AB Nexus Fall 2022 Research Collaboration Grant Program

AB Nexus is pleased to announce its Fall 2022 Research Collaboration Grant Program, which seeks proposals from interdisciplinary teams that expand and strengthen areas of research collaboration between the CU Anschutz and CU Boulder campuses.

Since its launch in Fall 2020, the AB Nexus Research Collaboration Grant Program has awarded over $2M to 30 teams featuring researchers from CU Boulder and CU Anschutz conducting innovative research involving basic, translational and clinical approaches. Please visit the AB Nexus website for more information about this opportunity, including eligibility, application process and requirements, review criteria, and key dates. The website also includes information about the 30 projects that have been awarded through our four previous rounds of competition. Teams planning to submit a proposal in the Fall 2022 competition must submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) by Friday, August 26, 2022 (11:59 pm MST).

Key Dates - Fall 2022

- **AB Nexus Grant Info Session:** [2] Wednesday, August 3, 2022
- **Notice of Intent (NOI) Deadline:** Friday, August 26, 2022 (required)
- **Invitation for Full Proposal:** Monday, August 29, 2022
- **Full Proposal Deadline:** Monday, September 26, 2022
- **Grant Panel Reviews:** October 2022
- **Winner Notification:** Tuesday, November 1, 2022
- **Grant Start Date:** Thursday, December 1, 2022

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Summary Information

**Award Amount:** $50,000 or $125,000 (depending on award track, below)

**Award Duration:** 12 months

**Funding Offices:**
- CU Anschutz Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research
- CU Boulder Office of the Provost, Research & Innovation Office (RIO)

Program Description

The AB Nexus is requesting proposals that expand and strengthen areas of research collaboration between the CU Anschutz and CU Boulder campuses. By integrating expertise in biosciences, biochemistry, engineering, arts and sciences, pharmacology and immunology, public health, mental health, environmental sciences and other areas, AB Nexus aims to create high-impact opportunities to improve human well-being, demonstrate thought leadership and innovation, and spur economic development.

The goal of the AB Nexus Research Collaboration Grant Program is to support interdisciplinary research activities that leverage expertise across campuses. Teams submitting a proposal should aim to answer relevant research questions related to basic science and/or translational technology approaches, such as:

1. **Basic Science Approaches**
   - What challenges related to human well-being could be investigated via unique collaborations between two or more disciplines?
   - What new discoveries related to the study of disease and other factors that negatively impact human well-being could be achieved?

2. **Translational Approaches**
   - What unmet needs related to operations within clinical science, clinical systems, health services, population health, environmental science or social science could inform and drive the development of novel research technologies and capabilities?
   - What opportunities are there for two or more disciplines to come together to translate innovations that positively impact humans, patients, practice, or population health?

Proposed research projects must demonstrate a clear fit with the research themes and questions outlined above. Research teams are required to have representation from both CU Anschutz and CU Boulder campuses. Teams should describe the significance of combining individual research expertise, how diverse disciplines will be integrated effectively, and how the team may engage other campus experts to grow the collaboration over time. Proposals must emphasize a detailed plan for how this short-term investment from AB Nexus may help increase the investigators’ prospects of winning subsequent externally sponsored awards.

Award Information

A. **Award Tracks**
AB Nexus is seeking research project proposals in two award tracks. Both will support research projects that combine two or more disciplines, for which preliminary data or evidence of team synergy is necessary in order to develop a competitive application for external funding.

i. **New Collaborations ($50k)**
   - This award track is for teams that have not previously worked together, but have identified a path for how integrated, joint work could facilitate the study of unique research concepts.
   - This track may include projects led by junior investigators seeking to form connections early in their research career or senior investigators interested in expanding their research scope and capabilities.
   - These projects will potentially propose more “high-risk” or innovative research concepts, which have not previously been explored in depth.

ii. **Existing Collaborations ($125k)**
   - This award track is for teams with a history of collaboration, who may have received external funding, and are interested in expanding research efforts.
   - Project teams may include junior or senior investigators pursuing interdisciplinary research that could lead to new sources of external funding.
   - These projects will potentially explore more “high-reward” research concepts that have been identified as areas of growth in the research community and which are of strategic interest to external agencies.

