National Institutes of Health (NIH) Department of Health and Human Services
Bridges to the Baccalaureate (R25)
Internal Deadline: Wednesday July 12, 2017

*Please distribute to relevant faculty.

NIH Application Due Date: September 25, 2017
ORD Internal Deadline: Wednesday July 12, 2017

To Apply:

Please submit the following information to Denise Lindley at Limited_Submissions@unc.edu by 5:00pm, Internal Deadline: Wednesday July 12, 2017 in ONE file (Word or PDF):

1. Biosketch or CV of PI. Please limit to five pages.
2. Two-page maximum project summary
3. List of potential collaborators (internal and external to UNC)
4. Names of three internal (to UNC) faculty who could speak knowledgeably about the project, in the event of an internal review. Please do not include the names of faculty named on the project, chairs or deans, direct reports or others who have a conflict of interest.

Bridges to the Baccalaureate (R25) Purpose

The NIH Research Education Program (R25) supports research education activities in the mission areas of the NIH. The over-arching goal of this NIGMS R25 program is to support educational activities that enhance the diversity of the biomedical, behavioral and clinical research workforce. To accomplish the stated over-arching goal, this FOA will support creative educational activities with a primary focus on Courses for Skills Development, Research Experiences, and Curriculum or Methods Development. A proposed program must include each activity and describe how they will be integrated.

The Bridges to Baccalaureate Program is intended to provide these activities to community college students to increase transfer and retention to BS graduation in biomedical sciences. This program requires partnerships between community colleges or other two-year post-secondary educational institutions granting the associate degree with colleges or universities that offer the baccalaureate degree. Applicants should directly address how the set of activities will complement and/or enhance the training of a workforce to meet the nation’s biomedical and clinical research needs by discussing 1) the rationale underlying the balance of effort and resources dedicated to each activity; 2) how the activities integrate; and 3) objective indicators that can measure the effectiveness of the program.

Recruitment and retention plans are required elements of the program.

Funding Opportunity Description

The NIH Research Education Program (R25) supports research educational activities that complement other formal training programs in the mission areas of the NIH Institutes and Centers. The over-arching goals of the NIH R25 program are to: (1) complement and/or enhance the training of a workforce to
meet the nation’s biomedical, behavioral and clinical research needs; (2) enhance the diversity of the biomedical, behavioral and clinical research workforce; (3) help recruit individuals with specific specialty or disciplinary backgrounds to research careers in biomedical, behavioral and clinical sciences; and (4) foster a better understanding of biomedical, behavioral and clinical research and its implications.

The over-arching goal of this National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) Bridges to Baccalaureate R25 program is to support educational activities that enhance the diversity of the biomedical, behavioral and clinical research workforce. To accomplish the stated over-arching goal, this FOA will support creative educational activities with a primary focus on:

1. **Courses for Skills Development**: For example, advanced courses in a specific discipline or research area, or specialized research techniques.

2. **Research Experiences**: For example, for undergraduate students: to provide hands-on exposure to research, to reinforce their intent to graduate with a science degree, and/or to prepare them for graduate school admissions and/or careers in research; for college science teachers: to enhance their science teaching.

3. **Curriculum or Methods Development**: For example, to improve biomedical science education, or develop novel instructional approaches or computer-based educational tools; to provide supplemental instruction for gateway courses; to develop "CURE" courses in community college first and second year classrooms.

**Background**

Every facet of the United States scientific research enterprise—from basic laboratory research to clinical and translational research to policy formation—requires superior intellect, creativity and a wide range of skill sets and viewpoints. NIH’s ability to help ensure that the nation remains a global leader in scientific discovery and innovation is dependent upon a pool of highly talented scientists from diverse backgrounds who will help to further NIH’s mission.

Research shows that diverse teams working together and capitalizing on innovative ideas and distinct perspectives outperform homogenous teams. Scientists and trainees from diverse backgrounds and life experiences bring different perspectives, creativity, and individual enterprise to address complex scientific problems. There are many benefits that flow from a diverse NIH-supported scientific workforce, including: fostering scientific innovation, enhancing global competitiveness, contributing to robust learning environments, improving the quality of the researchers, advancing the likelihood that underserved or health disparity populations participate in, and benefit from health research, and enhancing public trust.

In spite of tremendous advancements in scientific research, information, educational and research opportunities are not equally available to all. **This program encourages institutions to diversify their student and faculty populations and thus to enhance the participation of individuals currently underrepresented in the biomedical, clinical, behavioral and social sciences research enterprise, as described in NOT-OD-15-053.**

**Programmatic Approach**

The Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program provides an opportunity to **develop new, or expand existing, effective institutional programs aimed at a key juncture within higher education, namely the transition from a two-year community college program to baccalaureate degree completion in**
biomedical sciences. NIGMS anticipates that carefully planned interventions at this key point of the educational pathway will increase the supply of biomedical science graduates, a necessary step in enhancing the diversity of the NIH-funded biomedical workforce. The proposed Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program must select and employ well-integrated strategies, rooted in education research, that provide students what they need to progress to the next stage of the science education pathway. Applications must include facets of all three activities in their research plan.

Bridges applications are intended to reflect the plans and priorities of the participating institutions as well as the collective plans and priorities of the partnerships/consortia. Participating institutions should create a partnership program, or enhance an existing program, that will focus attention and adequate resources on the institution(s) granting associate degrees and so enhance competitiveness of their science graduates and science programs. Collaborative agreements should be designed to fit the needs and situations of the institutions involved.

The Bridges to Baccalaureate Program recognizes the heterogeneity of institutional settings and institutional missions. Therefore, each application must conduct a self-assessment of each participating institution that includes baseline data on enrollment, transfer, research training, and subsequent graduation of its UR students in biomedical sciences. Specific aims must be based on this self-assessment and must be consonant with the purpose of the Bridges to Baccalaureate program. The four-year partner institution should demonstrate that it has the resources needed to support Bridges students upon and after transfer, to facilitate the student’s successful baccalaureate degree completion.

Outcomes: The goal of the Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program is to develop a diverse group of highly trained biomedical scientists to address the Nation’s biomedical workforce needs. The short-term and intermediate-term goals of the program are to increase the number of students who transfer to a 4yr institution to study in biomedical sciences, and complete a baccalaureate degree, respectively. At the institutional level, the program expects that at least 70% of Bridges-supported students, upon or before graduation from the associate degree program, transfer to baccalaureate degree programs in the biomedical sciences, and at least 50% of transferring Bridges students successfully complete their baccalaureate degree in the biomedical sciences. NIGMS anticipates that Bridges grantees will improve upon these outcomes.

Research education programs may complement ongoing research training and education occurring at the applicant institution, but the proposed educational experiences must be distinct from those training and education programs currently receiving Federal support. R25 programs may augment institutional research training programs (e.g., T32, T90) but cannot be used to replace or circumvent Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) programs.

To view the full solicitation, please click on the link below.

Award budget: up to $300,000 / year for up to five years

Estimated Number of Awards: The number of awards is contingent upon NIH appropriations and the submission of a sufficient number of meritorious applications.
Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization (UNC): 1
Applicant organizations may not submit more than one application as the lead institution.

Please do not hesitate to contact Denise Lindley with questions or assistance at Limited_Submissions@unc.edu or 962-7503.