MS-INBRE Pilot Project Program

Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)

Grant Year 2027-2028

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1. Program Overview

The Mississippi IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence (MS-INBRE) Pilot Project Program supports the development of independent biomedical research programs at MS-INBRE Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions (PUIs).

Pilot Project awards are intended to:

- Strengthen biomedical research capacity at PUIs.
- Support the development of faculty investigators.
- Expand meaningful undergraduate research experiences.
- Enhance biomedical workforce development.
- Generate preliminary data for publications and future external funding applications.
- Promote utilization of MS-INBRE resources and infrastructure.
- Advance the mission of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Pilot Projects serve as an entry-level faculty development mechanism intended to position investigators for future MS-INBRE Research Project awards and/or external funding.

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2. Program Goals

Consistent with the goals of the NIH IDeA Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE) Program, Pilot Projects are designed to:

- Strengthen biomedical research capacity at PUIs.

- Increase undergraduate participation in research.
- Support faculty development and research independence.
- Promote biomedical workforce development.
- Increase competitiveness for external funding.
- Generate scholarly products, including publications and presentations.

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3. Award Information

Funding Mechanism: Pilot Project

Award Amount: Up to **$50,000 Direct Costs plus applicable Facilities & Administrative (F&A) Costs**

Project Period: September 1, 2027 – August 31, 2028

Number of Awards: Dependent upon available funding and program priorities.

Funding Source: National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS), through the Mississippi IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence (MS-INBRE).

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4. Key Dates

Activity	Date
Letter of Intent Due	February 1, 2027
Invitation for Full Application	February 2027
Full Application Due	April 1, 2027
Scientific Review	Spring 2027
Funding Decisions	Summer 2027
Earliest Start Date	September 1, 2027

Applications must be received by **5:00 PM Central Time** on the stated deadline.

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5. Eligibility

Applicants must:

- Hold a tenure-track faculty appointment at an MS-INBRE Predominantly Undergraduate Institution (PUI).
- Be eligible to serve as Principal Investigator under institutional policies.
- Commit a minimum of **three (3) person months (25% effort)** to the proposed project.

- Demonstrate institutional support and access to the facilities necessary to complete the proposed work.
- Propose a project relevant to biomedical research and human health.

Preference may be given to investigators who are developing a new line of biomedical research and seeking to establish competitiveness for future external funding.

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6. Responsiveness Requirements

Applications must clearly demonstrate:

NIH Mission Relevance

The proposed research must support the NIH mission by advancing knowledge relevant to human health, disease, or biomedical sciences.

NIH Priority Alignment

The proposed research must align with current NIH priorities and the goals of the INBRE program.

Research Compliance and Oversight

Applicants must identify activities requiring institutional oversight or regulatory approvals.

Dangerous Gain-of-Function (dGoF)

Projects involving prohibited dangerous gain-of-function research or other activities requiring federal high-risk biological research review are not allowable.

Undergraduate Research Engagement

Projects must provide meaningful undergraduate research experiences.

Research Capacity Building

Projects must contribute to strengthening biomedical research capacity at a PUI.

Applications that fail to adequately address these requirements may be deemed non-responsive and withdrawn from consideration.

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7. Letter of Intent (LOI)

Submission of a Letter of Intent is required.

LOI Components

1. Project Title
2. Principal Investigator Name
3. Institution
4. Mentor Identification
5. Project Summary (1 page, limited to 30 lines of text)
6. NIH Mission Relevance Statement (250 words maximum)
7. Specific Aims (1 page maximum)

Additional Required Document

- NIH Biosketch

Submission of an LOI does not obligate the applicant to submit a Full Application.

To submit your LOI visit www.msinbre.com under Faculty Funding Opportunities.

Applications must be received no later than **5:00 PM Central Time** on the applicable deadline. Late submissions may not be reviewed.

Applicants are responsible for ensuring successful delivery of application materials by the stated deadline.

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8. Full Application Requirements

Applications must be submitted as a single PDF document and include the following components.

Cover Page (1 page)

Include:

- Project Title
- PI Name
- Institution
- Department
- Academic Rank
- Contact Information
- Requested Direct Costs
- Requested F&A Costs
- Person Months and Percent Effort

Project Summary (1 page, limited to 30 lines of text)

Include:

- Overall goal
- Research question and/or hypothesis
- Brief project description
- Expected outcomes
- Relevance to human health
- NIH mission relevance

Mission Relevance, Priority Alignment, and Research Oversight Statement (1 page)

Address:

- NIH mission relevance
- Human health significance
- NIH priority alignment
- Research oversight considerations
- dGoF certification statement

Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) Letter (1 page)

The letter must verify:

- Investigator eligibility
- Institutional support
- Availability of facilities and resources
- Commitment to providing the required effort

Specific Aims (1 page)

State:

- Long-term goals
- Project objectives
- Central hypothesis or research question
- Expected outcomes

Research Strategy (4 pages maximum)

Organize under the following headings:

Significance

Scientific importance and anticipated impact.

Innovation

Novel aspects of the proposed work.

Approach

Study design, methods, analyses, anticipated outcomes, and alternative strategies.

Scientific Rigor and Reproducibility

Address:

- Scientific premise
- Experimental design
- Methods to minimize bias
- Reproducibility considerations
- Authentication of key resources, when applicable

Additional Information (3 pages maximum)

Address the following:

Undergraduate Research and Workforce Development

Describe student participation, mentoring, and expected educational outcomes.

