

Repurposing Research for Chicago 2025: Track 2 – Clinical Repurposing Trials Led by a Chicago Area Early Stage Investigator



OVERVIEW

“Clinical Repurposing Trials Led by a Chicago Area Early Stage Investigator” is one of 4 tracks for Cures Within Reach’s 2025 funding opportunity for Chicago area institutions and PIs. Specific focus areas for the other tracks include Health Equity, Pediatrics and Veterans issues. When submitting a Letter of Intent, applicants should select “Chicago area” and “Other” for the “Type of Request for Proposals” question, and then list all the applicable track(s) for their research in the “Other” text box: Health Equity, Early Stage Investigator, Pediatrics and/or Veterans. Visit <https://bit.ly/cwrrfps> to learn more about each track.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) from [Cures Within Reach](#) (CWR) is seeking clinical repurposing trials from any **research institution in the greater Chicago area led by an Early Stage Investigator, who is within 10 years of completing an advanced degree or medical residency, in any unsolved disease.** While the funded institutions must be in Chicagoland, patients and collaborators can be both within and outside the Chicago area. Our strongest preference is for proof of concept, pivotal, Phase I or Phase IIA clinical repurposing trials. Clinical trials utilizing telehealth or other remote strategies are encouraged to apply.

Repurposed therapies must be approved and/or generally recognized as safe for human use by some regulatory agency, such as the US Food and Drug Administration, European Medicines Agency, Health Canada or Japan’s Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Agency, and may include **drugs, devices, nutraceuticals, diagnostics or eligible cellular/gene therapies, as well as combination therapies.** These repurposed therapies must be tested in a new indication for which they are not already approved or used widely in clinical practice as standard of care. Repurposed therapies may be added to current standard of care to improve patient outcomes and/or quality of life.

CWR is accepting budgets of up to \$100,000 for this funding opportunity, which includes the required institutional match (see Important Funding Information below). For Principal Investigators (PIs) who are interested in including underrepresented patients in the proposed clinical trial, CWR may provide an optional \$5,000 - \$15,000 in additional financial support for approved community engagement costs. Interested PIs may include any general ideas and/or plans for engagement / collaborations with community-based organizations to engage underrepresented communities in the clinical trial. However, community engagement is not required, and community engagement costs should not be included in the requested funding amount submitted to CWR in the LOI. If a clinical trial is selected for funding, CWR will contact the PI about potential community engagement.

PIs who have not received extramural funding previously and/or who do not currently have their own lab should **include a Letter of Support from a funded, senior researcher who will act as a mentor** for the proposed research and the PI with their LOI submission.

All submissions for this RFP are via CWR’s online grant management platform on ProposalCentral (<https://proposalcentral.com>). If you’re already a ProposalCentral user, log in to your existing account to submit. If you don’t already have a ProposalCentral account, create a login. Next, navigate to the “Grant Opportunities” tab and search for “Cures Within Reach.” Submit your proposal using the **Geographic Specific Repurposing Research** program. Click on the “Apply Now” button on the right to begin a submission. In the submission form, PIs should select “Chicago area” and “Other” for the “Type of Request for Proposals” question, and then list the applicable Chicago-focused track(s) for their research in the “Other” text box: Health Equity, Early Stage Investigator, Pediatrics and/or Veterans. PIs can include as many tracks as appropriate.

CWR has a 2-stage submission process, starting with the LOI. **Full scientific details are not required at the LOI stage.** LOIs for this RFP will be reviewed, scored and ranked by CWR staff, our external Grant Review Committee and/or our Science Advisory Board members, and the top-rated LOI submissions will be invited to submit a full proposal as the second stage. PIs will be contacted approximately 6-8 weeks following the LOI submission deadline with a decision.

The LOI submission deadline is 11:59pm U.S. Eastern Time on May 16, 2025. Contact Clare Thibodeaux, PhD at clare@cureswithinreach.org with any questions. For more information about CWR's funding opportunities, visit <https://bit.ly/cwrrfps>.

FULL DESCRIPTION

Background

This RFP is seeking clinical repurposing trials from Chicago-area research institutions led by a PI who is an early stage investigator, within 10 years of completing an advanced degree or medical residency, in any unsolved disease. While the funded institutions must be in Chicagoland, patients and collaborators can be both within and outside the Chicago area. An unsolved disease is one in which one or more of the following are true:

- There is currently no effective treatment
- The current treatment is only effective for a portion of the patient population
- There is a treatment that is effective, but many patients develop resistance to the therapy
- There is a treatment that is effective for the entire patient population, but the treatment is very expensive, and therefore some patients cannot get access to the treatment
- There is a treatment that is effective for the entire patient population with significant side effects, and for some patients the negative side effects outweigh the benefits of the treatment

Repurposed therapies must be approved and/or generally recognized as safe for human use by some regulatory agency, such as the US Food and Drug Administration, European Medicines Agency, Health Canada or Japan's Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Agency. Repurposed therapies may include **drugs, devices, nutraceuticals, diagnostics or eligible cellular/gene therapies**, as well as combination therapies. These repurposed therapies must be tested in a new indication for which they are not already approved or used widely in clinical practice as standard of care. Repurposed therapies may be added to standard of care to improve patient outcomes and/or quality of life.

