CBC-HITES Request for Applications

Contents

PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

The [Chicago Biomedical Consortium](#) Hub for Innovative Technology and Entrepreneurship in the Sciences (CBC-HITES) provides Chicagoland academic innovators with the support needed to develop scientific and technical discoveries into biomedical applications.

CBC-HITES is a proof-of-concept biopharma and health technology center funded by the [NIH Research Evaluation and Commercialization Hub (REACH) program](#). Hubs are designed to provide academic innovators with product development education, industry connections, project management, and necessary funding to develop biomedical applications.

CBC-HITES is a funding and analytics resource for academic researchers from [nine Chicagoland institutions](#) built on the [processes and infrastructure](#) created by the [Chicago Biomedical Consortium](#) and is housed in Northwestern Medicine's [Comprehensive Transplant Center](#).

Windy City Innovation Award

Awards up to $75k in <u>direct costs</u> over one year for projects with at least one faculty member from one of our nine member institutions or their affiliates.

Applications are accepted twice yearly on **October 1** and **April 1.**

SUPPORT:

CBC-HITES provides support in the form of market, competitive, clinical, manufacturing, and feasibility analysis; experimental review and project management; connection to experts and venture; and many other resources needed to move inventions into the commercial sphere. We demystify the commercialization process by providing support at every stage:

- **Pre-funding guidance**
  - o Evaluate ideas for commercial attractiveness
  - o Identify appropriate scientific pathways that meet business needs
  - o Solicit and share feedback from venture capitalists and industry experts as well as federal-level feedback and guidance on regulatory issues
- **Post-funding support**
  - o Integrate insights from relevant clinical trial results
  - o Develop milestone-driven timeline for value creation
  - o Manage project progress and troubleshoot
  - o Network with industry experts and consultants
  - o Guide to additional funding sources
- **Beyond funding**
  - o Access cumulative knowledge of expert advisory boards from the private sector
  - o Provide support across development and commercial lifecycle

CBC-HITES AWARD DETAILS AND ELIGIBILITY

CBC-HITES awards up to $75k in direct costs

- Applicants must include at **least one tenured**, **tenure-track, or research faculty with research programs at one of the nine partnering institutions.** CBC-HITES welcomes teams composed of post-docs, students, and trainees who have at least one eligible submitting PI. Faculty with full-time appointments on the clinical track at one of the nine partnering institutions are also eligible to apply.
- Faculty from Loyola University, Illinois Institute of Technology, Northern Illinois University, Rosalind Franklin University, Rush University, and Discovery Partners Institute, or their affiliate institutions, applying with an innovation in **therapeutics, diagnostics, medical devices, health information technology,** or **research tools,** may be eligible for up to $75k in direct costs over one year.
- Faculty from University of Illinois Chicago (UIC), University of Chicago (UC), or Northwestern University (NU) applying with an innovation in **medical devices, health information technology,** or **research tools,** may be eligible for up to $75k in direct costs over one year.
- Applicants must have their **own designated laboratory space.** Although collaborative proposals are encouraged there is **no specific requirement for cross-institutional collaboration.**
- The technology driving the application **CANNOT be licensed** to any company or **supported by a sponsored research agreement.** If the technology is licensed to a company, you may be eligible for the [CBC Accelerator Award](#).
- Applicants **may have created a company** to pursue translation of their innovation, but there is no expectation or requirement for so doing. CBC-HITES also encourages applications before or without company formation.
- Multiple applications can be submitted from each institution.
- A PI is limited to one active CBC-HITES application at a time. If eligible, a PI may also have an active CBC Accelerator Award application.
- There is no expectation that awards will be distributed evenly among the CBC-HITES institutions.
- Research teams should not already be funded for the same (or closely related) specific aims and/or milestones.
- Specific aims or experimental plans described in **Letters of Intent** (LOI) cannot be under review at other funding institutions/agencies to support the same (or closely related) specific aims and/or milestones.
- The project should be focused on the development of an innovation built around a compelling hypothesis and focus on gathering **data that advances the hypothesis and discharges key translational risks.**

Awards up to $250k in direct costs (see CHI-Town Commercialization Award RFA)

