



Request for Applications

2024 Indiana CTSI Postdoc Challenge Grant Funding to Use CTSI Designated Core Facilities

A JOINT INITIATIVE BETWEEN INDIANA UNIVERSITY

AND PURDUE UNIVERSITY

AND

THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

ELECTRONIC RECEIPT DATE: February 28, 2024

Please note that you will be submitting through the Indiana CTSI's grants management software WebCAMP. Please allow enough time to be familiar with a new system.

The WebCAMP user's guide is also available under the funding announcement here:
<https://indianactsi.org/researchers/services-tools/translational-research-development/open-funding-opportunities/>

RFA questions please contact Tommy Sors at tsors@purdue.edu

WebCAMP questions please contact Julie Driscoll at [judrisco@iu.edu](mailto:jdrisco@iu.edu)

GENERAL:

The Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute (CTSI) is soliciting proposals from postdoctoral fellows, assistant scientists, assistant scholars, staff scientists, research scientists, and research engineers (see eligibility criteria below) to develop translational research through the use of technologies and expertise available at the Indiana CTSI-designated core facilities available at all partner institutions. Translational research refers to research in the lab that eventually translates into patient treatment to improve human healthcare. Translation involves applying discoveries made during research (in the lab, through animal studies, etc.) to the development of clinical trials and studies in humans.

CTSI-designated Core Facilities

CTSI-designated core facilities are cores that undergo a yearly accreditation process through the Indiana CTSI for all partner institutions found here: www.indianactsi.org/servicecores.

The Postdoc Challenge Experience

The Postdoc Challenge offers eligible investigators at Indiana University, Indiana University School of Medicine, IUPUI, Purdue University, and the University of Notre Dame valuable proposal writing and reviewing experience in areas related to translational research through the use of one or more of the CTSI-designated core facilities at any of the partner universities. This is a competitive opportunity for a **\$5,000 award** in the form of an expense account for use of core facility services. Funding is to be used only for services provided by the Indiana CTSI-designated core facilities listed on the CTSI website.

Workshop Participation and Reviewer Experience

To enhance the learning experience and success in the challenge, we highly encourage all applicants to attend all scheduled workshops and actively participate as reviewers. This engagement is crucial, as it provides a comprehensive understanding of the grant writing and review process, in line with NIH peer review guidelines. To attend these workshops, registration through the Qualtrics link https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_01WMuhATStqqQOW is required. Participants who fully engage in the workshops, contribute to the proposal writing process, and serve as reviewers will receive personalized letters of support from the Program Officer, acknowledging their comprehensive involvement and dedication to the program. These letters will serve as a testament to their commitment and skill, providing a valuable endorsement for their future academic and professional endeavors.

Eligibility and Advisor Consultation

If you are interested in participating in this challenge, you must discuss your proposal with your advisor prior to beginning the application process to ensure your participation will be approved. The duration of the project is one year, and investigators who are not planning on remaining in their postdoctoral positions for their proposed project period should not apply to this competition.

Proposals are due by **Wednesday, February 28, 2024** and are to be submitted in a single PDF file using the **Start a Submission** link found here: [Postdoc Challenge Link](#)

WHO MAY APPLY:

IU / IUB / IUPUI / IUSM: Postdoctoral Research Associates as well as exempt staff in Assistant Scientist or Assistant Scholar positions

University of Notre Dame: Postdoctoral Research Associates as well as exempt staff in Staff Scientist, Research Scientist, Research Engineer, or similar positions

Purdue (West Lafayette campus only): Postdoctoral Research Associates as well as exempt staff in Research Scientist positions.

RESTRICTIONS:

1. Awarded funds will be “deposited” with the specified CTSI core and can only be used for core services. Expenses other than for core services are not allowable.
2. One proposal per applicant.
3. Awarded funds are non-transferrable.
4. The duration of the project is one year and investigators who are not planning to remain in their postdoctoral positions for their proposed project period should not apply.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES:

1. Application forms may be obtained online at [2024 Postdoc Challenge Link](#)
2. You must discuss your proposal with your advisor prior to beginning the application process to ensure your participation will be approved.
3. Funding is for utilization of designated CTSI core facilities only. Information describing each eligible core is available at www.indianactsi.org/servicecores.
4. There is a **maximum \$5,000 limit** per proposal and funding may only be used for services provided by the core. If more than one core service is requested, the budget and justification must clearly indicate how much will be spent per core.
5. The three-page “Research Plan” section should include a Statement of Interest, the translational strategy of the project, and how the chosen core facility fits into this strategy. A project timeline, milestones for success and a budget that aligns with the strategy should also be included in this section.
6. If your proposal is a resubmission of a previously reviewed Postdoc Challenge application, it is permissible, and requested to include an additional half-page describing how your current application addresses reviewer concerns.
7. The biosketch must be provided in the newest published NIH format. grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm
8. Your **advisor** must provide you with a letter of support which must include a brief synopsis of the project, how the project will enhance the career objectives of the applicant and how the project supports the PI’s overall effort with the postdoctoral researcher.
9. The **Core Facility Director** must provide you with a letter of support which must concur with the suitability of the use of the Core and the cost involved. It is strongly recommended that you contact the Core Director one month before the submission deadline to give the Director time to prepare the letter.
10. **Proposals are due by Wednesday, February 28, 2024** and are to be submitted online via the “**Start a Submission**” link found here: [2024 Postdoc Challenge Link](#)

APPLICATIONS SHOULD FOLLOW THIS SEQUENCE (*application materials should be combined and uploaded as single pdf file*)

Page 1 **Face Page:** Specify the title of the proposal, applicant’s name and his/her institutional affiliation, the mentor / advisor’s name, and the CTSI core facility to be utilized.

