

Center for Medical Cannabis Research Pilot Awards Request for Proposals

Full Proposals Due: **Friday, February 28, 2025**

Overview

As part of the launch of the University of Utah **Center for Medical Cannabis Research (CMCR)**, the center will support three pilot awards up to \$50,000. The mission of the CMCR is to lead methodologically sound research evaluating the safety and efficacy of cannabis and cannabis products used with therapeutic intent.

Timeline

- Pre-application required for submission by Friday, December 27, 2024.
- Deadline for submission is Friday, **February 28, 2025**, midnight local time.
- Decisions will be made April 2025.
- Funding will start as early as May 2025.

Research Scope

We invite applications that build upon the mission of the CMCR as stated above and support the preliminary data and research collaborations required for developing subsequent competitive grant applications and/or commercialization opportunities.

Areas of interest include (but are not limited to):

- Clinical, public health, medical cannabis program related, and impact of medical cannabis research and discoveries.
- Development of innovative approaches to addressing medical cannabis' therapeutic risks and/or benefits.
- Exploring the analgesic properties of cannabinoids and its constituents.
- Contraindications, drug-drug interactions, adverse effects, risk of cannabis use disorder, or driving impairment related to medical cannabis.
- Research related to the potential health effects of various cannabis delivery methods, including vaporizing, ingesting, topical application, and combustion.
- Promote translational understanding of medical cannabis.
- Investigating the whole or parts of the *Cannabis sativa* plant, cannabis extracts or enriched extracts, cannabinoid compounds extracted and derived from cannabis extracts, non-cannabinoid constituents of cannabis, synthetic cannabinoids, and the components of the endocannabinoid system (the signaling pathways in the body activated by cannabinoids).
- Novel cultivation, synthesis, and production techniques or frameworks to support research, regulation, and standardization.
- Addressing social, healthcare systems, policy and economic aspects related to medical cannabis access, use and regulations.

We encourage projects to consider the following:

- New collaborations between clinical and research faculty, faculty from different departments, and collaborations with other institutions throughout Utah.
- Proposals from established investigators that represent new research directions.
- Promote justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging.

Eligible Applicants

- Only one research proposal per principal investigator (PI) will be reviewed.
- All PIs must be tenure or career-track clinical or research faculty.
- Any Utah-based research institution may apply.
- PIs must be affiliated faculty of the CMCR. If you are not already affiliated faculty, you may join by contacting valerie.ahanonu@hsc.utah.edu.

Proposal Preferences

Preference will be given to projects that include any of the following features:

- Have significant scientific merit.
- Demonstrate innovation advancements in medical cannabis research.
- Have a high potential for future extramural funding from entities like the National Institutes of Health, the National Institution on Drug Abuse, the Department of Defense, the Department of Health and Human Services, or foundations dedicated to research.
- Are not currently supported by extramural funding in the seed grant topic area.
- Represent work from new collaborative teams or that support partnerships with researchers from other Utah institutions.

Application Process

Pre- application Instructions:

Pre-applications and all supporting documents should be submitted electronically through the University of Utah's Competition Space interface at <http://utah.infoready4.com/> by December 27, 2024.

A pre-application must include (4 pages max.):

1. A Letter of Intent (LOI) including PI, Multiple Principal Investigator (MPI) and/or Co-investigators (CI) titles and affiliated institutions and a brief summary of current or planned collaboration activities with the team.
2. Project abstract.

Full applications and all supporting documents should be submitted electronically through the University of Utah's Competition Space interface at <http://utah.infoready4.com/> by February 28, 2025.

Full applications must include (1 1/2 in. margins, ariel, 11pt. font):

1. Cover page detailing PI name, each CI's name (include institution, department, title, and contact information), and project title.
2. A lay abstract for the general public (up to a 1/2 page). Please make sure to address the significance of the proposed project and how these funds will help future research efforts. For help with a lay abstract, see: [Dubé, C.E. & Lapane, K.L. J Canc Educ \(2014\) 29: 577. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13187-013-0570-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/s13187-013-0570-1)
3. Specific aims of the research proposal (up to a 1/2 page).
4. Detailed proposal (up to 6 pages max., including figures). Please address significance, innovation, (include proposed role/contributions for each team member and investigator synergy), approach, timeline, clear deliverables, research environment, and data sharing plan.
5. A clear plan for extramural funding (up to a 1/2 page). This plan must speak to specific plans including funding mechanism/call and planned submission date.
6. References (no page limit).
7. Biographical sketch for the PI and each CI (5 pages max.).
8. Proposed project budget and justification (not to exceed \$50,000), following the guidelines below. Please describe in the budget document how the funds will be distributed between investigators. (Note: funds will be distributed from the SVPHS Research Unit to a single PI on each grant for further distribution to the rest of the collaborators).

Items 1-8 must be submitted as one PDF.

Budget Guidelines

Funding is available for salaries and fringe benefits of post-doctoral fellows, students, technicians, and other non-faculty project personnel, supplies, miscellaneous expenses, and services. Awards made to institutions outside of the University of Utah will not include indirect costs. Grant funds cannot be used for faculty salaries (summer or academic year); travel (e.g., conferences cannot be supported by this grant); consultants; or office equipment, including computers (unless specifically justified). Please prepare a one-page budget with maximum direct costs of \$50,000 for one year of support. The budget template on Competition Space (<http://utah.infoready4.com/>) is not required but may be used for this purpose.

Evaluation of Proposals

Proposals will be reviewed by the CMCR Leadership as well as ad hoc members to assess innovation, scholarly merit, likelihood for success, external funding, and alignment with the mission of the CMCR. Final decisions will be made by the CMCR Steering Committee.

Post Award Funding Guidelines

One copy of the IRB approval, if human participants are involved, or if conducting animal research, a copy of the IACUC approval will be required prior to the release of funds. Grant administration is the responsibility of the Principal Investigators.

Progress Reports

The following reports are required from all awarded PIs. Templates will be provided.

6 months	Progress report will be required for review by the research committee to assure adequate scientific progress.
1 year	Progress report describing the results and deliverables of the research, future directions, and plans to secure additional funding.
Up to 3 years	Report of outcomes, diagnoses/clinical impact, publications, or extramural funding stemming from the work.

PIs may also be asked to participate in a presentation at either the annual symposium or a CMCR seminar and will be coordinated by administrative staff.

No Cost Extension

Unused funds must be returned to the CMCR after one year. However, recipients can submit, no later than two months before the one-year deadline, an explanation of why the funds have not been spent and a plan to spend out the grant after the one-year deadline. In such cases, the CMCR Leadership will decide if additional time will be allowed.

Questions?

If you have any questions or would like early feedback on your proposal, please feel free to email Valerie Ahanonu at Valerie.Ahanonu@hsc.utah.edu