I. Mission

The mission of the General Clinical Research Center (GCRC)’s Clinical Research Feasibility Funds (CReFF) program is to support and encourage clinical research at the GCRC among junior faculty who have not yet established independent NIH or comparable funding. The program offers start-up funds for investigators utilizing GCRC resources, and is designed to support pilot studies.

As discussed in NIH Roadmap initiatives, there is an increasing need for experienced clinical researchers to translate the advances of biomedical research into clinical applications. The GCRC provides the necessary infrastructure for training in protocol design, and the conduct and analysis of clinical research. This award allows junior investigators to further develop the knowledge and skills necessary for clinical research within a collaborative and multidisciplinary team research setting.

II. Eligibility

Candidates must have a GCRC-approved protocol by the time they submit their CReFF application. Candidates may be:
- Junior faculty with a rank of instructor or assistant professor
- Residents/Fellows with a faculty member mentor on the protocol

Past recipients of this award may not apply again.

Use of the inpatient or outpatient unit is mandatory. Non-use because of extenuating circumstances will be evaluated by the GCRC Advisory Committee on a case-by-case basis.

III. Level of Support

Up to $20,000 (direct costs) will be awarded to worthy candidates. The amount of the award is based on available unrestricted funds from the GCRC grant and may vary year to year. The CReFF subcommittee of the GCRC Advisory Committee will decide the final amount of the award to each successful candidate.

IV. Budget Request Limitations:
The award can be used for direct research costs not covered by resources available through the GCRC, such as:
- Laboratory supplies
- Partial salary support for research coordinator(s)
- Ancillaries not covered by the approved GCRC protocol budget
- Travel reimbursement to research subjects for their participation
This award may NOT be used for:

- Salary for the recipient or other co-investigators on the project.
- Salary for administrative support, such as a secretary
- Telephone services not directly related to the project
- Alteration or renovations of physical space such as offices or labs
- Purchase of office, computer or laboratory equipment
- Binding of periodicals and books, publication costs, and subscriptions
- Travel or honoraria for visiting lecturers

To ensure that your budget requests are appropriate, please consult with Dilcia Grenald: 212-746-3484

V. Application Process

1. **Deadline for submissions**: CReFF application documents are due June 1. If funds are available a second award cycle may be offered during the grant year [January].

2. **Required materials**
   
   a. Letter from the candidate to include: a description of the candidate’s career plan; a description of how support from the CReFF Program will allow the candidate to seek external support based upon the pilot data collected; which funding agencies are appropriate for funding the project after the pilot study is completed; and a timetable for potential submission of grants for extramural support.
   
   b. Candidate’s biosketch and other support using the following PHS 398 3-page format: [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/biosketch.doc](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/biosketch.doc)
   
   c. If applicable, mentor’s biosketch and other support using the PHS 398 3-page format.
   
   d. A detailed budget and budget justification for support up to $20,000. The format to be used can be found at: [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/fp4.doc](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/fp4.doc) - refer to Section IV for budget guidelines.
   
   e. Letters of recommendation from the applicant's research mentor and divisional or department head. The letters should describe in detail how the applicant will be supported by the mentor and divisional or departmental head, with specifics on the applicant's protected time (% effort) available for completion of the project. Support is defined as protection of time, funding or allocation of resources for the project.

VI. Selection Process and Criteria

Applications are reviewed by the CReFF subcommittee of the GCRC Advisory Committee. Research that does not involve human subjects or that does not utilize the GCRC will not be considered. The candidate’s proposal is reviewed according to the following criteria:
1. Commitment by the candidate of a substantial portion of his/her academic time to clinical research.

2. Merit of the candidate’s career development statement

3. Potential for acquiring outside funding, particularly at the NIH R01 level

4. Interdisciplinary features of the proposal

5. Letters of recommendation from the research mentor and divisional/departmental head providing evidence that: the applicant is committed to a career in clinical research; the division will support the applicant's career development in clinical research; and the division can provide support for the applicant's research project.

6. Scientific Merit of the candidate’s approved GCRC research protocol

7. Appropriate utilization of and need for GCRC resources

VII. Management of Funds
All expenses will be administered through the GCRC. Any re-budgeting of awarded funds requires a detailed letter and justification submitted to the GCRC Advisory Committee for review and approval.

It is possible to extend the award period for an additional year by demonstrating significant progress on the project, need for additional time and likelihood of results leading to extramural support. Requests for an extension of time beyond one year for use of the award must be made in writing before expiration of the award period and must include justification for that extension. Any unexpended funds at the end of the project period will revert to the GCRC grant.

VIII. Evaluation of Project Progress
An annual progress report (limited to no more than 3 pages) will be required as well as a report at the time of project completion. The following form should be used: [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/2590/2590-fp5.doc](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/2590/2590-fp5.doc). Reports should include: hypothesis, aims, brief description of methods and results and how they will be used to obtain extramural funding.

Note: Investigators beginning or considering a career in clinical research should be aware of the new NIH-funded Clinical Investigator Loan Repayment Program now available (see [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-01-064.html](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-01-064.html))

VII. CReFF applications or questions should be submitted to
David Brillon, MD, Associate Program Director
Weill Cornell GCRC
525 East 68th Street, Box 149
New York, NY 10021
E-mail to: djbrillo2@med.cornell.edu

To submit a GCRC application: contact:
Rita Falbel, Protocol Coordinator
Phone: 746-6291
Email: rfalbel@med.cornell.edu

For more information about the GCRC, visit
www.med.cornell.edu/gerc