these sections toward a general scientific audience; avoid field-specific jargon and undefined abbreviations. Every attempt will be made to find proposal reviewers with expertise in the general area of the proposal, but applicants should be aware that highly specialized expertise may not be available within the Indiana CTSI system.

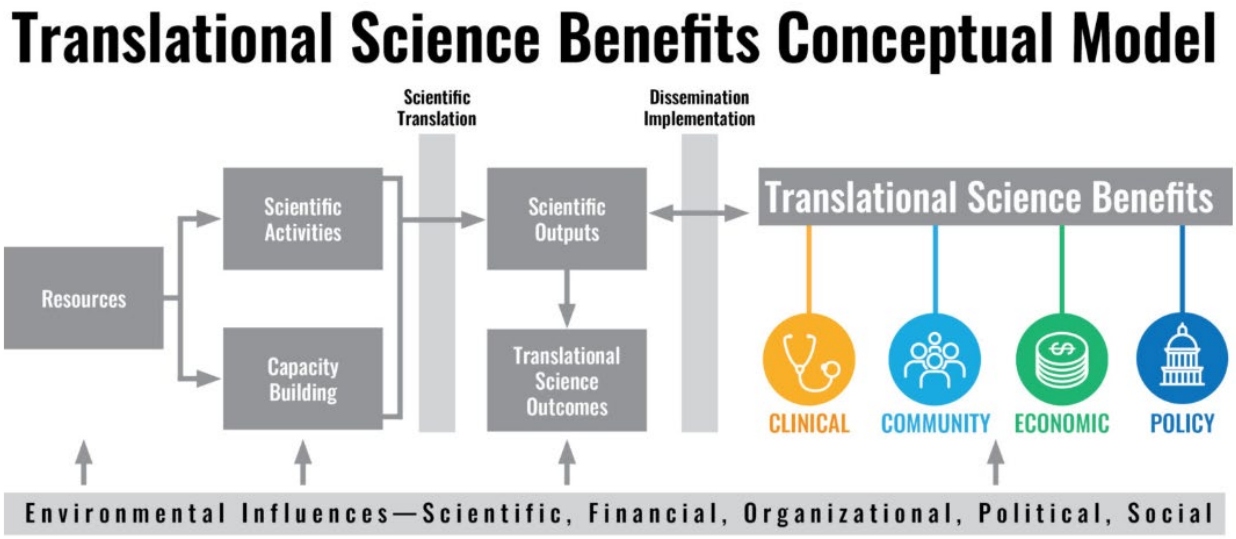
4. Specific Aims (one page maximum): Describe the specific aims of the proposal, how the aims relate to each other and the expected outcomes, the research design and methods and how the complementary expertise of the applicants contributes to these aims.

5. Research Plan: The Research Plan narrative **should not exceed 5 pages** and should be structured in accordance with the following format:

A. Objectives of the current proposal: State the overall objective or goal of the proposed research.

B. Describe the translational science barrier and how your project will address it

C. Significance and Innovation: What is the potential importance of the proposed project? What is its potential impact on human health and/or how may it be translated to impact human health concerns in the future? Discuss any novel ideas or contributions that the proposal offers.



This diagram provides another way of looking at the process of translational science. *Resources* flow into *Scientific Activities* and *Capacity Building*, which lead to *Scientific Outputs* and *Translational Science Outcomes*, which lead to **Translational Science Benefits**. All steps are impacted by *Scientific, Financial, Organizational, Political, and Social Environmental Influences.*

D. **<u>Approach:</u>** Discuss the approach and rationale behind the chosen approach to the problem. The purpose of the approach section is to describe how the research will be carried out. This section is crucial to how favorably an application is reviewed. The research design and methods section should include the following:

- PI's preliminary studies, data, and experience relevant to the application and the experimental design;
- the overview of the experimental design;
- a description of methods and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project;
- a discussion of potential difficulties and limitations and how these will be overcome or mitigated;
- expected results, and alternative approaches that will be used if unexpected results are found;
- a projected sequence or timetable (work plan);
- if the project is in the early stages of development, describe any strategy to establish feasibility, and address the management of any high risk aspects of the proposed work;
- a detailed discussion of the way in which the results will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted;
- a description of any new methodology used and why it represents an improvement over the existing ones

E. **<u>Project timeline:</u>** The following (or similar) table should be completed and inserted at the end of the research plan.

Tasks	Months			
	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12
Task 1 – enter description and mark appropriate period(s)	X			
Task 2 – enter description and mark appropriate period(s)		X		
Task 3 – enter description and mark appropriate period(s)			X	
Complete Requisite Progress Report				X

6. References Cited

7. Protection of Human Subjects; Vertebrate Animals Section; and/or Recombinant DNA: The appropriate details, where applicable, must be addressed. Please see page 8 below for instructions.

8. Biosketch: Biographical sketch (5-page maximum) of the principal investigators and co-investigator/collaborator in the SciENcv format.

9. Other support for the principal investigator and each co-investigator / collaborator: Include detail on any overlap that this proposal has with active or pending awards. This information should be provided in SciENcv format.

10. Supporting documentation: If this is a resubmission, include a one-page response to the reviewers' comments and include the review documents.

The Indiana CTSI offers a resource that can help strengthen submissions by providing valuable feedback and critiques.