Note: Research ideas that are in a more preliminary stage than what is described in the tracks above are encouraged to consider pursuing the CCTSI Pilot Grant Programs [3]. CCTSI provides funding opportunities, especially for junior faculty (mentored and junior CCTSI awards), for research that benefits human health across the NIH translational science spectrum (T0 – T4), including basic science research (T0) and preclinical research (T1). Research projects may be a better fit for CCTSI if the ideas being proposed:

- Require additional research discovery before a path forward for joint collaborative work can be identified.
- Are led by a junior faculty investigator in the early stages of exploring ideas for potential joint collaborative work and who are seeking mentorship.
- High-risk/ high-reward new technology development projects by mid-career and senior investigators

B. **Awarded Project Requirements**

Upon accepting an award, the project PI agrees to fulfill several requirements.

i. **Project Reporting**
   - Project PIs will submit brief reports at 6 and 12 months, outlining the general progress of the project and key metrics including resulting publications, presentations, research partnerships, IP, and external funding. After the project completion date at 12 months, teams will respond to periodic surveys that will aid in establishing return on investment of the program.

ii. **Reviewer Duties**
Project PIs and Co-PIs will agree to serve as potential reviewers in subsequent AB Nexus Research Collaboration Grant cycles.

iii. **Pursuit of External Funding**
- Project PIs and Co-PIs will agree to identify and pursue external funding.
- Research development staff will be available to assist in this activity through funding opportunity searches and providing proposal development support.

**Eligibility**

All project teams must include representation from both the CU Anschutz and CU Boulder campuses. This will generally take the form of 2 Co-PI’s with one lead PI.

Eligible applicants at CU Anschutz must meet the school and/or department eligibility for being a principal investigator on externally funded grants.

Eligible applicants at CU Boulder include Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty, Senior Instructors, and Career Track Research Faculty (i.e., this includes Research Professors Series, Senior Research Associates (SRA), and Research Associates (RA)) who hold an appointment of half-time or greater.

Additional eligibility information:

- Applicants may submit no more than one proposal as a PI.
- Projects with a primary focus on curriculum development are not eligible.
- Faculty course or teaching buy-out is not an eligible expense.
- Applicants with existing resources, such as funding from internal or external sources, that could be used to fund their proposal are discouraged.
- Applicants may request up to two weeks of summer salary (or the equivalent of 0.04 FTE) in their proposal budgets.

If your project involves any regulatory compliance considerations that are identified within governing bodies such as IRB, IACUC, EHS, Biohazardous material, etc. you certify that, if awarded, all proposed activities will be approved by compliance offices before initiating any work.

**Application Process and Requirements**

Investigators will be required to submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) by Friday, August 26, 2022. The NOI will include:

- Contact PI and list of collaborating PIs (*including campus, school, department affiliations for all*)
- Award Track (*New or Existing Collaboration*)
- Brief abstract describing the proposed research (*200 words maximum*)

Full applications are due by Monday, September 26, 2022 and can be submitted via the OpenWater online portal.

Proposals should use clear writing appropriate for non-specialists and make a strong case for
the importance of the project to reviewers outside the discipline. Investigators should prepare applications using the style and content formats described below:

- 0.5” margins minimum
- 11 point Arial type, single spaced
- 3.5 pages (content and suggested page limits below)
- Additional 2 pages for budget (1 page for planned expenses occurring on each campus)
- Additional page(s) for references (no page limit for references)
- PDF format

**Proposal Title**

*PI Name, Campus, School, Department; Co-PI Names, Campus, School, Department*

**Project Summary** (1 page maximum): Provide a summary of the proposed activity that outlines the concept to be explored and/or problem to be addressed. Explain why it is important or innovative. For existing collaborations, include a brief description of previous work.

**Research Strategy** (1.5 page maximum): Outline the proposed research program including specific aims, expected outcomes, metrics of success for the project, and project timeline.

**Leverage:** (0.5 page maximum): Discuss how AB Nexus funding can lay the foundation, or continue support, for an expanded activity. Include specific sources that will be sought for future support and indication of the long-term potential for growth of this activity. Proposals should emphasize a plan for 1) substantial near-term growth and sustained expansion of the collaborative team across campuses and 2) generation of significant and continuing return on investment; including showing prior engagement with target funding agency program officers where possible.

**Expertise:** (0.5 page maximum): Describe the expertise of the assembled team and why the team is uniquely qualified to achieve project goals.

