

BETRNet PILOT PROJECT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Overall Objectives are:

- 1.) To encourage innovative transdisciplinary and translational research, especially high risk/high impact research.
- 2.) To explore emerging opportunities and to enhance productivity of the research projects in the Barrett's Esophagus Translational Research Network (BETRNet)
- 3.) To attract new researchers, resources and technologies to conduct translational research on BE and EAC.

Specific Aims include the following:

- 1.) To award pilot projects to enhance and extend the research goals and improve utilization of resources generated by the BETRNet primary projects.
- 2.) To encourage innovative transdisciplinary approaches to increase understanding and develop intervention strategies focused on improving outcomes in patients with BE and EAC.
- 3.) To obtain preliminary data to enable generation of proposals to successfully compete for funding at the national level.
- 4.) To encourage cross institutional collaboration among BETRNet participating institutions.

Governing Policies for BETRNet Pilot Projects

- Pilot Projects, up to \$50,000 direct will be awarded for one year, with possibility of second year of funding based on success of program.
- Pilot Projects must have a transdisciplinary approach and translational research plan focused on BE and/or EAC in one of the focus areas defined by BETRNet.
- Pilot Projects should have at least one investigator and another collaborator from a different discipline to encourage interdisciplinary-transdisciplinary research. To accommodate submission of projects from investigators who may not be familiar with complementary investigators, pilot projects may be submitted by individual investigators representing either basic or clinical science, however if the project is identified as meritorious and selected for funding, then the Steering Committee will seek to identify potential collaborators in alternative disciplines, basic or clinical, one of which should be identified as co-investigator before funding will be awarded.
- Investigators anticipating developing a Cross Center Project should submit a one page concept sheet to PI's at each potentially involved site to determine availability of resources and potential interest and to obtain an agreement from the respective PI's that the proposal will be supported at each site pending project review and priority scores.

Cross BETRNet Pilot Projects

Cross Center Projects are regarded as special opportunities to advance research questions, which could not be investigated at an individual institution alone. These opportunities usually have one or more of the advantages listed below and the value of these opportunities will be an important consideration in evaluating proposals for funding as cross center projects.

- 1.) Increased sample size with samples obtained from multiple centers. Samples could be people, specimens, animals, etc. The BETRNet will be particularly advantaged in collaborating with other BETRNet Centers in that familial Barretts' esophagus kindreds identified at other BETRNet Centers will help increase our ability to accrue rare kindreds with multiple affected members.

2.) Access complementary skills, resources and/or expertise at different centers to conduct collaborative synergistic studies. For example, Dr. Chak and other members of the BETRNet are currently engaged in chemoprevention research with Dr. Navtej Buttar at the Mayo Clinic. Dr. Buttar is able to assay prostaglandins in biopsies from BE.

3.) A third opportunity for Cross Center Projects will occur naturally in instances when investigators who are part of our BETRNet interact with colleagues at their own institution who are part of a different BERTNet but have a different focus than ours.

Pilot Project Eligibility

All faculty with an appointment at the Assistant Professor level or higher at institutions participating in BETRNet are eligible to apply for pilot project funding. These include **CWRU, U.Penn, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Johns Hopkins, University North Carolina, Washington Univ., Mayo Clinic**. This includes faculty at all schools of the universities and/or affiliated healthcare centers. Investigators at the instructor level will be considered eligible, if applications are accompanied by letters of support from department chairs indicating commitment to faculty positions at the Assistant Professor level by the time scheduled for pilot project initiation. All applications require a letter of support from their department heads, and in addition, cross center proposals require letters of support from each of the local BETRNet Site Principal Investigators to ensure willingness to cooperate and that each of the investigators have sufficient protected research time and facilities to conduct the proposed research. Pilot Projects may be collaborative with investigators from other BETRNet institutions.

Project Application

Development

Pilot Project Applications must conform to the following guidelines:

- 1.) Cover page listing contact information for PI and faculty collaborators.
- 2.) Proposal (5 pages) in length (excluding references) as follows:
 - Specific aims (1 page)
 - Background and significance (1-2 pages)
 - Experimental Design (2-3 pages)
- 3.) NIH biosketches for all faculty participants.
- 4.) Detailed budget in web grant format.

Pilot Project Allowable Costs

Allowable costs for TRC-F pilot projects are outlined below:

- \$50,000 maximum direct costs per year
- Research supplies
- Equipment less than \$5,000
- Salary support for post doctoral or technical personnel
- No faculty salary support, travel, journal subscriptions, or society memberships are allowed. no funds for renovations.
- No indirect costs transferred to department or other schools outside of CWRU School of Medicine or other institutions.

These cost plans will be applied to both within center and cross center BETRNet Pilot projects. Final administration of Cross BETRNet projects will be determined by BETRNet steering committee.

Expectation of Funded Projects

- Establishment of co-investigators or collaborators to promote transdisciplinary collaboration and overall translational outcome
- Expectation of prompt IRB and IACUC application and approval
- Prompt initiation of research project
- Quarterly operational status reports to BETRNet Steering Committee
- Annual written progress reports
- Annual presentation at BETRNet Symposia
- Annual follow-up progress reports of research developments, presentations, publications and progress toward achieving translational goals and independent funding
- Use of BETRNet and Cancer Center Core Facilities where appropriate
- Review of Data by BETRNet Bioinformatics Core before presentation or publication
- Acknowledge support by Cancer Center and TRC-F in all publications and presentations
- Presentations at BETRNet Meetings
- Compliance with BETRNet Data Sharing and Publication Policies

Pilot Projects and Cross BETRNet Projects Will Be Monitored At Multiple Levels

- Quarterly Operational Progress Reports
- Semiannual Research Progress Reports presented at BETRNet Seminars
- Annual Written Scientific Reports at end
- BETRNet Steering Committee and Advisory Board will monitor research progress and where appropriate, assist with conversion to independent research grant application.