Research Capacity Building

Describe how the project will strengthen institutional research capacity.

Use of MS-INBRE Resources

Describe use of MS-INBRE cores, instrumentation, data science, or other resources.

Sustainability and Future Funding

Describe plans for publications, external grant submissions, and continued research development.

Data Management and Sharing Plan (1 page maximum)

Describe:

- Data types expected to be generated
- Data preservation methods
- Data-sharing strategy
- Repository plans, if applicable

NIH DMS Plan Guidance:
https://grants.nih.gov/policy-and-compliance/policy-topics/sharing-policies/dms/writing-dms-plan

NIH 2026 DMS Plan Format Template:
https://grants.nih.gov/policy-and-compliance/policy-topics/sharing-policies/dms/writing-dms-plan

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Budget and Budget Justification

No page limit.

Applicants must provide a detailed project budget and budget justification using the budget categories of the NIH Research & Related (R&R) Budget. The budget justification should clearly explain and support all requested costs.

NIH R&R Budget Form Instructions:
https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-i/general/g.300-r&r-budget-form.htm

Applicants are encouraged to consult their institution's grants office when preparing budgets and calculating fringe benefit and indirect cost rates.

Allowable Costs

- Faculty salary support
- Summer salary
- Research supplies
- Laboratory consumables
- Student wages
- Core facility fees
- Publication costs
- Project-related travel
- Other approved project expenses

Unallowable Costs

- Participant Support Costs
- Entertainment expenses
- Activities prohibited by this FOA

Student researchers must be compensated through wages. Stipends are not allowable.

NIH Biosketch

Required for:

- Principal Investigator
- Mentor(s)
- Key Personnel
- Applicants must submit an NIH Biographical Sketch generated through **SciENcv** using the current NIH Common Forms format.

SciENcv:
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/

NIH Biographical Sketch Guidance:
https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm

Failure to use the current NIH Common Forms format may result in the application being considered incomplete.

Other Support

Required.

Applicants must disclose all active, pending, and other support in accordance with current NIH disclosure requirements.

Applicants must generate and submit the **Other Support** document using **SciENcv** and the current NIH Common Forms format.

SciENcv:
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/

NIH Other Support Guidance:
https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/other-support.htm

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all domestic and foreign support, including in-kind contributions and resources available to support the proposed research effort, are accurately disclosed. Failure to provide complete

and accurate disclosures may result in administrative action, withdrawal from consideration, or termination of an award.

Facilities and Resources (1 page)

Describe facilities, equipment, research resources, and institutional support available for the project.

Mentor Letter

Mentor letters should describe planned guidance related to research development, publications, and future funding.

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9. Review Criteria

Applications will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Scientific Merit

- Significance
- Innovation
- Approach
- Feasibility
- Scientific rigor

Investigator Development

- Potential for future success
- Research independence
- Career development

Undergraduate Research and Workforce Development

- Student engagement
- Mentoring quality
- Training opportunities

Research Capacity Building

- Institutional impact
- Sustainability
- Expansion of research opportunities

Programmatic Relevance

- NIH mission relevance
- NIH priority alignment
- Alignment with MS-INBRE goals

Research Compliance and Oversight

- Completeness of required disclosures
- Adequacy of compliance considerations
- dGoF review

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10. Program Milestones and Expectations

Milestone	Expectation
Effort Commitment	≥ 3 Person Months (25%)
Undergraduate Research Participation	Minimum 1 Undergraduate Student
MS-INBRE Activities	Participation Required
Mentor Meetings	Monthly
Progress Toward Project Aims	Demonstrated
Scientific Presentation	At Least One Presentation
Manuscript Development	Expected
Grant Development Activities	Expected
Future Funding Application	Strongly Encouraged

Pilot Project investigators are expected to pursue advancement to an MS-INBRE Research Project award and/or external funding opportunity.

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11. Reporting Requirements

Awardees will be required to report:

- Publications
- Presentations
- Student participation
- Student outcomes
- Grant submissions
- Grant awards
- Other scholarly products

Failure to provide required reports may affect future funding eligibility.

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12. Submission Instructions

All applicants chosen to submit a full application will be sent the application link directly.

Applications must be received no later than **5:00 PM Central Time** on the applicable deadline.

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13. Program Contacts

Scientific, Programmatic, Research Development, and Eligibility Questions

Tristan Clemons, PhD
Director of Developmental Research Project Program, Mississippi INBRE
tristan.clemons@usm.edu

Budget and Administrative Questions

Mary Ann McRaney, CRA, CPRA, CFRA
Director of Operations, Mississippi INBRE
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14. Applicant Resources

- NIH R&R Budget Form Instructions:
https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-i/general/g.300-r&r-budget-form.htm

- SciENcv (NIH Biosketch and Other Support):
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/

- NIH Biographical Sketch Guidance:
https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm

- NIH Other Support Guidance:
https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/other-support.htm

- NIH Data Management and Sharing Policy:
https://grants.nih.gov/policy-and-compliance/policy-topics/sharing-policies/dms

MS-INBRE reserves the right to revise this FOA, make no awards, or make awards in amounts different from those requested based upon programmatic priorities, peer review outcomes, and availability of funds.