- Applications with <u>at least one faculty member</u> from UIC, UC, or NU applying with an innovation in **therapeutics** or **biomarker diagnostics** are eligible for up to $250k in direct costs over two years.
- Applications with faculty from UIC, UC, or NU with a **licensed therapeutic** or **biomarker diagnostic** may be eligible for up to $250k in direct costs over two years from the [CBC Accelerator Award.](#)

REVIEW PROCESSES

REVIEW PROCESS GOALS:
The goal of the review process is to evaluate applicant ideas and guide them along the path to commercialization. CBC-HITES staff and our Entrepreneurial Fellows form dedicated teams that work closely with the applicant teams and each institution's technology transfer office to help Chicagoland academic scientists navigate and accelerate the translation of their innovative discoveries into impactful healthcare solutions.

REVIEW PROCESS OVERVIEW:
Entrepreneurial Fellows and CBC-HITES staff will form a dedicated team that works to evaluate the proposal. The review utilizes a multi-step process with the final stage culminating in a review of materials and discussion with an external Review Board made up of industry professionals and investors selected based on their extensive subject-matter expertise. The **Letters of Intent (LOIs)** are first screened for eligibility. Then LOIs are scored and ranked by CBC-HITES staff. Proposals that pass the initial screening, move to an in-depth evaluation which is shared with the Review Board. The Review Board helps to assess the applications and deliver funding recommendations.

REVIEW PROCESS TIMING:

PROCESS STEPS	TIMING
1. Pre-submission discussion	Anytime
2. LOI preparation and submission	Accepted twice yearly on **October 1** and **April 1**
3. LOI screen	1 month
4. Evaluation	4 months
5. Intellectual property content review	1 month
6. Review Board decision	Up to 1 week
7. Technology Guidance Committee	TBD

REVIEW PROCESS STEPS

Steps 1. Pre-submission discussion

LOIs associated with a translational research project will be **accepted twice yearly on October 1 and April 1.** CBC-HITES *strongly recommends* that the submitting PI contact CBC-HITES team for a pre-submission discussion to ensure alignment of the project with the funding criteria. The discussion will also inform whether the LOI will be eligible for an award up to $75K or $250K.

Step 2. LOI preparation and submission

See **LOI Preparation** for instructions on how to submit the LOI application.

Steps 3. Screen of LOIs

The initial pool of LOIs is assessed by the CBC-HITES team for eligibility and by the following criteria:

1. Transformative potential
2. Project maturity
3. Execution feasibility
4. Commercial opportunity
5. Funding outlook

Internal CBC-HITES reviewers will score projects (1–3) for each criterion based on findings in the initial assessment. LOIs will be ranked based on these scores relative to the total LOI pool for the application cycle. **Faculty with LOIs with the highest scores will be asked for additional information** (i.e., data, drug/technology development plans) **to inform the evaluation (Step 4).**

Step 4. Evaluation

Using a rubric that encompasses eight main areas of inquiry, the applicant's LOI is further evaluated and a slide deck elucidating the following key project components will be developed:

1. Problem/market
2. Innovation
3. Near-term execution
4. Path to market
5. Business model
6. Commercial opportunity
7. Follow-on funding outlook
8. Team & resources

Regardless of funding decision, if LOI is evaluated, applicants will receive the project evaluation slide deck containing the above topics, an executive summary, and cover page.

Step 5. Intellectual property content review

Working with the applicant's Technology Transfer Office, we ensure that no confidential information is shared during our Review Board meeting.

Step 6. CBC-HITES Review Board meeting and decision

The CBC-HITES team will share the evaluation slide deck with a Review Board, a committee made up of scientific experts, industry professionals, and investors selected based on their extensive subject-matter expertise. The committee reviewers will score projects (1–5) based on the criterion below. Projects will be ranked and those with the highest ranking will be considered for funding.

1. Transformative potential
2. Project maturity
3. Execution feasibility

4. Business model viability
5. Non-equity funding
6. Equity financing
7. Interest from strategics

Step 7. Technology Guidance Committee Review

Under some circumstances, qualified proposals (and the corresponding evaluation decks) will be reviewed by the Technology Guidance Committee composed of Federal experts assembled by NIH which include NIH Entrepreneurs-in-Residence, experts from the FDA, and experts from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for additional input.

