

CVRE Investigator Award Program (v.2.1; 9/10/2019)

The primary objective of the CVRE **Investigator Award Program** is to enhance the research productivity of MVAHCS investigators. Funding through this program is intended for well-defined needs including but not limited to:

- Pilot studies
- Equipment and supplies
- Training
- Grant writing assistance
- External grant reviews
- Travel or publication expenses (*for research career development track or active investigators only*)

Note: Bridge funding is not available through this program.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility is limited to VA staff (MD, DO, PhD or equivalent with $\geq 5/8$ paid VA appointment) with a faculty appointment at the University at any level. To be eligible, investigators must have an actual or a 6-month projected zero balance in their CVRE residual fund account(s).

Only **active investigators** and **investigators on a research career development track** are eligible for travel funds or publication expenses.

- **Active investigator** status is defined as one or more of the following within the past 2 years: PI on funded research; applied for research funding as PI through either CVRE, University of Minnesota or the VA; or published research-related papers in peer reviewed journals
- **Research career development track** is defined as having a formal mentoring plan, protected time for research activities, and a current faculty appointment at the University, as detailed in a letter from the applicant's supervisor or PSL director

Any questions about eligibility should be directed to the ACOS or deputy ACOS, prior to applying.

APPLICATION for PILOT Studies

Pilot study applications are only accepted:

- From people on a research career development track or
- When external grant reviews request/suggest pilot data before resubmission

Pilot studies are funded for 1 year only with a budget not to exceed \$10,000

Any exceptions must be pre-approved by the ACOS/Research or the deputy ACOS/research.

The application consists of 4 components:

1. **Cover Form** see attached
2. **Narrative** in the following format. *Not to exceed 1 page with font size 11 or larger and 1-inch margins.*
 - a. Purpose including relevance to Veterans and/or VA (*only one or two sentences*)
 - b. Hypotheses/Specific Aims
 - c. Work Plan and Methods
 - d. Feasibility of completing the work within 12 months, including discussion of anticipated barriers
 - e. Anticipated Next Steps: Be very specific, e.g. resubmission to VA CSR&D in March 2020.
 - f. Key Personnel

3. Budget and Budget Justification (1 page)

- Budgets are for 1 year only
- Present your budget in table format with expenses listed by category:
Personnel | Equipment and Supplies | Travel (*must not exceed \$1500, including conference registration fees*)
- Budget Justification
 - For personnel include the employee's name, salary, % time, and duration of employment
 - Explain the specific purpose of any requested equipment/supplies/ travel

4. Attachments (*Please DO NOT ATTACH additional documents aside from those listed below; they will not be reviewed. If the RAP wants more information, we will contact you*)

- Grant Reviews (*not required for research career development track investigators*) Please highlight the relevant reviewer comments that the pilot study is designed to address. **We strongly encourage you to talk to the relevant scientific program manager about your grant review.**
- Specific Aims Page from the original grant(*not required for career development track investigators*)
- Your CV
- Support letter if you are on a research career development track, signed by your section chief or PSL director. The letter should describe your mentoring plan, the amount of protected time you have for research activities, and your current faculty appointment at the University.

APPLICATIONS for OTHER PURPOSES (i.e not pilot studies)

This includes requests for equipment, supplies, training, grant-writing assistance, external grant reviews, travel or publication expenses. Eligibility requirements are as noted above. The application consists of 2 components:

1. Email with

- a. A description of what you want to purchase
- b. An attestation of your eligibility (see above) and
- c. An explanation as to how the item or service will contribute to your research productivity. Please be specific (e.g. the grant writing assistance is for my spring 2020 submission to VA CSR&D)

2. Supporting Documentation see examples in table below

Type of Request	Examples of Supporting Documentation
Data / Statistical Analysis	Letter from journal requesting analyses for resubmit
Equipment, supplies, etc for funded project	Request for additional support from funding agency (that was denied or only partially supported)
Training	Letter from supervisor confirming support
Assistance with grant editing/writing	Draft grant proposal or specific aims page
External Grant reviews	Draft grant proposal
Travel or publication expenses	Letter of acceptance for publication or presentation

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Applications are accepted at any time and should be sent via email to the ACOS/R or the deputy ACOS/R. For pilot study applications, combine the cover form, narrative, and budget page into one 3-page PDF. Submit the attachments as individual files.

APPLICATION REVIEW

After administrative review, proposals will be considered by the Research Advisory Panel (RAP) or its designee(s). Applicants may be asked to present a brief synopsis of their request in person to the RAP.

Review criteria:

- Eligibility including
 - balance in residual fund accounts projected to be zero within 6 months
 - active investigator status or career development track for travel or publication expense requests
- Investigator status (e.g. history of productivity, impact, timeliness, responsiveness, compliance)
- Outcome importance (e.g. a publication in a high impact journal will be given more consideration than a low impact journal; a federally funded grant will be given more consideration than state or foundation funding)
- Likelihood that the award will lead to the stated outcome (e.g. funded grant, publication)
- Past CVRE funding through this program
 - Generally, investigators are eligible for only one travel award every 2 years
- Research career development status (e.g. NA, well positioned, not well positioned)
- For pilot fund requests, priority will be given to proposals that are responsive to grant reviews

TERMS OF SUPPORT

If funds are requested to support a research project, the study must be approved by the Research and Development Committee and, if applicable, appropriate Subcommittee(s). An application will be accepted if approval is pending, but funds will not be released until approval is confirmed.

Award amounts are determined by the Research Advisory Panel and administered by CVRE. Award titles and \$ amount will be made publicly available on the CVRE website. Funding from CVRE must be acknowledged in all related publications.

Funds must be used according to the approved budget and are subject to all CVRE policies and procedures. These funds are not subject to overhead fees and must be used within 12 months of the release date. Unused funds revert to CVRE.

A final report must be submitted to the Research Advisory Panel as soon as the work or travel or purchase is completed and no later than 15 months after the date the award was granted. This report should be no longer than 1/2 page and include a summary of work accomplished and benefits accrued (see table below).

Type of Support	Examples of outcomes to include in Final Report
Pilot Data Acquisition, including study coordinator time	Results of pilot study; status of resulting manuscripts or grant proposals
Data Analysis	Status of the relevant grant or manuscript
Equipment, supplies, etc for funded project	Project status
Training	Indication of how training is being used
Assistance with grant editing/writing	Grant status
External Grant reviews	Grant status
Travel or publication expenses	Connections made, awards won, other recognition