



## **Request for Applications: Pilot Projects**

**Submission Deadline: May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026**

### **Background**

The objective of the Center for Molecular Interactions in Cancer (CMIC) is to use structural biology and quantitative biophysical approaches to conduct research aimed at understanding the molecular features of cancer, including initiation, progression, and treatment. The CMIC is funded through the NIGMS Centers for Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) award mechanism, which exists as part of the congressionally mandated Institutional Development Award (IDeA) program. This COBRE has funding available to support pilot projects for junior or mid-career faculty who would like to perform research that aligns with the scientific theme of the CMIC. For more information about the COBRE, please go to <https://medicine.uams.edu/cmhc/> or contact the Principal Investigator, Robert L. Eoff, PhD ([rleoff@uams.edu](mailto:rleoff@uams.edu)) or the Research Program Manager, Veronica Overton ([VLOverton@uams.edu](mailto:VLOverton@uams.edu)).

### **Description of the Pilot Project Program**

The CMIC Pilot Project Program provides up to \$75,000 in direct costs for 1-year of support of basic or translational research projects that match the focus of the center. Two awards will be made annually. Funded pilot investigators will have access to the two CMIC Research Core facilities free of charge. Applicants are encouraged to take advantage of expertise available within other existing COBRE project teams and interact/collaborate with them. Funded COBRE pilot investigators will be required to participate in local, regional, and national COBRE and IDeA meetings, to give periodic progress reports when requested, and to submit a comprehensive final written report detailing studies performed and the findings.

### **Eligibility**

1. The research project should be strongly focused on investigating molecular features of pathways or processes impacting cancer biology or therapy. Projects that plan to use the CMIC Research Cores (Structural Biology Core and Biomolecular Interactions Core) will be given priority. Basic science and translational projects are given equal priority. Projects must have clearly defined goals and outcomes to be competitive.
2. The applicant must have a PhD, MD, or equivalent degree.
3. Preference will be given to applicants who are early stage investigators in tenure track, with strong evidence of institutional support (designation of lab space, start-up funds, etc.), followed by young investigators with a clear path to obtaining an independent research position and mid-career faculty who are seeking a new direction for their research program.
4. It is important that applications indicate a clear path for subsequent extra-mural grant proposals for independent funding.

Applicants are highly encouraged to contact Robert Eoff ([rleoff@uams.edu](mailto:rleoff@uams.edu)) to discuss eligibility and fit of the proposed research for the theme of the CMIC.

## Application format

The application should include the following forms:

Form	Page Limit
NIH PHS 398 form – Face Page ( <a href="https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/fp1.pdf">https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/fp1.pdf</a> )	1 page
Project Summary	1 page
Specific Aims	1 page
Research Strategy	Up to 6 pages
NIH Biosketch for the PI and each of the key personnel (please use latest NIH biosketch (Non-Fellowship) format: <a href="https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm">https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm</a> )	5 pages each
Budget Justification	No limit
Vertebrate Animals (if applicable)	No limit
Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information (if applicable)	No limit

The **Research Strategy** should include a clear description of the major research objectives, methods used in the project, the expected results, and how successful completion will help the mission of the CMIC. A statement of plans for statistical analysis is required. The Research Strategy should include a statement of the relevance of the application to the focus of the CMIC. A brief description of the applicant’s plan to obtain funding from data generated by the pilot award should be included.

**Animal Studies:** Institutional assurances (including review and approval by the UAMS IACUC) must be in place prior to funding if your project is selected. If animal studies are proposed, please be sure to include a completed NIH section “Vertebrate Animals” in the application (not subject to page limits).

**Clinical Research:** Institutional assurances (including review and approval by the UAMS IRB) must be in place prior to funding if your project is selected. If the use of human samples is proposed, please be sure to include a completed NIH section “Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information” in the application (not subject to page limits).

### Budget

There is a maximum of \$75,000 in direct costs available for each project.

Travel costs are only allowed for attending COBRE or IDeA meetings.

The following budget categories will not be supported: 1) equipment \$5,000 or greater in cost; 2) patient care costs; 3) third party sub-contracts

Salary for the PI cannot be included in the budget. When determining how much effort to commit to the project, applicants should take into consideration that UAMS Grants Accounting may require a setup of match account to capture effort committed to the project. Please contact Veronica Overton ([VLOverton@uams.edu](mailto:VLOverton@uams.edu)) if you have questions about any aspects of the Pilot Project budget.

**Project Period:** July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027

### Reporting Requirements

Pilot project awardees are expected to present their research at one of the semi-annual CMIC Advisory Committee meetings (preferably the in-person meeting). A final progress report is due no later than 60 days after the end of the pilot project (typically September 1<sup>st</sup> of the year that the project ends).

All publications resulting from work done with COBRE resources **must include an acknowledgement to NIGMS grant P20GM152281**. Any grant award received directly or indirectly as a result of COBRE support must be reported to Dr. Eoff immediately upon receipt.

### **Application Submission**

The submission deadline is **5 PM, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026**.

Applications should be submitted by e-mail to Veronica Overton ([VLOverton@uams.edu](mailto:VLOverton@uams.edu)). Electronic submissions are required. An application assembled into one PDF document is preferred. Late or incomplete applications, or applications not conforming to the page limits will not be reviewed.

### **Questions**

For questions, please contact Veronica Overton ([VLOverton@uams.edu](mailto:VLOverton@uams.edu)) or Robert Eoff, PhD ([RLEOFF@UAMS.EDU](mailto:RLEOFF@UAMS.EDU)).