



Island-wide Universities Open Call Collaborative Seeds Proposals (CCSP)

The NIH-NIGMS Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) Program seeks to augment and strengthen institutional biomedical research capabilities by expanding and developing biomedical faculty research through support of a multidisciplinary center. **The COBRE PHASE 2 Center for Neuroplasticity at the University of Puerto Rico** aims to (1) foster development of junior investigators into competitive researchers working on projects with broad biomedical significance, (2) provide a state-of-the-art instrumentation core that combines imaging and electrophysiological approaches and expertise, and (3) sustain a COBRE Administrative Core that supports programmatic activities and promotes interdisciplinary collaborations at the basic and translational levels. In this second phase, the COBRE Center will define pathways and benchmarks for basic and translational research across the UPR system and will ensure the sustained growth and evolution of a program that will advance the trajectory of competitive biomedical research in Puerto Rico over the next decades.

To enhance achievement of the primary programmatic goals of the COBRE Phase 2 award in the thematic area of Neuroplasticity, synergism is sought from the interaction of its three main components, a two-tier cadre of junior investigators, the Administrative Core activities, and the COBRE Neuroimaging and Electrophysiology Facility (NIEF) core infrastructure. The **COBRE NIEF** (<http://cicim.upr.edu/neuroimaging-and-electrophysiology-facility/>) has developed into a unique state-of-the-art resource for the Center for Neuroplasticity investigators and the larger University of Puerto Rico (UPR) biomedical research community. To enrich this synergy and increase the overarching impact of the COBRE Phase 2 Neuroplasticity Center a **COBRE Collaborative Seeds Proposals (CCSP) Program** of island-wide outreach and dimensions is hereby instituted. The CCSP further advances the NIEF goals of providing access to state-of-the-art instrumentation cores that combine imaging and electrophysiological approaches and expertise. It also supports programmatic activities that promote interdisciplinary collaborations. Furthermore, increased access to resources, infrastructure and opportunities is also attained by the strategic allocation of COBRE and NIEF infrastructure resources at the UPR-MSC, UPR-RP campus, the Institute of Neurobiology and the Molecular Sciences Research Center.

The CCSP Program introduces a novel COBRE outreach and expansion component by making the human and infrastructure resources in the thematic area of Neuroplasticity available to all higher education colleges and universities in Puerto Rico. Through this initiative the COBRE Phase 2 Neuroplasticity Center at the UPR further expands the dimensions of the cadre of neuroplasticity research scientists in Puerto Rico, and hence the potential for competitive research and discovery. Due to the urgent need to combat the current pandemic, the program strongly encourages submission of research focused on the neurobiology and neuroplasticity changes related to the COVID-19 disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2. Accordingly, **the COBRE PHASE 2: Center for Neuroplasticity at the University of Puerto Rico officially announces a call for the submission of COBRE Collaborative Seeds Proposals (CCSP). A total of five (5) CCSP proposals are expected to be funded during this COBRE Phase 2 fiscal year (July 2021- June 2022) year, with each proposal providing a maximum of \$3,000 for the collaboration proposed.**

CCSP proposals must meet the following criteria: (1) the proposal must be developed and submitted by two or more collaborating investigators, (2) at least one of the collaborating investigators must be from the UPR, (3) one investigator can participate as a PI or CoPI in a maximum of two CCSP (4) Neuroplasticity must be the theme of the CCSP research proposal, (5) the proposed research collaboration must rely primarily on the use of COBRE Neuroimaging and Electrophysiology Facility (NIEF) core infrastructure, (6) CCSP costs must also be based primarily on the use of the COBRE NIEF, (7) the research proposal must be of a limited scope achievable within a one-year or less time frame, and (8) proposals must include assurance of full compliance with all applicable federal policies, rules, and guidelines for research involving human subjects, vertebrate animals, and/or biohazards.

The CCSP submission format is:

Section 1 - Title, Collaborating Investigators (CCSP Team) names/affiliations, and Date (half-page);

Section 2 - Summary (abstract) of the proposed CCSP research (half-page);

Section 3 - Detailed Research Plan - Specific Aims, Significance, Innovation, Experimental Design, Timeline, and Expected Outcomes (including publication or proposal submission plan) (3 pages);

Section 4 - Detailed Budget Justification and detailed Matching Funds committed (if any) (Matching funding from partnering institutions will increase the probability of receiving the CCSP award);

Section 5 - Official quotations from the NIEF and of any other justified proposed expense unavailable at the NIEF;

Section 6 - Collaborating Investigators (CCSP Team) Letter of Agreement to Collaborate, and CCSP team members Biographical Sketches (NIH style); and,

Section 7 – Documented assurance of full compliance with all applicable federal policies, rules, and guidelines for research involving human subjects, vertebrate animals, and/or biohazards.

CCSP research proposals for review must be submitted electronically to the UPR Medical Sciences Campus' COBRE Pilot Projects and Seeds Program Director (walter.silva@upr.edu) **anytime from August 25, 2021 to February 25, 2022. NO proposals will be accepted after these deadlines, and funding will depend on the scientific merit of the proposal, its advancement of the Center's goals and objectives, and availability of funds.** The CCSP proposal will require: an initial administrative review to assure compliance with COBRE Program guidelines followed by a second level review by the COBRE Infrastructure Core(s) Director(s) Subsequently, the CCSP will be submitted to the COBRE PI/PD for his evaluation and final approval.

Contacts Information

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Approved by:



Dr. Jose A. Lasalde Dominicci
Principal Investigator/Program Director

COBRE PHASE 2: Center for Neuroplasticity at the University of Puerto Rico
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