Pilot Study Program for Innovation in Translational Research
www.bctr.cornell.edu

Applications due: March 15, 2013
Awards Announced: May 1, 2013
Start date: July 1, 2013

IRB approval must be received before any BCTR funds can be awarded. It is important to start the IRB approval process as early as possible to avoid delay in receiving the award.

The mission of the BCTR is to strengthen and speed the connection between cutting-edge research and the design, evaluation, and implementation of programs and policies that enhance human development, health, and well-being (see www.bctr.cornell.edu).

The Pilot Study Program
BCTR will award approximately 3-4 pilot grants of up to $12,000.

The overarching goal of the pilot study program is to encourage researchers to systematically move social and behavioral research into real-world practice and policy. We are especially interested in pilot projects that will partner with Cornell Cooperative Extension, 4-H, the Weill Clinical and Translational Science Center (in New York City), and other Weill units and affiliated organizations. Proposals involving faculty and researchers from more than one discipline are particularly welcome. Specifically, the pilot study program has four major aims:

1. To encourage new research on health, healthy development and well-being across the life course that has clear potential for translation into practice and policy;
2. To promote researcher interest and expertise in conducting collaborative research with national, state, and community agencies and organizations and in translating basic research for use in policy and in community settings;
3. To provide the experience and preliminary data that will lead to success in obtaining an externally funded grant to expand the research;
4. To encourage more researchers to engage in translational research by offering support and consultation on methodological issues and developing partnerships with community agencies.
What type of projects will BCTR fund?

Projects that strengthen research proposals that will be revised and resubmitted to NIH, NSF, or an equivalent major funder in the near future will be strongly preferred for funding. A broad range of specific topics will be considered for pilot funding, as long as the topic and methodology are relevant to the mission of the BCTR. Pilot projects may include (1) feasibility studies that would lead to a rigorous evaluation of existing interventions; (2) pilot or proof of concept studies to demonstrate the extension of a basic research program into community settings; (3) pilot tests of innovative translational research methods, such as a new dissemination strategy for a scientifically established program into practice settings; (4) development of innovative methods for producing research syntheses or summaries; (5) testing of methods to engage practitioners or policy makers in the formulation or execution of research studies; and (6) collection of preliminary data that will strengthen an application to NIH or another major funding source for support of a translational research project.

Although the pilot studies program will consider supporting research on health, healthy development, and well-being at any critical stage in the life course, the investigator must demonstrate that the project will facilitate translating the results of the project to the development or testing of an intervention, or engaging communities outside the university in using the research to influence policy or practice. Investigators may propose to collaborate with community, state, or national organizations including community centers or organizations, health care providers, voluntary organizations, schools and school programs, or governmental agencies, among many others. It is strongly preferable that applicants who plan to work with service or community agencies document an existing relationship with such an agency as part of their applications. However, in some cases BCTR staff can assist potential researcher applicants in making connections to community partners.

Who is eligible to apply?

Any Cornell-Ithaca faculty member or team of faculty members led by a Cornell faculty member may apply. Junior faculty members are especially encouraged to apply. Senior Extension Associates and Senior Research Associates may apply if the proposal involves an active collaboration with a professorial faculty member.

How will projects be selected for funding?

A review committee of faculty experts will evaluate the proposals. Projects that propose to collaborate with community agencies and organizations may also be reviewed by relevant community experts. Reviewers will evaluate projects based on the timeliness of the proposed project, its immediate relevance and application to issues central to the BCTR mission, and the probability of attracting outside funding, as well as scientific merit, feasibility, and qualifications and commitment of the investigator to the project. We will give priority to projects that strengthen research proposals that are being resubmitted to NIH, NSF or an equivalent major funder in the near future. Researchers
must also show a record of scholarly productivity and active proposal development appropriate to their level of experience. **If a project involves human participants, Institutional Review Board approval must be received before funds can be released. (There can be no exceptions to the IRB approval rule.)**

**Proposal requirements**

Applicants should provide a proposal of no more than 4 single-spaced pages using a readable font (e.g. Times New Roman 11 or Arial 11). The 4 pages of the proposal should include: (1) the specific aims of the project (no more than one page); (2) the overall significance of the proposed project and its potential for translation to real-world issues relevant to the mission of the BCTR; (3) innovation of the project; (4) the methods to be used in the project; (5) if applicable, information on the collaborating agency/ies and how the collaborative process will take place; (6) a one-year study timetable; (7) anticipated sources of funding for the research after the pilot study is completed; and (8) a timetable to apply for external funds. As appendices, applicants must include a budget and budget justification, 2-page NIH-style biosketches for project investigators and other key personnel and letters of commitment from the agency/community partner(s) (if applicable). **Any proposal in hand for resubmission or submission to an external funder must also be submitted, if applicable.** *We strongly recommend that IRB and other relevant university reviews be underway as soon as possible after proposal submission because funds may not be released until the project is approved by the relevant ethical review committees. Please note that some projects involving human subjects may require review by additional committees, e.g. Environmental Health & Safety. (See the IRB website for guidance.)* Additional appendix material is limited to no more than 20 pages and may include supporting materials such as study protocols, and reviews of a prior proposal submission (if applicable).

Allowable expenses include research-related costs, including research assistant salaries and fringe benefits (if applicable), communications and supplies, respondent incentives, travel related to the research, and equipment purchases less than $1500. Conference travel is not an allowable expense. Additionally, if the investigator plans to work with community agencies, it is generally expected that a fund for collaborating agencies will be provided to cover expenses they may incur. The budget should be reviewed by the investigator’s department or center financial administrator before submission.

**To submit, please send all required documents as a single Word or PDF file to Elaine Wethington at ew20@cornell.edu no later than March 15, 2013.**

**For further information:**

For more information about the review and application procedures, please contact Prof. Elaine Wethington, Director of the BCTR Pilot Study Program (ew20@cornell.edu). If you are uncertain whether your idea will fit the BCTR mission, you may consult with Elaine Wethington or John Eckenrode (jje1@cornell.edu).