# Frequently Asked Questions
# 2025 ATRS Pilot Award

Institute for Clinical and Translational Research
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

This FAQ is provided as a resource to assist with the process of applying for the 2025 ICTR Advancing Translational Research & Science (ATRS) Pilot Award. **Please refer to the 2025 ATRS Request for Proposal (RFA) for full details about eligibility, review criteria, and application deadlines and processes.**

### Q1: What is the goal of ICTR Research Pilot Award funding?

Pilot awards are generally intended to fund activities related to collecting preliminary data and other evidence that will support future work that is funded by larger, extramural awards.

Successful proposals will clearly describe how the pilot data collected as a part of this award will be used to seek further, external, peer-reviewed funding in support of a research career trajectory.

https://www.nccih.nih.gov/grants/pilot-studies-common-uses-and-misuses

### Q2: Who funds these awards?

Funding support is contingent upon successful non-competitive renewal of grant support from the NIH National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) for awards administered by the UW Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (ICTR).

It is expected that up to 5 applications will be funded.

### Q3: What types of proposals are prioritized for funding?

Proposals responsive to this specific RFA must directly address either:

1. Advancing innovative translational research that elucidates novel processes that are generalizable to multiple translational research projects, **OR**
2. Providing solutions to common barriers in the translation of innovations into practice or policy.

### Q4: What's the difference between Translational Science and Translational Research?

**Translational Research** is the *application* of discoveries (from laboratory, clinic, or community) to create tangible health interventions—turning observations into diagnostics, therapies, and practices.

**Translational Science** is the *field of investigation* that seeks to understand and improve the *process* of translation itself—examining the scientific and operational principles that enable these discoveries to move more efficiently and effectively into real-world use.

### Q5: Is a project that proposes a novel application of an existing method fundable through this mechanism?

Potentially. A proposal that applies an existing method in a new and innovative way *could* be considered fundable *if* it directly addresses a recognized translational science obstacle and demonstrates *generalizable impact.* In other words, the applicant must show how this novel

application will (1) overcome a common barrier in moving discoveries into practice or policy, and (2) yield insights or methodologies that can be broadly applied to other translational research projects—not just the specific context in which the method is used.

*Please reach out Bri Deyo, ICTR Pilot Awards Program Manager, (deyo@wisc.edu) regarding any questions regarding the applicability of your proposed research to this award mechanism.*

**Q6: What is an example of a translational barrier?**

Examples cited in the literature and by other CTSA programs include:

- Ineffective clinical trial recruitment and/or failure/inability to retain participants
- Complexity of study protocols/complexity of managing multi-site studies effectively/ protocols and intervention not completed on time or within budget
- Translation of effective health interventions between patient populations, geographic areas, demographic differences
- Failure in translation of animal models to human trials, failure to correctly predict drug toxicology or efficacy, lack of valid predictive biomarkers
- Challenges in testing new therapeutic modalities and drug repurposing
- Barriers to data acquisition, integrity, and analysis
- Lack of data interoperability and transparency
- Failure to technically, consistently, and realistically execute complex mechanistic studies in human or animal models
- Lengthy regulatory approval processes at multiple levels of the ecosystem
- Lack of novel endpoints for clinical studies that measure health impact and equity across diverse populations

**Q 7: What do I need to do before I can apply?**

A Pre-proposal must be submitted on or before February 18, 2025, 11pm CT. Once PI eligibility and responsiveness to the RFA have been established, prospective applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal and provided with a link to make their full submission.

See the RFA for a detailed description of the required elements.

**Q8: How is the full application submitted?**

The full application is submitted via REDCap, and includes:

- A form for the collection of academic and demographic information
- A place to upload the budget and justification, using the provided template
- A place to upload all applications sections, combined into one PDF

See the RFA for a detailed description of the required elements.

**Q9: Do I need IRB/IACUC approval before I submit my application?**

No. But you will need the relevant IACUC approval or IRB approval or confirmation of exemption for your funding to be released.

**Q10: How will proposals be evaluated for scientific merit?**

Each full application will be evaluated by at least 2 independent peer reviewers using the Simplified Framework for NIH Peer Review. Merit will be determined by averaging the Overall Impact scores from each independent peer reviewer. Meritorious applications will then be evaluated and ranked by an ICTR Scientific Review Committee (SRC). The SRC may request further clarification and/or modifications.

The Simplified Framework for NIH Peer Review Criteria retains the five regulatory criteria (Significance, Investigators, Innovation, Approach, Environment) but reorganizes them into three factors; two will receive numerical criterion scores and one will be evaluated for sufficiency. All three factors will be considered in arriving at the Overall Impact score. The reframing of the criteria serves to focus reviewers on three central questions reviewers should be evaluating: How important is the proposed research, how rigorous and feasible are the methods, and whether the investigators and institution have the expertise/resources necessary to carry out the project.

https://grants.nih.gov/policy-and-compliance/policy-topics/peer-review/simplifying-review

**Q11: Are no-cost extensions allowed?**

No. The award period is determined by the NCATS, and is July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026. All funds must be spent by the end of the award period.

**Q12: Will this award be offered again?**

Yes. ICTR releases this RFA annually. The continued availability of this award is contingent upon continued funding from NCATS.

Other Pilot Award RFAs are released throughout the year. To see a complete list of ICTR funding opportunities, see: https://ictr.wisc.edu/funding-opportunities-2

**Q13: What happened to the Novel Methods award that was previously offered?**

The ICTR Novel Methods award has been replaced by the Advancing Research & Science (ATRS) Pilot Award.

**Q14: I have questions that were not addressed in this document, who can I talk to about my proposal?**

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