

Third Coast Center for AIDS Research

Pilot Award RFA Information Session

February 5, 2025



Agenda

- TC CFAR Overview and Expansion
- Developmental Core
- CFAR Pilot Program
- CFAR Core Services and Resources
- Q and A

About the Third Coast CFAR

*“Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men’s blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work.” **Daniel Hudson Burnham (1846-1912)***

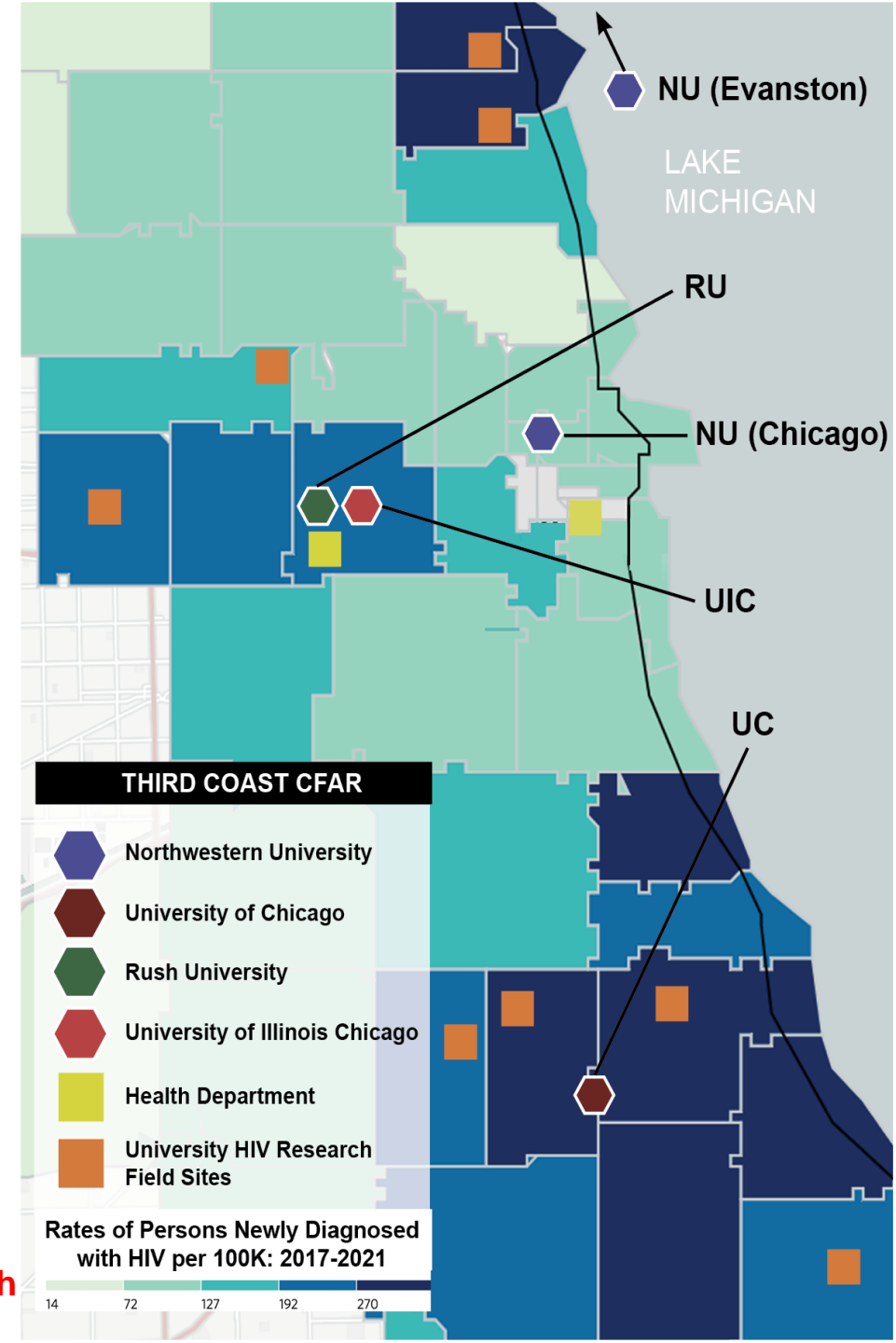
Like the transformational Chicago architect, Daniel Burnham, the Third Coast Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) has a grand vision – to end the HIV epidemic, with Chicago as a national model for high-impact research collaborations.