Page 2 **Project Summary:** This should be a brief (3 sentence) abstract in layman’s terms.
Project Abstract: This should be a brief scientific abstract about the project. Proprietary information should not be included in the summary.

- Pages 3-5 **Research Plan** (3-page limit, Arial 11 font, single-spaced, 0.5" margins).
Include the following:
- Statement of interest
 - Translational strategy and how the core facility fits into this strategy
 - Project timeline
 - Milestones of success
 - Budget and how it aligns with your strategy
- Page 6 **Budget and justification** stating how funds will be used for each Core Facility
- Page 7* **Resubmission Statement:** If this project is a resubmission of a previously submitted Postdoc Challenge proposal, you are permitted an additional half-page to describe how the current proposal specifically addresses the previous reviewers' comments.
- Page 8* **References**
- Page 9* **Letter of Support – Advisor / Mentor** (1-page limit)
- Brief synopsis of the project
 - How the project will enhance the career objectives of the applicant
 - How the project supports the PI's overall effort with this applicant
- Page 10* **Letter of Support – Core Facility Director(s)** (1-page limit)
- Brief synopsis of the project
 - How this project will use the stated Core facility
 - Budget is appropriate
- Page 11+* **NIH Biosketch**

**Pagination will vary based upon inclusion of resubmission comments, and/or references list and biosketch length.*

INFORMATIONAL WORKSHOPS:

Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend all of the **virtual on MS Teams** informational workshops offered on the following dates:

- Thursday, November 30, 2023: 2:00-3:00pm
"Decoding the Research Funding Ecosystem: A Comprehensive Guide to NIH Funding"
- Thursday, December 7, 2023: 2:00-3:00pm
"Strategies for Discovering Funded Research and Uncovering New Funding Opportunities"
- Thursday, December 14, 2023: 2:00-3:00pm
"Fundamentals of Effective Grant Writing"
- Tuesday, January 9, 2024: 10:00-11:00am
"Successful Grant Writing Strategies"
- Tuesday, January 16, 2024: 10:00-11:00am
"The Specific Aims Page"
- Tuesday, January 30, 2024: 10-11:00am
"Significance, Innovation, Approach and Environment"

7. Tuesday, February 6, 2024: 10:00-11:00am
"The NIH Review Process"
8. Tuesday, February 13, 2024: 10:00-11:00am
"Q & A"

The workshops will cover essential modules aimed to improve participants' understanding of the grant writing and review process. By registering, you'll gain exclusive access to our live sessions, receive personalized links to each workshop, and enjoy the flexibility of revisiting the content through our workshop recordings at your convenience. Secure your spot by signing up through the Qualtrics link: https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_01WMuhATStggQOW. **Upon registration, you will receive an email from Robin Benson (benson75@purdue.edu) providing you with the links to the virtual workshops on MS Teams.**

POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER REVIEWERS:

We are seeking volunteers to serve as reviewers for the Postdoc Challenge. Your participation will provide essential feedback to improve research proposals and offer you valuable experience in the peer review process, a vital skill in scientific research. Join us to make a significant impact while honing your own expertise. If you would like to participate as a proposal reviewer, please complete this [Qualtrics Survey](#). Applicants may also participate as proposal reviewers.

REVIEW PROCESS:

Applications will be reviewed and ranked by a group comprised of selected faculty and members of the postdoctoral community. The final selection and funding recommendations will be made by the Indiana CTSI Strategy Committee. Awardees will be announced in April 2024.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR AWARDEES:

All awardees must agree to comply with CTSI internal award funding reporting requirements as described below.

1. You will be expected to provide annual progress reports to document progress toward your milestones as long as the project is active. These updates are intended to assist you in resolving any obstacles that are impeding your research.
2. You will also be contacted for annual follow up to determine any grants, publications, and / or IP that was generated from this project to assist us in reporting to NIH on the success of our pilot funding program.
3. By accepting this award, grant recipients agree to have their name and project title posted on the Indiana CTSI and/or partner university's websites.
4. By accepting this award recipients agree to notify Tommy Sors at tsors@purdue.edu in writing if leaving the university prior to the conclusion of the project.
5. Grant recipients are required to acknowledge receipt of Indiana CTSI support in any presentation or publication of work funded by the Postdoc Challenge as follows:

"This [(publication was made possible) (project was supported), or (project was funded)], in part, with support from the Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute funded, in part by Award Number UM1TR004402 from the National Institutes of Health, National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, Clinical and Translational Sciences Award. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health."

PRIVACY STATEMENT:

The email addresses entered in this site will be used exclusively for CTSI purposes, they will not

be made available to any other party for any other purpose.

The files and data submitted to this competition may be used to fulfill federal CTSI reporting requirements/metrics tracking. In addition, proposals will be shared with scientific peer reviewers and appropriate CTSI administrative representatives. The CTSI representative(s) is responsible for managing the peer review process and tracking progress on funded projects.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Contact Name: Tommy Sors tsors@purdue.edu