

2026 Edward Ellerbeck Implementation Science Pilot Project Program Request for Applications

2-page Letter of Intent Submission Deadline: March 2, 2026, 5:00 PM

Oral Presentation by select applicants to KCIS Leadership Committee: Week of March 30, 2026

Full Application Submission Deadline for select applicants: May 26, 2026, 5:00 PM

Anticipated Award Notification Date: June 15, 2026

Anticipated Project Period: September 1, 2026 – August 31, 2027

Overview

The Kansas Center for Implementation Science (KCIS), a NIH supported Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE), is accepting pilot project applications for up to \$50,000 in direct costs. Projects must be in the area of implementation science and address a pressing clinical or population health problem. Clinical investigators are encouraged to apply. The goal of the pilot project program is to enable researchers to explore novel research approaches and to generate preliminary data on the feasibility and potential of implementation science approaches. Proposals should reflect original implementation science research that will be highly competitive for future extramural funding at the national level.

Eligibility

Eligible investigators must hold a faculty level appointment at the University of Kansas Medical Center, the University of Kansas, or Kansas State University. Highest priority will be placed on promising junior investigators who have not held previous NIH R01-level funding or equivalent, in an effort to recruit these individuals into implementation science careers and to prepare them for independent funding. Established researchers are also encouraged to apply if they have a highly innovative idea and if the approach is a significant departure from their prior research.

Projects must fall within the broad area of implementation science and clearly aim to improve health outcomes. To consider whether your project has an implementation science focus, review *An Introduction to Implementation Science for the Non-Specialist*, PMID PMC4573926. For an overview of framing implementation science questions and selecting conceptual frameworks, study designs, implementation strategies, and measures visit the [University of Washington's Implementation Science Research Pathway website](#).

If you submitted a LOI for the KCIS Research Project Leader (RPL) RFA: If you would like the LOI submitted to the KCIS RPL RFA to be considered for a Pilot Project award if not selected for the RPL award, please let Erin Powell (epowell2@kumc.edu) know. *For concurrent RPL applicants, you only need to submit a new LOI for the Pilot Project Program if it is for a project on a different topic.* Please note, investigators may not hold COBRE RPL and Pilot Awards congruently. You will be notified by March 4, 2026 if you have been invited to present your proposed RPL project to the KCIS Leadership Committee.

Application Process

1. Letter of Intent – Deadline: **March 2, 2026, 5:00 PM**

Letters of Intent (LOI) should be sent to the KCIS Administrative Core, Erin Powell (epowell2@kumc.edu).

Applicants are strongly encouraged to reach out to KCIS Core Directors to discuss their pilot project LOI. To do so, please [complete a brief consultation request on the KCIS website](#). For contact information please see Further Information below.

The letter of intent may not exceed **2 pages** (11pt Arial or Helvetica; 0.5” margins) and must include the following information:

- a. PI's name, position title, department/school, and contact information; and project title
- b. Description of the proposed research including:
 - i. Specific aims
 - ii. Prior research experience and project team
 - iii. Summary of the proposed methods
 - Emphasis should be given to providing a strong premise for the particular setting in which the implementation question will be addressed and methods for investigating implementation within that setting. Include description of any experience engaging with the target population, partners, or stakeholders.
- c. A brief statement of how KCIS cores will be used. Information about the cores can be found on the [KCIS website](#). KCIS Core Directors may be contacted for additional information.
- d. References Cited (if applicable; not included in 2-page limit)
- e. PI's NIH bioksketch (pre or post January 26, 2025 format may be used; not included in 2-page limit)

The LOIs will be reviewed by the KCIS Leadership Committee and selected applicants will be invited to make a detailed oral presentation of their proposal. Chosen applicants will subsequently receive consultation and mentorship in preparing a full written proposal, including consultation on frameworks, study designs, qualitative methods, biostatistics, and engaging with stakeholders in the implementation setting.

