



RCMI PROGRAM

RENEWAL 2006-2011

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

## **APPLICATIONS GUIDELINES**

### **Purpose**

The major goal of the RCMI Program is to develop and strengthen a collaborative research environment at the Medical Sciences Campus by improving the human and physical resources for conducting biomedical and/or behavioral research related to health disparities. Limited support will be available for pilot research projects.

### **Program Objectives**

#### **Background**

During the current cycle, the Program has developed a strong information and communication infrastructure through the expansion and restructuring of the Center for Information Architecture in Research. These efforts have provided the necessary resources to develop long distance collaborations, as well as effective and continuous interactions with consultants and advisors minimizing the geographical isolation highlighted by many of our investigators as a primary obstacle for research development. To maximize the use of this infrastructure, the renewal application will focus on the support of high-quality, multi-disciplinary, collaborative initiatives.

High priority will be given to activities focusing in collaborative research in biomedical/biobehavioral research, especially those conducted with collaborators in research intensive institutions outside Puerto Rico. This approach is consistent with the recommendations of the NCRR Strategic Plan and the NIH Roadmap.

#### **Objectives and Scope**

The main objective of the RCMI Renewal Application is to encourage collaborative multi-disciplinary research focusing on health disparities. The goal is to bring together groups of already funded investigators and to provide additional resources to develop new collaborative activities. The additional funds must support activities that are likely to significantly enhance existing capabilities and/or introduce new approaches to on-going research efforts. The requested resources should be necessary to advance the proposed research objectives. Collaborations with investigators outside Puerto Rico and in other RCMI institutions are encouraged.

## Specific Requirements

### A. Type of Activities

**Research Infrastructure:** Proposals to provide core research resources (e.g., specialized instrumentation, genomics, proteomics, model organism, bioinformatics) should provide information regarding: the group of currently funded investigators working on a common problem that will utilize the facility; a designated Core Director; the professional and technical staff to be involved in the core(s) and their duties; and plans regarding the utilization of the core, including services that will be provided, and their bearing on productivity and quality of the collaborative research effort. A plan to institutionalize support over time should also be included.

Core resources may be requested to enhance or add additional capability to a collaborative project by including new or improved technology or by standardizing data among different research teams. An example of new technology might be gene chip microarray technology; an example of standardizing results might be establishment of a model organism facility or the development of culture-sensitive questionnaires and/or scales.

Some examples of infrastructure that may be appropriate for support are:

- Recruitment and hiring of additional faculty investigators and research support personnel
- Mentoring of faculty
- Development of core laboratories and new technologies
- Acquisition of state-of –the-art instrumentation
- Biostatistical/Bioinformatics and computer resources
- Other institutional infrastructure activities that will enable the institution's faculty to become more competitive in obtaining support for biomedical and biobehavioral research (for example, remote use of instrumentation, videoconferencing, training in specialized techniques, visiting professors, research associates, seminar and workshops, etc.).

Requests for research resources must be strongly justified in terms of value to achieve the goals of the collaborative project, value to increase the synergy of the collaborative project, and cost effectiveness. Requests for continuing existing core resources must also be justified in terms of progress and results achieved to date. A Plan for Handling Intellectual Property and Sharing of Research Resources is also required.

**Pilot Projects:** Limited funding will be available for proposals to support projects, especially of young investigators, not already involved in a collaborative research project, who have unique skills or expertise and innovative ideas which could contribute or provide a resource to an on-going and/or new collaborative project.

All applications for on-going collaborative research projects must follow PHS 398 instructions for the Research Plan. In addition, the investigator needs to clearly describe the importance and relevance of the proposed project to institutional RCMI goals.

## **B. Collaborative Focus**

High priority will be given to collaborative proposals to develop or enhance research services and areas that will address health disparities, as well as proposals with a multidisciplinary approach involving basic and clinical collaborations that will utilize the information and communication infrastructure developed by the RCMI Program. All collaborative activities must provide a Plan for Handling Intellectual Property and Sharing of Research Resources.

## **C. Target Areas**

The objective of the RCMI renewal is to stimulate collaborative research on health disparities. Examples of areas of biomedical/biobehavioral research in which collaborative multidisciplinary research teams are encouraged include:

- Diseases of higher prevalence in the local population or unique to the community
- Research requiring basic and clinical collaborations
- Research on health care delivery systems
- Comparative epidemiology
- Comparative genetics
- Applications of molecular genetics, proteomics, and/or bioimaging in basic and clinical studies

### **Letter of Intent:**

A letter of intent **is required** to help organize the review process and avoid conflict of interest in the review. The letter should include a descriptive title of the proposed activity, a brief description of the activity (200-300 words), the name, address, telephone number and e-mail of the Activity Coordinator, as well as the name and institutions of the collaborators. The letter should be sent not later than **May 16, 2005** to:

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RCMI Program Director  
RCMI Office 621-A  
Medical Sciences Campus

Tel: (787) 763-9401  
(787) 758-2525 Exts. 1620/1621

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### **Instructions and Forms:**

Specific instructions and forms for the preparation of an RCMI proposal are included in **Appendix A** and **Appendix B**, respectively. Incomplete proposals **will not** be considered. Special attention should be given to the biographical sketches, all budget justifications, review protocols for the use of human subjects and vertebrate animals, conflict of interest, and the instructions for detailed information in these and other areas.

### **Allowable Costs:**

Allowable costs include faculty recruitment (including salary), research personnel, equipment, alterations and renovations, supplies, as well as travel and consultants. A complete budget and budget justification must be included.

## **Review Process:**

Upon receipt, applications will be sent for external scientific and technical review. Selection will be made by the RCMI Internal Review Committee based on the external reviews, program priorities, the likelihood that the proposed activity fulfills the criteria for the RCMI Program evaluation at NIH, and the availability of funds. **Appendix C** includes the major factors to be considered in the evaluation of the infrastructure components and core facilities as well as those of pilot projects.

## **RECEIPT AND REVIEW SCHEDULE**

Application Receipt Date at RCMI Office:	<b>July 1, 2005</b>
Peer and Internal Review at MSC:	<b>July – August, 2005</b>
NCRR Review of Application:	<b>August 15, 2005</b>
Submission of Renewal Application:	<b>October 1, 2005</b>