



From: Faculty Research Development Office (FRDO)
Office of the Vice President for Research

Subject: Limited Competitions: NIH Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) Phase 1 (P20)
PAR-22-250

Date: May 12, 2023

UNM Researchers,

The Office of the Vice President for Research is requesting statements of interest for the NIH Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) Phase 1 (P20) program. The NIH posted a Notice of Change to the Institutional Eligibility Criteria and UNM is eligible to submit a new Phase 1 application. UNM and UNMHSC (considered a single institution for IDeA) currently have 3 active COBRE awards. The Notice [NOT-GM-23-040](#) clearly states, “*Funding priority will be given to meritorious applications from institutions with two or fewer active COBRE Phase 1 and/or Phase 2 awards.*” **Thus, while UNM is eligible to submit a Phase 1 application, institutions that have two or fewer Phase 1/2 COBREs will have funding preference over those that have 3.**

The COBRE funding initiative program supports the establishment and development of innovative biomedical research centers at Institutional Development Award (IDeA)-eligible institutions through awards for three sequential five-year phases. The purpose of the COBRE Phase 1 award is to build capacity in an area of biomedical research through the establishment of a center of excellence that helps develop a critical mass of investigators who are able to compete effectively for independent research funding and improve infrastructure in the center's area of research. The program allows Direct Costs up to \$1.5M/year. The project period is limited to five years.

- The PD(s)/PI(s) is expected to be an established biomedical research scientist with the mentoring and administrative experience necessary to lead the Center.
- The Center's scientific goals must be aligned with the applicant institution's strategic priorities and cover a sufficiently broad scientific area to warrant the institution's sustained support.
- Applications proposing to establish a Center in a scientific area closely related to one previously supported by a COBRE award to the institution or in an area for which the institution already has a critical mass of funded investigators are of low programmatic priority.
- Research Project Leads (RPLs) must qualify either as NIH Early Stage Investigators (ESIs) or as New Investigators (NIs), and must hold faculty appointments (or equivalent at research institutes) and lead their own research programs.

Full proposals are due to the NIH on January 30, 2024.

This is a limited competition. **Each institution is limited to 1 (one) application** and for this program, UNM and UNMHSC are considered a single institution. We will be conducting a two-step internal competition to ensure we have a review committee in place by the pre-proposal deadline. **You must complete both steps if you are interested in participating.**

COBRE proposals are complex and require significant planning, institutional support, a multidisciplinary and collaborative environment, and career development guidance to early stage investigators and new investigators. Faculty are strongly encouraged to review the funding announcement at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/par-22-250.html> before submitting a statement of interest.

STEP ONE: Please submit your **statement of interest** by **NOON on June 1, 2023** via UNM's [InfoReady Review portal](#). This is a required step and no late submissions will be considered.

The statement of interest **must** include:

- a. **Significance (300 words maximum):** describe how the Center's scientific goals align with the UNM's strategic priorities in developing research capacity and the need for the establishment of a Center in the proposed scientific area.
- b. **PI:** describe the PI's current research focus, and include a listing of current relevant peer-reviewed funding (NIH, NSF, or other Federal or non-Federal investigator-initiated support) and evidence of administrative leadership.
- c. **Individual research projects:** Identify at least 3-5 potential (eligible) early stage investigators or new investigators in complementary disciplines who might be included in the COBRE proposal as Research Project Leads.

STEP TWO: Submit NIH formatted CVs and a 3-page pre-proposal that clearly describes:

- a. Describe how the Center will support UNM's strategic priorities in developing research capacity.
- b. Describe the need at UNM for the establishment of a Center in the proposed scientific area. Outline how the Center addresses an important problem or a critical barrier in the field and how the proposed work will advance knowledge, technical capabilities, and/or clinical practice in the field of research.
- c. Describe the PI's background and how it's appropriate to establish, develop, and lead the COBRE to enhance research capacity at the institution in the proposed biomedical scientific area. Provide evidence of successful mentoring and guidance of early career research investigators. Provide evidence of the PI's record of sustained leadership of a productive and independently funded research group in the scientific area of the Center.
- d. Provide an overview of your plans to manage mentor training and the process of selecting candidate investigators and reviewing replacement Research Projects.

Please submit your 3-page pre-proposal and NIH CV for all personnel; 11-point font) by **NOON on June 8, 2023** via UNM's [InfoReady Review portal](#). You will receive an email when the InfoReady competition has been converted from the SOI application to the pre-proposal application, but you can work on your documents outside the system before that. No late submissions will be considered.

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact us at limited@unm.edu.

If you are affiliated with HSC, please contact HSC Limited Competition at HSC-LimitedComps@salud.unm.edu for more information.