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## RUPHI-CTSI Pilot Grant Program

### Translating Research into Practice

The RAND-University of Pittsburgh Health Institute (RUPHI) and the University of Pittsburgh Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) announce a program to encourage collaborative health services research conducted by teams of investigators from RAND and the various schools and departments at the University of Pittsburgh and affiliated institutions. The RUPHI-CTSI Translating Research into Practice (TRIP) Pilot Grant Program provides seed grants to support efforts by junior investigators, or to more senior investigators who are changing the direction of their research activities, to promote RAND-University of Pittsburgh health services research collaborations.

The RUPHI-CTSI Pilot Grant Program provides grants of up to \$30,000 to fund pilot research projects of one-year duration that will be used to provide opportunities to test hypotheses or to provide preliminary data that will strengthen subsequent larger scale research proposals. Specifically, one of the expected work products of a funded TRIP project is subsequent submission of a more substantive proposal to a federal agency, foundation, or equivalent organization, with these larger proposals maintaining the collaborative arrangements between RAND and Pitt. Pilot projects must focus on translating research into clinical practice, including exploring barriers to such translation. Funds are available to support five TRIP awards.

Successful applicants will be encouraged to attend or participate in: the weekly Health Services Research Seminar sponsored by the Center for Research on Health Care (CRHC), the Center for Health Equity and Promotion (CHERP), and RAND; the monthly RAND Health Brownbag Seminar Series; and the biweekly CRHC Research Development Seminar (RDS). At a RUPHI-CTSI luncheon to be held during the year, successful applicants will be expected to present progress reports on their TRIP-supported research activities. Please see the RUPHI web site for more information on RUPHI and the RUPHI-CTSI pilot grant program <http://www.ruphi.pitt.edu/>.

In 1999, AHRQ (then AHCPH) reported that it can take as long as one or two decades for the results of original research to be applied to routine clinical practice. Thus, the translation of research findings into sustainable improvements in clinical practice and patient outcomes remains a substantial obstacle to improving the quality of health care.<sup>1</sup> The situation has not changed significantly since 1999, and, today, one of the major goals of the NIH Roadmap is to increase the speed with which the results of proven research are operationalized into health care. The TRIP program is focused on preliminary projects that test the efficacy of moving an innovation (e.g., technology, guidelines, procedures, educational materials, etc.) into clinical practice. Pilot projects that involve comparative effectiveness research or use of information technology to translate research into practice are of particular interest, as these two areas have great potential for future large-scale project support by NIH and AHRQ.

#### Eligibility:

To be eligible for a TRIP Pilot Grant, a project must involve collaboration between at least one Pitt investigator and at least one RAND investigator. Priority will be given to those projects that allow junior investigators to develop research programs and research strengths.

- Pilot research projects may be led by either a RAND or a Pitt investigator. Investigators from both Pitt and RAND must have a demonstrable and substantial role; assessment of these roles will be

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<sup>1</sup> *Translating Research Into Practice (TRIP)-II*. Fact sheet. AHRQ Publication No. 01-P017, March 2001. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD. <http://www.ahrq.gov/research/trip2fac.htm>

a component of the review of the application. Pitt investigators must hold the rank of Assistant/Research Assistant Professor, Associate/Research Associate Professor, or Professor/Research Professor. Under extraordinary circumstances, an Instructor may be deemed eligible if it can be determined that he/she is clearly on a path to an independent position. Questions about eligibility of Pitt investigators should be directed to Dr. Michelle S. Broido, CTSI co-director ([broidoms@pitt.edu](mailto:broidoms@pitt.edu)) or to Dr. Wishwa Kapoor, RUPHI and CTSI co-director ([kapoorwn@upmc.edu](mailto:kapoorwn@upmc.edu)). Such eligibility questions must be resolved before submission of the application.

- Since one of the goal of the TRIP program is to help investigators new to the area of research obtain experience in health services research, one of the investigators must be established in a field of research that is relevant to the proposed work. That is, one investigator must be able to mentor the more junior investigator, as appropriate.

### **Application Process:**

The application must contain the following in the order listed below:

- A cover page that includes the title of the proposed pilot project and the name, degree, academic title, primary departmental affiliation, and contact information (telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address) of both the Pitt investigator and the RAND investigator. *See the budget section, below, for other information that may be required.*
- A one page abstract summarizing the study goals, design, and methods (not to exceed 250 words).
- A description of the relevant background of both the Pitt investigator and the RAND investigator (not to exceed 200 words per investigator).
- NIH biographical sketches (PHS 398 or SF424 format) and Other Support pages for both principal investigators. Such documents should also be provided for co-investigators. These documents are not needed for consultants.
- A proposal that includes a description of the pilot project, including specific aims, background and significance, and research design and methods (not to exceed 5 single-sided pages).
- A description of how these preliminary data, if successfully obtained, will be used in a substantial grant application in the future, including a description of the overall aims and a broad overview of the methods of the future grant proposal (not to exceed 1 page).
- A budget page (using the PHS 398 form) and budget justification; see below.