**Budget:** (2 pages) Provide a budget and justification that is reasonable and appropriate for the scope of work. Each campus will administer the component of the budget occurring on that campus. Therefore, Anschutz and Boulder PIs/Co-Pis should coordinate on the total budget requested, but submit separate budgets for planned expenses that will occur on each campus.

**References:** (no page limit) Provide references where applicable, please follow standard citation practices that align with your respective CU Anschutz and/or CU Boulder college/school/department/section.

**Review Process**

Projects which have the potential of increasing sustained collaboration across the CU Anschutz and CU Boulder Campuses will be prioritized, especially when potential for broader and long-term engagement. The review committee will be led by two co-chairs, one representing each campus. Faculty volunteers review applications, provide comments, convene to discuss proposals and recommend proposals for funding. There will be equal
membership of each campus on the committee. Proposals will be evaluated in four primary areas:

- **Intellectual Merit:** Merit and quality of proposed research; potential to contribute value and advance knowledge (particularly factoring in the novel approach to concept(s)).
- **Impact:** Measurable benefit of basic science, clinical, and/or translational approaches to significantly improve human well-being.
- **Interdisciplinarity:** Demonstration of fully integrated research collaborations and partnerships across disciplines. Of high interest are proposals that indicate a specific plan to grow and expand the team over time.
- **Leverage:** Long term potential for growth of the proposed research activity, including identified or prospective support from external funding agencies. Of high interest are proposals that identify specific external opportunities, ideally growing in magnitude or complexity, and a timeline in which the team plans to pursue them.

*Note on Variability in Review Considerations across Disciplines:* Please note that discipline-specific considerations will be taken into account during the review process. It is recognized that merit, impact, and success are defined differently across disciplines and that funding patterns vary by discipline; this variability will be considered during the review process.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Eligibility:**

**Can I serve as Co-PI on more than one proposal?**

Yes, you can serve as main PI on only one proposal, but as Co-PI on multiple proposals. However, to clarify further, we do require that multiple proposals be significantly different in subject matter.

**Does an applicant need to have a full-time appointment to apply?**

Eligible applicants must hold a position of half-time or greater. Eligible applicants at CU Anschutz must meet the school and/or department eligibility for being a principal investigator on externally funded grants. Eligible applicants at CU Boulder include Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty, Senior Instructors, and Career Track Research Faculty (i.e., this includes Research Professors Series, Senior Research Associates (SRA), and Research Associates (RA)).

**How exactly do you define ‘new’ vs. ‘existing’ collaborations?**

New collaborations are geared towards teams that are still building out their relationship and ideas, for example - pitching a brand new idea, collecting preliminary data, and preparing to apply for grants.
Existing collaborations will have full article joint publications, awarded funding, and an established body of research that the team is looking to expand in new directions (i.e. to capture new/different sources of funding).

**Administrative/Budget:**

**Does the budget need to be routed to OGC/OCG?**

No, since this is an internal grant opportunity, budgets do not need to be routed to OGC/OCG.

**Are there indirect costs/subcontracts we need to consider?**

No, since this is an internal grant opportunity, there are no indirect costs or subcontracts required.

**Are we able to have salary support (investigators vs. non-investigators)?**

Applicant PIs and Co-PIs may request up to two weeks of summer salary (or the equivalent of 0.04 FTE) in their proposal budgets. Salary support may also be requested for non-investigators (i.e. post-docs and students) in an amount that is fitting to the work proposed.

For other questions, please contact [ABNexus_SeedGrants@colorado.edu](mailto:ABNexus_SeedGrants@colorado.edu).

**Groups audience:**

AB Nexus

**Source URL:** [https://www.cu.edu/ab-nexus/opportunities-funding](https://www.cu.edu/ab-nexus/opportunities-funding)

**Links**

[1] [https://www.cu.edu/ab-nexus/opportunities-funding](https://www.cu.edu/ab-nexus/opportunities-funding)
[2] [https://cuboulder.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJIvduCtrzgiG9RsFSUkaF6_4KqmjnH2Pgi](https://cuboulder.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJIvduCtrzgiG9RsFSUkaF6_4KqmjnH2Pgi)
[3] [https://cctsi.cuanschutz.edu/funding](https://cctsi.cuanschutz.edu/funding)
[4] mailto:ABNexus_SeedGrants@colorado.edu