

## Nebraska Center for Integrated Studies of Biomolecular Communication (NCIBC)



### REQUEST FOR NEW PROJECT APPLICATIONS DUE December 14, 2018

#### **Overview:**

NCIBC (<http://ncibc.unl.edu/>) seeks to fund several new project Leaders for Seed Projects (up to \$25K direct costs), Pilot Projects (up to \$50K) and/or full ESI funding (up to \$135K) in the center's focus areas as broadly defined below. Funding is available through July 31, 2019 with the possibility of renewal through July 2020.

Diseases result when the internal stability and normal communications between tissues and cellular pathways are disrupted by genetic defects, environmental disturbances, or pathogens. NCIBC is funded by a Center for Biomedical Research Excellence grant (P20GM113126) from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) to build institutional capacity and infrastructure for basic biomedical research. NCIBC is designed to be a natural mixing chamber to integrate the research activities of chemists, biochemists, engineers, and bioinformaticists to address critical knowledge gaps in our understanding of how cells communicate and to mechanistically define metabolic and regulatory pathways relevant to disease development and progression. NCIBC's **long-term goal** is to foster the development of collaborative research teams with broad disciplinary representation to interrogate complex disease pathways, especially by connecting researchers who are developing new molecular probes and analytical and informatics technologies with those unravelling molecular mechanisms of complex diseases.

#### **Eligibility:**

- Individuals must qualify as an "Early Stage New Investigator" <sup>1</sup> according to NIH guidelines, have a full-time tenure-leading appointment at UNL or UNMC, and not currently be supported by another CoBRE Center.
- The proposed research must fall into the areas of NCIBC focus as listed above with preference given to projects that will make use of the NCIBC Systems Biology Core and/or Data Management and Analysis Core facilities and to collaborative projects involving current NCIBC members. See the website for summaries of currently supported projects.
- NCIBC Project Leaders must become participating members of the center.

#### **Application Process:**

- Applications must follow the format and use the forms for the NIH R21 funding mechanism and include: project summary/abstract, project narrative, specific aims (one page), six-page research plan, references, NIH biosketch, budget, budget justification, facilities and equipment. All NIH R21 proposal preparation guidelines apply. Plans for collaboration within

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<sup>1</sup> NIH **Definition of Early Stage New Investigator:** A Program Director/Principal Investigator who qualifies as a New Investigator is considered an Early Stage Investigator (ESI) if he/she is within 10 years of completing his/her terminal research degree or is within 10 years of completing medical residency (or the equivalent) and has not previously competed successfully for an NIH- or NSF-supported research project other than early stage or small research grants or for training, infrastructure, and career awards. See also: [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/new\\_investigators/investigator\\_policies\\_faqs.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/new_investigators/investigator_policies_faqs.htm).

NCIBC and use of the NCIBC research core facilities should be included in the body of the research plan. A statement on the status of IRB, IACUC and biosafety/biohazard approvals must be included. Renovation/alteration expenses and indirect (F&A) costs are not allowed.

- The types of projects allowed include:
  - Seed Funding – these are projects that require funds to facilitate the development and refinement of specific aims and project goals leading to internal or external funding applications. The total budget is limited to \$25,000 in direct costs.
  - Pilot Funding – these projects require support to acquire strategically targeted preliminary data leading to an application for external funding at the NIH R21 or R01 levels. The total budget should not exceed \$50,000 in direct costs.
  - Full ECI Project – these projects are defined by well-conceived specific aims and require support for two years leading to external funding by NIH using R01, R35 (MIRA) or Director’s New Innovator Award mechanisms. The total budget should not exceed \$135,000 in direct costs per year.
- ***Applicant should submit a brief letter of intent via email to the NCIBC co-directors by noon on November 30, 2018 describing the research topic and the type of project funding sought. Complete applications should be submitted in PDF format to [unlresearch@unl.edu](mailto:unlresearch@unl.edu) by noon on December 14, 2018.*** Include the text “NCIBC – Project” in the subject line of the email.

#### **Application Review:**

Proposals will be reviewed by the Center Co-Directors and members of the Internal Mentoring and Advisory Committee (IMAC) using standard NIH review criteria. Top-ranked proposals will be forwarded to the NCIBC External Advisory Committee members for recommendations prior to submission to NIH for final approval. Anticipated Award Date: January 15, 2019.

#### **Questions concerning this RFA or the application process, contact:**

- James Takacs, Charles J Mach University Professor of Chemistry: [jtakacs1@unl.edu](mailto:jtakacs1@unl.edu)
- Concetta C. DiRusso, George Holmes University Professor of Biochemistry: [cdirusso2@unl.edu](mailto:cdirusso2@unl.edu)