The application must be clear, readily legible, and conform to the following three requirements: 1) the font must be 11-point; 2) margins, in all directions, must be at least ½ inch; 3) text in figures, charts, tables, figure legends, and footnotes may be smaller in size but must be in black ink and readily legible. If these are not legible, there may be a negative impact on the evaluation of the application. Adherence to type size and line spacing requirements is necessary for several reasons. No applicant should have the advantage, by using small type, of providing more text in his or her application. Small type may also make it difficult for reviewers to read the application.

### **Budget:**

Funds may be used to cover investigator effort on the pilot project, supplies, participant payments, or other purposes related directly to the conduct of the research. The monies awarded will support direct costs only; no indirect support will be provided. Mentors who are not named principal or co-principal investigators may not receive funding from this Program. Requests for travel support and computers must be explicitly justified in the context of the proposed research, and such requests may be denied. Travel that is for professional development or conference attendance will not be supported.

All awards will be co-funded by the RAND-University of Pittsburgh Health Institute (RUPHI) and the University of Pittsburgh Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI). Please note that the source of funds provided by the CTSI is the Clinical and Translational Science Award (<http://www.ctsaweb.org/>), provided by the National Center for Research Resources, National Institutes of Health. Thus, any salary support provided using CTSI funds must reflect federal fringe benefit rates. Because awards will be co-funded between CTSI and RUPHI, investigators should be prepared to make minor adjustments in project budgets, if an award is made. These adjustments will be made through discussions with appropriate CTSI

and RUPHI administrators. In particular, if an award is made, a budget meeting will be held with participation from the principal investigators, their respective research administrators, and financial administrators from the CTSI.

Please note that even if Pitt investigator effort is not to be funded using funds from the TRIP award, investigator effort is required and must be cost shared by the department or other entity that will support such effort. Both the Pitt principal investigator and his/her department chair or appropriate responsibility center director (e.g., division chief or institute director) who can authorize cost sharing against an Entity-02 or -04 institutional account must sign the cover sheet. These signatures certify acceptance of principal investigator's cost shared effort and no indirect cost. The appropriate institutional account numbers against which the effort will be charged must also be provided. *If the project is funded and salary effort is not charged to the award, cost shared effort must be reflected on the SPAR document and a copy of the relevant SPAR must be provided to the CTSI administration upon request.*

**Submission, Review, and Award:**

Applications are to be submitted electronically in pdf format to Ms. Gina Snyder, [gsnyder@rand.org](mailto:gsnyder@rand.org). The e-mail message containing the pdf attachment should be copied to Ms. Melissa Penkrot, [mam266@pitt.edu](mailto:mam266@pitt.edu). Within one week of receipt of the electronic application, Ms. Snyder will send an e-mail message acknowledging receipt. Investigators should contact Ms. Snyder if such messages are not received.

Applications must be received by 5:00 pm on July 8, 2009. No exceptions will be made to this deadline.

Applications will be reviewed by the RUPHI-CTSI TRIP Review Committee, and the recommendations of this committee will be carefully considered by the RUPHI and CTSI leadership in determining which applications will receive awards. All budget items must be explicitly justified and will be reviewed by the Committee; see budget information, above. As noted, applications involving junior investigators or investigators who are changing their research interests to health services research are of high priority to the program.

It is anticipated that all projects responsive to this solicitation will require IRB approval. Pitt investigators will need approval from the Pitt IRB, and RAND investigators will need approval from the RAND IRB. Please note that no project funds can be expended until such approvals are in place. Approved protocols need not be submitted as part of the application. However, in order to minimize the time delay between approval of a project and release of funds, applicants are encouraged to prepare protocol submissions in advance of notification that an award is pending so that the protocols can be submitted for approval immediately upon such notification. Pitt investigators are required to obtain assistance with IRB protocol submission from the CTSI regulatory core through the CTSI Service Request System (<http://www.ctsi2.pitt.edu/ServiceRequest/index.aspx>) or by contacting a CTSI Regulatory Compliance Facilitator, Shannon Valenti ([sln25@pitt.edu](mailto:sln25@pitt.edu)) or Susan Sandusky ([sls127@pitt.edu](mailto:sls127@pitt.edu)). Protocol submissions should indicate that funds to support the project have been requested from the RUPHI CTSI Translating Research into Practice Pilot Program, supported by the CTSI Pilot and Collaborative Translational and Clinical Studies Core. RAND investigators should follow all standard procedures related to human subjects as set forth by the RAND Human Subjects Protection Committee (HSPC). RAND HSPC Forms A and B should be completed as soon as possible. For questions or assistance with RAND protocols, please contact Donna Keyser ([donna\\_keyser@rand.org](mailto:donna_keyser@rand.org)).

**RFA Release Date:** May 8, 2009

**Proposal Due Date:** July 8, 2009, 5:00 pm.

**Project Start date:** September 1, 2009, pending IRB approval

**Questions Regarding the Program:**

Scientific and other questions can be addressed to RUPHI Associate Directors: Donna Keyser ([donna\\_keyser@rand.org](mailto:donna_keyser@rand.org)) or Deborah Seltzer ([seltzer@pitt.edu](mailto:seltzer@pitt.edu)).