Step 8. Funding

The final funding decision will be made by CBC-HITES based on compiled scores from the Review Board and, when available, the Technology Guidance Committee.

Step 9. Project management

We provide agile project management services to all programs funded through **CBC-HITES**. Our services include:

- Market analysis and competitive landscape assessments through our program evaluation process to establish a compelling path to commercialization.
- Development of a milestone-driven workplan timeline and budget framework to guide programs during the support period for the CBC-HITES grant as well as the activities that will be supported by follow-on funding opportunities.
- Regularly scheduled project team meetings between investigators, project managers, and consultants or stakeholders to evaluate and ensure progress against pre-determined milestone criteria.
- Support for the identification of non-dilutive funding opportunities to continue to execute on the established workplan following the CBC-HITES funding term.
- Connection to a network of 75+ investors and strategic members of our venture community to guide preparations for equity financing.

AWARD FUNDING SOURCES

CBC-HITES will scale CBC's infrastructure to more institutions and is funded by a $10.4 million investment over four years, including $6 million in support from the Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust, a $4 million grant awarded by the National Institutes of Health, and $400,000 by the Walder Foundation. In partnership with 27 industry, venture capital, and community organizations, CBC-HITES will accelerate the translation of new life sciences technologies from lab to commercial sphere.

LOI PREPARATION:

All LOIs **MUST** be prepared according to the guidelines listed below. All pages and documents listed below should be assembled into a **SINGLE PDF** document in the order listed. **Portfolios will not be accepted.** If your LOI advances to the screening step, the CBC-HITES staff will reach out to inquire about additional data and/or publications that may support your innovation.

To submit your application, please follow the below steps:

Step 1: Fill out the online form. All fields marked by asterisks (*) are required.

- Submitter information
- Intellectual property
  - General technology transfer questions to assess the submitter's interactions with the US Patent Office. These data are collected for the NIH REACH Common Application.
  - Technology transfer questions related to **this technology.**
  - Name and contact information for your institutional Technology Transfer representative, if applicable.
- Biological specimens
  - Please indicate if embryonic stem cells, or human or animal subjects will be used in this research.

Step 2: Attach your LOI in PDF format. The LOI must conform to the following guidelines:

- Name the PDF file with "HITES_LOI_" followed by the last name of the PI designated as contact person (e.g., HITES_LOI_smith.pdf).
- The body of the LOI is limited to 4 pages; Include the following sections with the indicated titles and in the indicated order. Use at least size 11 font, 0.5-inch margins, and standard letter paper size (8.5" x 11").
  - On **page 1,** a one-paragraph lay-language summary of the project *(max. 150 words)*
  - On **pages 2–3**, include an overview of the translational potential of the project by using the headings below and answering the following questions (please answer to the best of your ability and reach out to the CBC-HITES team for assistance):
    - **Innovation:**
      - What is the proposed innovation that is this application's focus?
      - What is the proposed patient population, healthcare setting, or research setting that will benefit from the proposed innovation?
    - **Problem/unmet need:**
      - What problem is solved by the proposed innovation?
      - Why is the current standard insufficient?
    - **Benefits:**
      - How does the proposed innovation differ from the status quo /current standard?
      - What additional benefits will your innovation provide?

- **Supporting data**:
  - What types of experiments and development activities have been done to date to advance the innovation?
  - What data have been generated to demonstrate the potential of the innovation to address the problem?
- **Next steps:**
  - How do you plan to use the award funds to advance the innovation toward commercialization?
  - What are the key open questions around the proposed innovation?
  - What are your proposed next steps/the key experiments?
  - What is the next key experiment that will significantly de-risk your project?
- **Funding**:
  - Has this project received any funding for translational work? If yes, please elaborate and indicate the relationship of this proposal to otherwise funded work.
- **References:**
  - On **page 4**, relevant cited scientific references *(do not to exceed one page; please follow the NIH format)*

LOI SUBMISSION:

Completed LOIs **MUST** be submitted online along with the online application. Clearly designate the contact person on the LOI. The contact person listed will be responsible for interacting with the CBC-HITES team.

Please designate the lead PI on the LOI as the administrative contact person and submit online.

▸ **Submit your CBC_HITES Award LOI here**