

# Botanical Dietary Supplements Research Center 2016-17 Pilot Project Program

Currently Accepting: Letters of Intent

Deadline: June 6, 2016

Funding Entity: Botanical Dietary Supplements Research Center, Pennington Biomedical Research Center

Award: up to \$50,000

Contact: [anne.gooch@pbrc.edu](mailto:anne.gooch@pbrc.edu)

The major objective of this program is to provide research support to test innovative hypotheses involving botanicals (bioactive extracts) and their effects on metabolic pathways leading to obesity, insulin resistance, and Type 2 diabetes or their co-morbidities. This request for proposals is seeking pilot projects that specifically relate to the theme of the Botanical Dietary Supplements Research Center to promote human health by focusing on the functional aspects and mechanisms by which botanicals promote metabolic resilience and general health. Thus, our approach to the study of botanicals is on health maintenance, rather than disease interdiction. We are particularly interested in projects that emphasize mechanistic approaches to investigate microbiome modulation of metabolism, microbiome-host interactions, and microbiome-botanical interactions. Projects exploring sex-related variation related to botanicals are also encouraged. It is hoped that a Pilot Project Award will generate enough preliminary data for the investigator to obtain research funding by conventional mechanisms (e.g., R21 or R01). The expectation is that the project will be completed within the budget period of the award. We also hope this program will encourage junior investigators and more established investigators in other fields to approach problems that are relevant to our understanding of the metabolism and function of botanically derived bioactive compounds, and increase our understanding of the preclinical aspects of the botanicals in promoting resiliency to developing metabolic syndrome and Type 2 diabetes.

## More Information

### Deadlines:

Letter of Intent: June 6, 2016

Applications: July 18, 2016

Notification: August 15, 2016

**Note: All letters and grant applications should be submitted to: [anne.gooch@pbrc.edu](mailto:anne.gooch@pbrc.edu)**

**THE BOTANICAL DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS RESEARCH CENTER** will fund grants (up to \$50,000) in the following research areas:

1. Identification or characterization of botanical extracts that alter the pathophysiological mechanisms related to the development of insulin resistance and that promote health maintenance or enhance resiliency to development of insulin resistance or other aspects that define metabolic dysregulation.
2. Identification of targets (e.g., molecular, cellular, organ) and mechanisms of action of botanical test materials related to health maintenance and prevention.
3. Evaluation of botanicals in evolving and understudied areas, such as the microbiome, is strongly encouraged.
4. Assessment of synergy and/or antagonism among bioactive constituents of botanical preparations and their role in insulin signaling and/or insulin secretion.
5. Studies of the role of botanicals as regulators of signaling, genetic, or epigenetic events associated with preventing the development of metabolic syndrome, obesity and Type 2 diabetes, or co-morbidities associated with these conditions (i.e. hypertension, dyslipidemia, inflammation).
6. Studies on the absorption and metabolism of botanical bioactive compounds.

Multi-disciplinary projects are strongly encouraged. Priority will be focused on *in silico*, *in vitro*, and preclinical *in vivo* models. Clinical studies are not generally considered, unless the applicant provides considerable rationale that the aims of the study can be completed within the limited time frame and that the clinical study can be adequately supported with the funding available.

**Who is eligible?** 1) Full time faculty; 2) Senior post-doctoral fellows; and 3) Junior investigators at all institutions that are part of the Botanical Dietary Supplements Research Center (Pennington Biomedical Research Center, Rutgers University) or part of LSU (e.g., all components of LSU A&M, LSU Ag Center, LSUHSC-NO, LSUHSC-S). Projects will be considered from outside institutions in the state provided a memorandum of understanding can be put in place prior to the start of the project and only after NIH programmatic approval.

Junior investigators who do not have current or previous NIH (or other federal agencies) research support (excluding career development awards) and who wish to establish their own independent research program are encouraged to apply. Current or past Botanical T-32 fellows are ineligible.

Senior postdoctoral fellows need to be part of the institution for longer than 1 year and will need to submit a mentor's letter supporting the project and outlining how the research will be integrated into the fellow's current training.

Established investigators who have not been directly involved in nutrition or bioactive compound related research, but who wish to enter the field or who wish to initiate a new research direction within the botanical field are encouraged to apply.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with Botanical Dietary Supplements Research Center investigators regarding botanical use and integrity, statistical approach, and genetic/genomic support before they submit their LOI.

There is no citizenship requirement for recipients, but eligible visiting scientists must have a long-term collaborative relationship with Pennington Biomedical. Applicants must hold a PhD, MD, or equivalent degree, and have completed at least one year of postdoctoral training relevant to the proposed research area.

### Deadline and Review Process:

1. Interested investigators are asked to submit a single page letter of intent for the 2016-2017 BDSRC Pilot Project Program Award by **June 6, 2016**. This letter should include a statement of the hypothesis, a brief paragraph of background information, a short description of the experimental design and proposed methods, and indication of eligibility criterion (see three criteria above). A **required component** of the letter is information about the botanical extract/product to be tested, including information on

sourcing and known or reported characterization. From these letters of intent, applicants will be selected to submit a 5-page grant proposal.

2. Full applications of the projects selected from the letters of intent need to be submitted for review by **July 18, 2016**. All applications will undergo comprehensive peer review for scientific merit, originality, relevance of the work to botanicals, the potential for the project to generate data for a successful peer-reviewed grant application, and the potential for the PI to develop into an independent investigator.
3. Awards will be announced, pending NIH approval, by **August 15, 2016**.