Research Forum Program Overview

PROGRAM PURPOSE

The Research Forum (RF) program provides investigators with efficient guidance to improve and accelerate their projects in clinical and translational research. The RF provides two services to assist investigators:

- Consultation with the RF Director or assigned Navigator to discuss the project, identify issues and potential next steps, and prepare the project for review by the RF Team of experts.
- A forum for presenting research plans to a multidisciplinary Team of experts including senior faculty, technical experts, and ICTS Core personnel.

Ideally, research projects considered for this program should address (but are not limited to) one or more of the following cross-cutting research themes established by the ICTS:

**Theme 1:** Translate the results of genetic/genomic research into clinical research and practice
**Theme 2:** Accelerate the development and evaluation of new therapeutics
**Theme 3:** Conduct research in comparative effectiveness and dissemination and implementation to improve the transfer of clinical research discoveries into practice

The RF program is designed to guide and support many project development activities. The RF functions as a team science/team mentoring group of multidisciplinary researchers and support personnel who assist investigators in transforming their ideas into well-designed translational projects, subsequent grant applications, and/or successful/marketable biotechnology platforms.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Research projects accepted into the program can receive support in a variety of areas, including (but not limited to) the following:

- New protocol development
- Current proposal feedback
- Milestone and budget development
- Biostatistics and research design
- Subject recruitment
- New collaboration opportunities/network development
- Nurse coordinator assistance
- IRB and regulatory assistance
- Guidance on intellectual property
- Development and completion of analysis plan

**Application Process:** A brief pre-application (includes an investigator NIH Biosketch and a half-page abstract) is required; complete the online RF- Pre Application survey. Pre-applications are considered on a rolling call. The RF Director will respond within 2–3 business days and will assign a Navigator who will work directly with the PI to discuss additional project details. The Navigator will provide the RF Project number if invited forward, supply the project description template (3-page limit) and provide additional information for the full RF- Application.
If requesting a Community Engagement Studio, applicants complete the Studio Request Form and identify the project problem and target population. The Community Engagement Navigator will follow-up with the investigator within 2–3 business days for additional project details and planning activities.

**RF Presentation:** Investigators should plan on a minimum of one month to complete the application process and develop the presentation (15 minutes) for the RF Team. A presentation template is provided to the investigator to develop the project and identify target issues that will receive RF Team feedback. The remainder of the hour-long RF session will be an interactive dialogue with the RF team members. Tips are provided on the RF webpage for developing an effective presentation.

**RF and Studio Review Process:** The full project application and oral presentation will be reviewed by the RF or Studio team, and a report summarizing the discussion and recommendations will be prepared and distributed to all participants within two weeks following the meeting. All projects will be monitored and periodically reviewed by the ICTS as needed to determine program value, assess delivery of milestones, and to receive additional input/guidance.

### RF TEAM and AD HOC REVIEWERS

Each RF Team has a dedicated set of members who regularly serve and review projects on a monthly basis. Additional subject level expertise is provided by ad hoc panelists. Average Team size for project development and review is 13 members.

### AVAILABLE FUNDING

Supplemental funds can be made available depending on project needs. If recommended by the Team and identified in the report, the Navigator will work with the PI to develop a budget and project milestones which will be reviewed by the RF leadership group to evaluate the funding request. Note: per ICTS standard policy, ‘no-cost extensions’ are not permitted, so the funds for these services will be available up to the time specified by the RF. Continued funding of any effort is contingent on demonstrating successful progress toward meeting the project goals.

### ELIGIBILITY

- Applicant must be registered members of the ICTS. Member eligibility and registration is available at [www.icts.wustl.edu](http://www.icts.wustl.edu). Registration takes less than 5 minutes. For assistance with registration, contact the ICTS office by email (icts@wustl.edu).
- Applicants from WU or its ICTS partner academic institutions must hold a faculty level appointment.
- For research fellows or trainees, the mentor (faculty member) must submit the application as PI. Describe the trainee-mentor circumstances in the application.
- Employees of BJH, Goldfarb School of Nursing, or SLCH (MD, PhD, nurse, or allied healthcare professional) may apply with the permission of their departmental director.

### CONSIDERATIONS

In developing applications for the RF, investigators should generally strive to show a DIRECT or CLEAR LINK to human health or disease for proposals that deal with animal models or *in vitro* culture systems.

### CONTACT

For more information about the RF program, please email icts-rf@email.wustl.edu or call Betsy Keath at 314.747.8155.