



CENTER FOR DRUG DESIGN
AND INNOVATION

Open to all UNMC Faculty: Due April 30th, 2024

UNMC Center for Drug Design and Innovation (CDDI) is the campus-wide drug discovery enterprise of the University Nebraska Medical Center. Our mission is to catalyze the formation of multidisciplinary teams of scientists and clinicians, that collaborate to translate scientific discoveries and clinical observations into new therapies for areas of unmet medical need. To form such multidisciplinary teams, CDDI offers seed funding through several mechanisms. One goal of the Center is to eliminate the barriers for advancing promising early-stage research into development programs.

The **Launch Seed Grant** mechanism is open to all UNMC faculty and seeks to fund projects focused on finding new drug-like small molecules, which can comprise target validation, robust assay development, high throughput screening (HTS), and/or hit-to-lead medicinal chemistry projects, and other preclinical studies. Proposed target validation studies using synthetic chemical probes are also considered responsive to this RFA.

Funding via this mechanism can range up to \$45K for one year. Successful applications will present not only preliminary data, but also provide a credible plan towards a specific milestone, that if achieved would position the project to receive external funding.

Faculty seeking support via this mechanism are asked to submit their applications to Corey Hopkins, PhD (corey.hopkins@unmc.edu) by 5 pm April 30th, 2024. Pre-submission inquiries can also be directed to Corey Hopkins.

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Applications for the CDDI Launch Seed Grant Program must be submitted as a single pdf, consisting of three parts (A-C):

- A. Application Narrative (three pages max, 0.5 inch margin, 11 pt) which includes the following.
1. Names, affiliations, e-mails of PI and Co-Is (roles specified).
 2. Clinician collaborators that may be involved at present or in the future if identified.
 3. Title of Invention Disclosure, if any, and name of OTM technology manager.
 4. Brief description and medical significance of the biological target/pathway.
 5. Description of the current biochemical or cell-based assay, that would be adapted for HTS, or guide hit-to-lead optimization.
 6. Molecular structures of any small molecule hits identified to date, if any, and proposed experimental approach to optimize them.
 7. Description of the planned animal model to establish proof of concept, including IACUC protocol number (if available).

8. Novelty in target/indication/assay (advantage over competition).
9. Identification of a specific milestone that would mark success for the funded project. Describe how achievement of the milestone would position the PI/team to win external funding and achieve a larger translational goal.
10. Budget Justification: The budget should fund project activity for up to one year, and specify major areas of expenditure (personnel, materials and supplies, services, etc). No PI/Co-I effort or travel can be budgeted; trainee or research staff salaries can comprise no more than 25% of the requested budget.

B. References cited (in support of A above; no page limit).

C. NIH Biosketches of the PI and any named Co-I's.

After the submission deadline passes, the CDDI will convene a panel of expert reviewers, including members of UNeMed. For those proposals receiving favorable reviews, the PI(s) may be asked to present to a subset of these reviewers before a funding decision is made.