

DIABETES ENDOCRINOLOGY RESEARCH CENTERS

DIABETES RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTERS

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DIABETES AND
DIGESTIVE AND KIDNEY DISEASES**

August 2001

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I. DESCRIPTION

Background

The NIDDK-supported Diabetes Endocrinology Research Centers (DERCs) and Diabetes Research and Training Centers (DTRCs) are part of an integrated program of diabetes and related endocrinology and metabolism research. Centers provide increased, cost effective, collaboration among multidisciplinary groups of investigators at institutions with an established, comprehensive research base in diabetes and related areas of endocrinology and metabolism. DERCs and DTRCs are intended to improve the quality and multidisciplinary nature of research on diabetes by providing shared access to specialized technical resources and expertise.

General Description

Both DERCs and DTRCs are intended to facilitate progress in research with the goal of developing new methods to treat, prevent and ultimately cure diabetes mellitus and its complications. Both DERCs and DTRCs support research cores that provide shared resources to enhance the efficiency of biomedical research and foster collaborations within and among institutions with established, comprehensive bases of research relevant to diabetes mellitus. Both types of center also support a Pilot and Feasibility Program and an Enrichment Program. DTRCs differ from DERCs in that they provide additional support for cores and pilot and feasibility projects directed at prevention and control of diabetes. These should focus on translation of research advances into clinical practice.

The objectives of the Centers are to bring together investigators from relevant disciplines in a manner that will enhance and extend the effectiveness of their research. In addition to collaborations between scientists within an institution, core centers can foster interaction and collaborations between investigators at multiple institutions to promote a multifaceted approach to a common goal. A core center must be an identifiable unit within a single university medical center or a consortium of cooperative institutions, including an affiliated university. An outstanding existing program of biomedical research in the area of diabetes is required. This research should be in the form of NIH-funded research projects (R01), program projects (P01), or other peer-reviewed research, such as that supported by the American Diabetes Association and the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation. This established research program must be in existence at the time of submission of a center application. Research programs outside the primary institution where the center is based may utilize the core resources. The base of research projects to be served by the cores must be clearly defined and justified in the application. The research base for the Center must consist of at least \$2,000,000 of peer reviewed research projects. Efficient management of resources and close cooperation, communication, and collaboration among involved personnel in multiple professional disciplines are ultimate objectives of core centers.

Basic Requirements for a P30 Core Center

To be eligible for a Core Center grant, the potential applicant institution must already have a substantial base of ongoing, independently-supported, high-quality research in diabetes and related areas of endocrinology and metabolism. The research base for a core center is made up of investigators with individually-funded research projects who can benefit from shared resources. Core center funding will provide core facilities (shared resources), pilot and feasibility studies (new initiatives), and program enrichment activities. Except for pilot and feasibility studies, core center funds are not intended to support individual biomedical research projects other than through core usage. The major source of support for biomedical research projects associated with the Center should be derived from separately-funded projects of the participating investigators. Similarly, professional trainee stipends are not to be supported through core center funding.

A Core Center may serve a single institution or a consortium of institutions engaged in a collaborative approach to research on diabetes. Cores may be based solely at the applicant institution or at multiple institutions through subcontracts. If subcontracts are to be utilized the applicant must clearly demonstrate how a cohesive and integrated operation will be ensured and describe the advantages of this approach to performance of Core functions. The Core Center may also provide resources for funded projects at collaborating institutions without a subcontractual arrangement with the parent institution. If such projects are to be included in the research base, the applicant must clearly describe and justify the reasons why it is appropriate for these projects to be included in the research base and the advantages to be derived from the collective utilization of the Core Center.

At the time of initial submission, the applicant institution or consortium of institutions must have an active program of excellence in basic and clinical biomedical research in the area of diabetes and related areas of endocrinology and metabolism. **The biomedical research base will be given primary consideration in the peer review process.** There should be a focus on diabetes, however, related endocrinology and metabolism research relevant to diabetes may also be supported and included in the research base. Focus, relevance, interrelationships, quality, and to some extent quantity, are all considerations in judging the adequacy of the research base.

