



Office of Research

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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We are pleased to announce an internal competition for the **NIH Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) Phase 1 program (PAR-22-250)**

A COBRE Phase 1 award supports the establishment of a multi-component center of excellence in an area of biomedical research that aligns with the applicant institution's strategic priorities for growing its research capacity. The program aims to develop a critical mass of investigators who can compete effectively for independent, external research funding. To achieve this goal, the COBRE award supports a Center that provides research support and mentoring to faculty investigators and funding for their recruitment. Enhancements to the institution's research infrastructure that facilitate the proposed research are also supported. An established investigator with scientific expertise in the research area of the Center as well as mentoring and administrative experience is expected to lead the Center as the Program Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) of the award. An Advisory Committee (AC) comprised of institutional leadership and external experts in the scientific area should provide advice and oversight on critical scientific activities and administrative decisions. Required components of the Center include an Administrative Core and 3-5 Research Projects. Optional components include Research Cores and an Alteration and Renovation Project. All proposed components must be integral to attaining the goals of the Center and are expected to interact with each other and with relevant existing programs at the institution to foster a collaborative research environment.

Additional information is available in the [COBRE program announcement \(PAR-22-250\)](#) and [COBRE webpage](#). Please note, NIH has expressed two topics of special interest through this program:

- Supporting Data Sciences Research [NOT-GM-23-011](#)
- Supporting Women's Health Research [NOT-GM-23-012](#)

USC is limited to one submission.

To apply for the internal competition, please submit the following **as a single PDF file to jmorris@sc.edu by 5pm on Thursday, July 20**. The internal proposal package must contain the following components in the order specified. Internal proposals that do not conform to these proposal preparation guidelines will be returned without review.

Instructions for Internal Proposals

Prepare your COBRE internal proposal according to the following instructions *and submit as a single PDF file*. Use a minimum of .5" margins on all sides and 11-point font for body text (the text used in captions and figures may be smaller, but it must be legible). The proposal narrative (i.e., Specific Aims, Significance, Innovation, Center Director/Principal Investigator, Proposed Project Leaders, Other Key Personnel, Center Organization and Management, and Research Core Facilities) is limited to a maximum of five pages in length. The Bibliography and References Cited section is limited to a maximum of two pages in length. Biographical sketches and letters of support do not count toward the internal proposal page limit.

1. Specific Aims – LIMITED TO 1 PAGE

- Include the center title and PI name, title, and contact information at the top of the page.
- State the goal and specific aims of the proposed center, describe the center's thematic scientific focus, and summarize the expected outcomes, including the impact that the results of the proposed research agenda will exert on the field(s) involved.

2. Significance – SUGGESTED LENGTH 1/2 PAGE

- Introduce the proposed center's thematic scientific focus and explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field(s) that the proposed center addresses.
- Explain how the proposed center is expected to improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad fields.
- Describe how the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field will be changed if the proposed aims are achieved.

3. Innovation – SUGGESTED LENGTH 1/2 PAGE

- Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms.
- Describe any novel theoretical concepts; approaches or methodologies; or instrumentation or interventions to be developed or used, and any advantages of these over existing methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.
- Explain any refinements, improvements, or new applications of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.
- Indicate how the proposed center is distinct from existing NIH-funded COBREs. A directory of current COBRE awards is available at <https://www.nigms.nih.gov/Research/DRCB/IDeA/Pages/COBRE.aspx>

4. Center Director/Principal Investigator – SUGGESTED LENGTH 1/2 PAGE

- Detail the PI's qualifications to lead the proposed center, including a summary of relevant academic preparation and training, and previous administrative and mentoring experience.
- Summarize the PI's record of research accomplishments and contributions that have advanced biomedical or behavioral science.
- Describe how establishment of the proposed center represents a logical extension of the PI's professional trajectory.
- Indicate the level of effort the PI expects to dedicate as director/PI of the proposed center.

5. Proposed Project Leaders – SUGGESTED LENGTH 1 PAGE

- Describe a cadre of three to five early-career investigators who are eligible to receive COBRE research project support (i.e., an individual who has not been and is not the PD/PI for an external, peer-reviewed research project or program project grant, or an established investigator who is making a significant change in their career). For each investigator, list title and affiliation.
- Summarize the research expertise and interests of each early-career investigator, including relevant academic preparation and training. Briefly describe a research project that each early-career investigator may pursue with COBRE program support.

6. Other Key Personnel – SUGGESTED LENGTH 1/2 PAGE

- Describe the research expertise and relevant qualifications of additional key personnel (e.g., associate director, core facility director(s), etc.). For each individual listed, provide their title and affiliation.
- Briefly describe the role of each individual within the proposed center.

7. Center Organization and Management – SUGGESTED LENGTH 1/2 PAGE

- Describe how institutional biomedical research capacity will be augmented and strengthened through the establishment of the proposed center.
- Details plans for center organization and management, including leadership and advisory structure and efforts to facilitate collaboration and coordination among center personnel.
- Summarize evaluation strategies and specific milestones that may be used to measure progress toward the center's longer-term goal(s).

8. Research Core Facilities – SUGGESTED LENGTH 1/2 PAGE

- Provide an overview of research core facilities (existing or planned) that are required to support the proposed center's research agenda.
- Describe how proposed research core facilities are distinct from those currently available at participating institution(s).

9. References Cited – LIMITED TO 2 PAGES

- Include the full citation for each reference cited within your internal proposal narrative.

10. NIH Biographical Sketches – LIMITED TO 5 PAGES EACH

- Include current versions of NIH biographical sketches for the PI, potential project leaders, mentors, and other key personnel.
- Instructions and a template for the NIH biographical sketch format are available online at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>

11. Support Letters

- Include one- to two-page letters of support provided by the PI's 1) cognizant academic dean and 2) chair/head/director indicating the proposed center is supported by and integrated into the research goals of the college and department/school/center, aligns with unit-, college-, or institutional-level hiring plans, and that the PI has the administrative approvals necessary to develop a full COBRE proposal.