2. Selected LOIs will be asked to present their work to the KCIS Leadership Committee and answer questions during a brief oral presentation. Oral presentations will take place: **Week of March 30, 2026**

3. After oral presentations, selected PIs will be asked to prepare a full written proposal. Written proposals due: **May 26, 2026, 5:00 PM**

Awards are contingent on availability of funds from NIH. After funding decisions have been made, awarded applications will be routed through the KUMC Research Institute Division of Sponsored Programs Administration for approval and signatures before being submitted to NIGMS for final funding approval. Some applications not selected for NIGMS COBRE funds may be considered for available internal funds.

Written applications are by invitation only based on approved Letters of Intent and oral presentations. Applications should be prepared using PHS 398 forms and instructions, which can be downloaded from the [PHS 398 applications website](#). Please use 11-point Arial or Helvetica font and margins no smaller than 0.5 inches. Applications should include the following sections:

- a. Form Page 1: Face Page
For non-KUMC applications, face page must be signed by your institutions authorized signing official.
- b. Form Page 2: Summary, Relevance, Project/Performance Sites, Senior/Key Personnel, Other Significant Contributors, and Human Embryonic Stem Cells
- c. Budget:
 - i. Form Page 4: Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period
 - ii. Budget Justification
- d. NIH Common Forms for Biographical Sketches and NIH Biographical Sketch Supplements for all Key Personnel (SciENCv must be used to prepare these forms)
- e. Research Plan
 - i. Specific Aims (1 page)

- ii. Research Strategy (6 pages) including: Significance, Innovation, and Approach
- iii. References Cited
- f. Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information form page including Study Record(s)
- g. Proof of IRB submission for review
- h. Letters of Support (optional)
- i. Checklist Form Page (Non-KUMC applications only)

Funding Parameters

The following budget parameters must be followed:

1. The anticipated budget period is 09/01/26-08/31/27. No cost extensions are discouraged and must receive prior approval.
2. Direct costs may not exceed \$50,000.
3. No more than \$10,000 total may be allocated for salary and fringe of the PI, co-investigators, and other personnel with a faculty appointment.
4. Research project support costs may include research personnel costs, supplies, services, external consultants, essential research related travel, participant incentives, and other expenses necessary for the successful execution of the proposed project. Data management and biostatistics costs are covered under the KCIS PrISM Core.
5. Equipment purchases are not permitted.

Submission

Final written applications should be submitted as a single PDF file to Erin Powell via email (epowell2@kumc.edu) **no later than 5:00 PM, Tuesday, May 26, 2026.**

Other Requirements

Proposals selected for funding will be required to have human subjects approval from the Institutional Review Board prior to submission to NIGMS for final funding approval. For this reason, applicants invited to submit a full written proposal are required to submit proof that IRB applications are under review at the time they submit the full application.

Additional Terms and Conditions

1. When an awardee submits subsequent grant applications, he/she is expected to acknowledge COBRE funding. If the subsequent grant application receives funding, the awardee must provide written notification of the type and amount of funding.
2. Publications resulting from research relevant to KCIS and/or time supported by the COBRE should acknowledge COBRE funding and include the grant number P20GM139733.
3. Pilot award recipients are required to provide information needed to complete the COBRE Annual Research Performance Progress Report and other information as requested.
4. Pilot award recipients will be asked to present their research and provide a brief written progress report for an External Advisory Committee Meeting.
5. Pilot award recipients are encouraged to attend and may also be asked to present at KCIS Club Meetings.
6. Unanticipated new requirements: By accepting COBRE funds, awardees agree to comply with any and all requirements not already mentioned that may be imposed on the COBRE grant by NIH or other institutional authorities.

Further Information

Administrative and Budget Questions: Erin Powell (epowell2@kumc.edu)

Project Eligibility and Scientific Questions:

Christie Befort, KCIS PI: cbefort@kumc.edu

Ed Ellerbeck, Pragmatic Implementation Science Methods (PrISM) Core Director: eellerbe@kumc.edu

Sarah Kessler, Community Engagement and Outreach (CEO) Core Director: skessler2@kumc.edu