Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
ACTRI Pilot Project Awards
Last Updated: November 10, 2025

Eligibility

Do I need to have a full-time faculty appointment for the Pilot Project Award?
Yes. Assistant and Associate Professors at UC San Diego or an ACTRI Partner Institution* are eligible for the Pilot Project Award, though priority is given to early stage investigators proposing collaborative projects. Full Professors are not eligible, unless they are entering a new line of research.

Postdoctoral Fellows and Project Scientists are not eligible. However, they may apply, but will need a faculty appointment at time of award, if selected.

*Individuals employed by a Partner Institution without a faculty appointment are not eligible to apply as Primary Investigators, but are encouraged to participate as co-Investigators on a project led by a UC San Diego or Partner Institution faculty member.

Can I apply with multiple projects?
Principal Investigators may only submit one Pilot project proposal. Previous awardees are not eligible to reapply for 12 months following the conclusion of an awarded Pilot project.

Do I need to be a US Citizen or have permanent residence in the US to apply?
US Citizenship or permanent residency is not required for the Pilot Project Award.

Applicants who are non-U.S. citizens employed at a U.S. institution are eligible to apply. It is the responsibility of the applicant's institution to ensure that the individual's visa status allows them to remain in the U.S. for the duration of the project.

As part of the review process, we may request documentation confirming that the applicant's visa or employment authorization extends through the project period.

Are applications with Foreign Components allowed?
At this time, Foreign Components are not allowed.

Application Requirements

Do I need to apply through the Research Affairs/HSSPPO office?
No, you will apply directly to ACTRI by clicking on the application link listed on the ACTRI Pilot Project Award website. You will not need to submit RES or other internal forms required by HSSPPO.

What are the Reviewer criterion for this application?
The following criteria will be used in evaluating these proposals:
- Significance of the research and scientific quality
- Clinal & Translational science focus
- Feasibility to complete within the one-year funding period
- Probability that the work will yield important new information, technology, or service and/or yield new federal funding
- Qualifications of the Principal Investigator and co-Investigators

What is meant by "translational science focus" as a review criterion?
Translational science refers to systematic efforts to understand and address roadblocks commonly encountered in translational research. Whereas **translational research** focuses on moving discoveries

from basic science to health implementation, **translational science** identifies and addresses barriers in the scientific process that can generalized to other translational research projects and scientific fields. Translational science thus enables and accelerates translational research by providing generalizable and scalable scientific and operational innovations, while maintaining scientific and ethical rigor.

ACTRI supports the spectrum of translational science, from the translation of concepts into testable applications, to the translation of health care delivery to the community. See the following resources for more information: NCATS Translational Science Resources , Montefiore Einstein CTSA; University of Utah CTSA, UAMS CTSA

Do I need to have an approved IRB/IACUC protocol to apply if my project involves animal and/or human subjects research?

No, you will not need an approved protocol to apply, but you must submit evidence of IRB or IACUC submission with your application.

IRB/IACUC approval is required at time of award. Delayed IRB/IACUC approval postpones funding initiation.

What if my ACTRI membership application has not been approved by the submission deadline?

You can still select "Yes" in response to the question inquiring about your ACTRI membership *if* you submitted your membership application before the Pilot Award submission deadline.

Please email researchcomm@health.ucsd.edu for ACTRI membership status inquiries.

What format should the budget be submitted in?

Any budget form is acceptable, we simply ask that it lists each personnel, their effort, salary, benefits, and non-payroll.

Do I need to provide a budget justification and a study timeline?

Yes, both a budget justification and a study timeline (template provided in InfoReady) are required at the time of submission to ensure feasibility within the funding period.

$40,000 in direct costs can be budgeted for the 12-months project in line with allowable expenses on federal grants. Cost extensions are not allowed and unspent funds by March 31 will not be available for further research.

Expense	Allowed	Not allowed
PI Effort (capped at 1.2 calendar months)	X	
Postdoctoral Fellow Support	X	
Clinical Research Coordinator (CRC)	X	
Travel		X
Clerical Help		X
Office Supplies		X
Books and Subscriptions		X
Publication Expenses		X
Tuition Remission		X
Course Buyout		X
Graduate Student Support		X

<u>**Awardee Expectations**</u>

May I defer acceptance of this award?
> No, we do not accept deferrals.

What expectations are there of Pilot Awardees?
> All investigators selected for funding will be required to meet quarterly with the Pilots Director and the ACTRI Pilots Management Team. In addition, investigators must submit a progress report – as required by the program's funder, NCATS. A follow-up report will be due one year after the project's completion. This report will consist of a detailed description of progress to date and a listing of all submitted publications and grant applications (pending or funded), meeting abstracts, and seminars relating to the pilot project.
>
> Upon concluding the Award, investigators will have the opportunity to participate in ACTRI's novel "What's Next" program designed to continue supporting investigators.

What if I have other questions or I would like to meet with someone to discuss my application?
> Please contact **ACTRI-Education** at ACTRI-Education@health.ucsd.edu for any questions about the program.