To engage with this resource, please contact your campus Navigator below to discuss meeting with one of the Project Development Teams (PDTs):

Bloomington:	Joel Ybe jybe@iu.edu
Indianapolis:	Tammy Sajdyk tsajdyk@iu.edu
Notre Dame:	Prakash Nallathamby Prakash.D.Nallathamby.1@nd.edu
Purdue:	Natasha Nikolaidis nnikolai@purdue.edu
Evansville:	Kara Garcia karagarc@iu.edu
Terre Haute:	Ellen Ireland eireland@iu.edu
Regenstrief:	Jennifer Gatz jenngatz@regenstrief.org

For financial questions related to budgeting and grant submissions, please contact:

- IU / Regenstrief**:** Indiana CTSI Office (trnsldev@iu.edu)
- Purdue**:** Michelle L Roskuski (mroskusk@purdue.edu)
- Notre Dame: NDp3

REVIEW, AWARD SELECTION & FUNDING TIMELINE

The CTS pilot grant mechanism is intended to foster translational science projects or novel intellectual property (IP). Requests for funds will be critiqued on the following items (**See also review form on website**):

- The strength of the research.
- The potential translational nature of the project as it relates to translational science.
- The strength of how well it can be disseminated or implemented.
- The potential for publication describing implementation.
- How well the application addressed the expectations outlined in the RFA.

Applications will be subject to a 2-stage selection process.

Stage 1: The initial review will be completed by a joint committee with peer representatives from the six sponsoring affiliates on **October 23, 2026.**

Stage 2: Finalists will be selected by the joint committee and invited to give an oral presentation to the Indiana CTSI CTS Review Committee on **November 13, 2026.**

NOTE: ALL APPLICANTS NEED TO HOLD THIS DATE - 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM EST

The Indiana CTSI Review Committee will evaluate the strength and potential of the proposed project and will review and discuss with the investigators the milestones and timelines of the project. The results / comments will be collated, and recommendations forwarded to the Indiana CTSI Strategy Committee for final funding decisions.

NCATS Prior Approval: Recommendations for the number, size and scope of the CTS awards will be determined by the Indiana CTSI Strategy Committee in **December 2026**. NCATS Prior Approval must be obtained per NIH guidelines before engaging in the proposed research.

PIs with projects recommended for funding will be notified in December 2026 and will be asked to have all regulatory documents (IACUC/IRB Approval) available by January 2027 for submission to NCATS. Contact Rachel Bennett (racbenne@iu.edu) with questions related to regulatory submissions and the NCATS Prior Approval process.

Projects should therefore have a start date no earlier than **May 1, 2027.**

Timeline

First Review Date:	October 23, 2026
Second Review Date:	November 13, 2026
Funding Notices Out:	Late November 2026
Regulatory Documents Should be Completed:	January 2027
NCATS Prior Approval Process:	January – April 2027
Funding Begins:	May 1, 2027

CTS POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS

1. The CTS Pilot Grant Award is considered federal funding and NIH funding should be indicated in regulatory submissions to the IACUC and IRB.
2. All awards will be monitored for progress by the Indiana CTSI and NIH NCATS as required by the CTSA Annual Progress Report and NIH Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR). Progress monitoring generally includes the following from all project PIs and, when appropriate, may be developed in consultation with Indiana CTSI Administration:
   a. Progress reports while the project is active that will be submitted to NCATS.
   b. A close out report and four annual follow-up reports after the project ends
3. It is expected that this pilot funding will lead to publications generally reported on the annual progress reports.
4. Grant recipients are required to acknowledge receipt of Indiana CTSI support in any presentation or publication of work funded by a CTS award as follows:
   This [(publication was made possible) (project was supported)] by the Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute, funded in part by grant # UM1TR004402 *from the National Institutes of Health, National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, Clinical and Translational Science Award. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.*
5. Grant recipients are strongly encouraged to participate as reviewers for any Indiana CTSI internal grants in the future.

Detailed Requirements for Protection of Human Subjects and/or Live Vertebrate Animals

Protection of Human Subjects

Be sure to include all required content for each section as described in the NIH Application Guide:

https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-i/general/g.500-phs-human-subjects-and-clinical-trials-information.htm#3.1

1. *Risks to Human Subjects*
   a. Human Subjects Involvement, Characteristics, and Design
   b. Study Procedures, Materials, and Potential Risks

2. *Adequacy of Protection Against Risks*
   a. Informed Consent and Assent
   b. Protections Against Risk
   c. Populations that are vulnerable to coercion or undue influence and pregnant women, fetuses and neonates, if relevant to your study

3. *Potential Benefits of the Proposed Research to Research Participants and Others*

4. *Importance of the Knowledge to be Gained*

Vertebrate Animals Section

A helpful tool to aid in completion of the VAS is this NIH Worksheet and Checklist: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/vaschecklist.pdf

1. *Description of Procedures*. Provide a concise description of the proposed procedures to be used that involve live vertebrate animals in the work outlined in the "Research Strategy" section. Identify the species, strains, ages, sex, and total numbers of animals by species, to be used in the proposed work. If dogs or cats are proposed, provide the source of the animals.

2. *Justifications*: Provide justification that the species are appropriate for the proposed research. Explain why the research goals cannot be accomplished using an alternative model (e.g. computational, human, invertebrate, in vitro).

3. *Minimization of Pain and Distress*: Describe the interventions including analgesia, anesthesia, sedation, palliative care, and humane endpoints to minimize discomfort, distress, pain, and injury.

4. *Method of Euthanasia*: State whether the method of euthanasia is consistent with the recommendations of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals. If not, describe the method and provide a scientific justification.