Third Coast CFAR Evolution

- Founded in 2015 and renewed in 2020 with academic partners NU and UC
- 2025 renewal includes RUSH and UIC, making the TC CFAR a citywide center
- Expanded core operations and full programs will begin later in 2025
- One of 20 NIH-funded Centers for AIDS Research
- **Core mission of CFAR support ESIs and to bring established researchers from other fields in HIV research**

Third Coast Center for AIDS Research



Developmental Core



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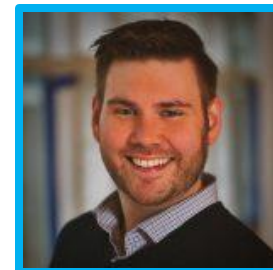
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TC CFAR Steering Committee



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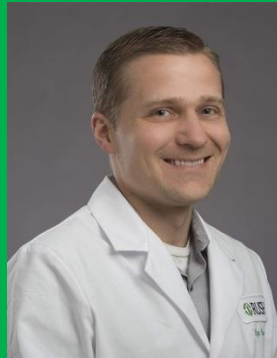
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Pilot Award Program

Introduction to CFAR pilots

- Today's webinar offers high level information (purpose, eligibility, LOI, timelines, budgets) - please see RFA for full details
 - <https://www.thirdcoastcfar.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Pilot-RFA-Spring-25.pdf>
- Next pilot RFA slated for fall 2025
- Competitiveness of program and quality of proposals
 - 2020-24: 43 applications, 27 funded (63%)
 - Ability to fund 8-12 meritorious proposals over the next year
 - Funded proposals generally scored mid-30s or better
 - For examples of funded proposals and PIs see: <https://www.thirdcoastcfar.org/third-coast-cfar-pilot-awards/>

Pilot Award Mechanism

- **Purpose:** Invest in mentored, faculty led research that will generate preliminary data for new grant applications that address NIH HIV priorities
- **Scientific focus:** Pilots support research from all disciplines in HIV science and must directly address an NIH Office of AIDS Research priority
- **Awards:** 1-year project period. Direct costs are \$60,000 (MPI awards \$80,000)

Eligibility

- **Pilot PI:** Applicants must be in a PI-eligible position at NU, UC, RU, or UIC
- **Funding history:** Applicants must be either:
 - **An early stage investigator or new investigator** (i.e., they have not yet led an R01-equivalent award for HIV research)
 - **An established PI new to HIV** (i.e., R01-funded in another field and newly expanding their work to HIV)
- **Mentors:** Must be R01 funded in HIV. Provide significant support for pilot as well as subsequent proposal to NIH.

PI Eligibility

- Each TC CFAR institution uses slightly different titles for various faculty appointments that are considered PI-eligible.
 - Non-tenure track faculty (e.g., research track, team scientists) are eligible if they are allowed to apply for a subsequent NIH grant as PI.
- Pilot awardees must be eligible to apply for NIH grants where their TC CFAR institution will be the prime grantee (e.g., NU, UC, RU, UIC, LCH).
- One-time exceptions to PI eligibility so the investigator may hold a CFAR pilot award will not be accepted.
- Questions about PI eligibility should be directed to the Developmental Core before the LOI is due. The Core may request confirmation of eligibility from a department chair at the LOI stage.

Letters of Intent

- **Required Letter of Intent Stage (LOI) Stage.** Opportunity for Developmental Core to confirm eligibility and readiness for spring 2025, as well as advise on start date and structure of budget.
- **LOIs due February 19.** LOI survey includes:
 - Aims page
 - Plans for regulatory approvals (e.g., IRB, IACUC)
 - Summary of key personnel, collaborating institutions
 - Plans are not binding

Timelines

- **March 3:** Developmental Core will confirm eligibility and advise on project start date.
- **March 31:** Full proposals due in REDCap
- **April and May:** NIH-style peer review process
- All regulatory approvals must be in place before the Core will prioritize an application for funding.

Advice on Budgets

- **Be realistic about costs and timelines**
- **Allowability**
 - Budget for Core Services
 - If a subaward is needed, consider if a service agreement could be done instead (Contact Justin Schmandt to discuss options)
 - Mentors may only take salary support when they have an additional role on the project
- Project start date depends on need to set up subcontracts / number of partners
- Refer to the Full RFA for Details

Additional Resources

Core Services

- Applicants are encouraged to use CFAR resources and services
- TC CFAR Scientific Cores:
 - Virology and Immunology Technology Core
 - Clinical Sciences Core
 - Behavioral, Social, and Implementation Sciences Core

Core Services

- Learn more about core services on CFAR website
 - Request services through CFAR website or by contacting leader of relevant scientific core or Developmental Core
 - Initial consultations are free
 - Chargebacks are set up at cost
- CFAR can also help applicants navigate non-CFAR cores

Takeaways

- Contact the Developmental Core with questions at any point in the application process
- Build in plenty of time before March 31 for mentor feedback on the full proposal
- IRB and IACUC timelines
- Refer to RFA
- Use CFAR core services
- Apply when you are ready! TC CFAR issues Pilots RFAs ~2 Times/Year

Contact Developmental Core



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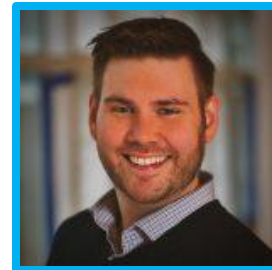
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