Eligible submissions must:

- Be interventional clinical trials testing repurposed therapies, either alone or in combination with standard of care or other repurposed therapies, in a new indication to address unsolved diseases
- Be conducted at any Chicago area accredited academic, nonprofit and governmental research institutions and/or health systems significantly involved with medical research, where good scientific research and clinical practices can be assured
 - Although start-ups, biotechs, pharmaceutical companies and medical device companies are not eligible for this RFP, their collaborators at eligible institutions can apply
- Be led by a Chicago area PI who is an early stage investigator, within 10 years of completing an advanced degree or medical residency
 - PIs who have not received extramural funding previously and/or who do not currently have their own lab should **include a Letter of Support from a funded, senior researcher who will act as a mentor** for the proposed research and the PI
- Have a timeline of no longer than 36 months
- Not yet have funding (see Important Funding Information below) or already have funding from another source, when funding from CWR will help improve the chances of success of the project and/or help speed patient impact

Our strongest preference is for proof of concept, pivotal, Phase I or Phase IIA clinical repurposing trials supported by strong preclinical evidence, real world evidence or clinical observations. We may also consider later stage clinical trials that require additional funding. CWR is open to all clinical trial designs (open label, cross-over, dose determination, randomized, blinded, controlled, decentralized, etc.) that have the opportunity to create a robust and well-defined outcome that will show reproducible clinical impact and/or generate data that can be leveraged into follow-on funding from other sources and additional clinical trials.

If you have a repurposing idea that isn't an exact fit for this RFP, or **if you have eligibility questions due to budget or other aspects, contact Clare Thibodeaux, PhD at clare@cureswithinreach.org.**

Important Funding Information

All funding requests are in US dollars and detailed budgets are not required at the LOI stage. CWR is accepting budgets of up to \$100,000 for clinical repurposing trials, which includes the required 20% institutional match. **CWR will provide no more than 80% of the total funding amount submitted to CWR, and the PI's research institution will match at least 20% of the total funding amount submitted to CWR.**

For example, if the total funding amount submitted to CWR is \$100,000, CWR will provide 80% or \$80,000 and the research institution will provide 20% or \$20,000. Submitting an LOI does not commit the PI or the research institution to the 20% institutional match. If a submission is selected to move beyond the LOI stage, CWR will contact the PI and the research institution about this requirement.

The 20% institutional match must be real dollars committed to the project. The institutional match may come from the research institution itself (including salaries, patient costs, etc.); from government or other public funders; from individuals, foundations or other private funders; from industry (including the dollar value of donated drug); or from any combination of these sources. The CWR portion of the requested total funding amount cannot be used for indirect costs. However, **the 20% institutional match may be used for indirect costs.**

The total funding amount submitted to CWR must be sole, late or final funding required to accomplish the specific aims listed in the LOI. CWR funding cannot be the first funding raised for a project unless it is also the sole funding needed. The 20% institutional match is not counted as additional funds to be raised. Below are some general examples:

- The project will cost \$100,000 to complete, and the maximum funding amount of the RFP is \$100,000. This project is eligible for funding from CWR.
- The project will cost \$300,000 to complete, and the maximum funding amount of the RFP is \$100,000. The PI has already secured \$200,000 in existing funding / support. This project is eligible for funding from CWR.
- The project will cost \$300,000 to complete, and the maximum funding amount of the RFP is \$100,000. The PI has already secured \$0 in existing funding / support. This project is not eligible for funding from CWR.

If you have eligibility questions due to the budget or funding amount for your project, please contact Clare Thibodeaux, PhD at clare@cureswithinreach.org.

CWR is open to working with other funders who share our desire to support early stage PIs and are interested in these near-term repurposing opportunities. **We will accept projects that already have funding from another source, when this additional funding from CWR will help improve the chances of success of the project, and therefore increase the chance of patient impact.**

LOI Submission and Due Date

All submissions for this RFP are via CWR's online grant management platform on ProposalCentral (<https://proposalcentral.com>). If you're already a ProposalCentral user, log in to your existing account to submit. If you don't already have a ProposalCentral account, create a login. Next, navigate to the "Grant Opportunities" tab and search for "Cures Within Reach." Submit your proposal using the **Geographic Specific Repurposing Research** program. Click on the "Apply Now" button on the right to begin a submission. In the submission form, PIs should select "Chicago area" and "Other" for the "Type of Request for Proposals" question, and then list the applicable Chicago-focused track(s) for their research in the "Other" text box: Health Equity, Early Stage Investigator, Pediatrics and/or Veterans. PIs can include as many tracks as appropriate.

The LOI submission deadline is 11:59pm U.S. Eastern Time on May 16, 2025. For more information about CWR's funding opportunities, visit <https://bit.ly/cwrrfps>.

Review Criteria and Review Process

Repurposing innovation, feasibility of the research plan, relevance to the patient population, potential clinical impact and the research team are key ranking criteria for a successful LOI submission. LOIs for this RFP will be reviewed, scored and ranked by CWR staff, our external Grant Review Committee (representing research, industry, clinicians, nonprofits, government and the patient/community voice) and/or our Science Advisory Board members, and the top-rated LOI submissions will be invited to submit a full proposal. PIs will be contacted approximately 6-8 weeks following the LOI submission deadline with a decision.