Basic Requirements for a P60 Core Center

All the elements (see above) required for a P30 Core Centers are also required for a P60 Core Center. The following additional requirements for DRTCs should be noted. The research base of the DRTC must include a substantial focus on research directed at translation of research advances in the area of diabetes into clinical practice. DRTCs must request substantial support for cores and pilot and feasibility projects directed at prevention and control of diabetes. The cores and pilot and feasibility projects directed at prevention and control of diabetes should focus on translation of research advances into

clinical practice. This includes the identification of barriers to widespread adoption of new science and the development and testing of interventions to overcome these barriers under real world conditions. Applicants are encouraged to focus on underserved populations disproportionately affected by diabetes in the cores and pilot and feasibility projects directed at prevention and control of diabetes.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE CORE COMPONENT

Description

The DERC or DRTC must be an identifiable organizational unit within a university medical center or a consortium of cooperating institutions including the university-affiliated center. Such a Center will involve the interaction of broad and diverse elements; thus, lines of authority and approval by the appropriate institutional officials must be clearly specified. The administrative core plays a key role in the coordination and functioning of the center.

Requirements

Each applicant institution specifies a Core Center Director to be responsible for the scientific and administrative leadership of the Center. The Director should be an experienced and respected scientist with a proven track record for obtaining NIH funding. He/she must be able to coordinate, integrate, and provide guidance in the establishment of new programs in diabetes and related research. The Core Center Director should provide at least 10% effort on the Administrative Core and a total of 20% effort distributed among the Administrative and other components of the Center. One or more Associate Directors should be named who will be involved in the administrative, scientific, or training efforts of the center and will serve as Acting Center Director in the absence of the Director. An administrative assistant may also be proposed.

It is expected that the organization of the Administrative core should encompass a supportive structure sufficient to ensure accomplishment of the following: coordinating and integrating the Center components and activities; overseeing the solicitation, review and selection of pilot and feasibility studies; reviewing the utilization and quality of core resources; interacting with the scientific and lay communities and the NIDDK in order to develop relevant goals for the Center; and interacting with the administrative and scientific leadership at the applicant institution(s) to enhance the visibility and effectiveness of the center as a focus for diabetes research.

The final administrative structure of the Center will be left largely to the discretion of the applicant institution (subject to review by NIH peer review mechanisms). However, NIH's experience has demonstrated that the effective development of the Center programs require close interaction between the Center director, the principal investigators, appropriate institutional administrative personnel, the staff of the awarding agency, and the members of the community in which the Center is located. Therefore, each Center applicant should establish an administrative structure which will permit the

development of such interaction. Within this structure, each applicant institution must also establish a mechanism to oversee the use of funds for the proposed pilot and feasibility program. This mechanism must include the use of appropriate consultants for review from the scientific community outside the Center institution. Consultants who will serve on advisory committees should not be specifically identified in the application but the process by which they will be selected should be described. These same consultants may be utilized, if desired, for review of other activities of the Center. The mechanism for reviewing the use of the pilot and feasibility funds will be considered by the initial review groups in the evaluation of the Center applications. Further details regarding this mechanism will be found below in the discussion of the pilot and feasibility program. The projects selected to receive these funds will be described by the Centers in their annual reports and will be given special attention by the NIDDK in its annual evaluation of the Center program. The Center grant may also include limited funds for program enrichment (i.e., seminars, etc.) that should be included in this core.

The initial base of research projects to be served by the cores must be clearly defined in the application. The process by which additional projects will be selected to utilize the core resources and by which selected projects will be prioritized must be delineated. There should be well- defined criteria for designating an investigator as a Center participant. Each Center, however, is expected to formulate these definitions based on its own situation.

Although facilities available should be described for each element of the application, a more general description of overall facilities and a statement regarding institutional commitment to the Center should also be included here.

III. BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH COMPONENT

Research Base

The Core Center Grant provides a mechanism for fostering interdisciplinary cooperation within a group of established investigators conducting high quality research on diabetes and related areas of endocrinology and metabolism. Therefore, existence of a strong research base in this area is a fundamental requirement for and the most important aspect in the establishment of a Core Center.

Applicants should include an overview of current research in diabetes and related areas being conducted at their institution in sufficient detail to allow reviewers to judge its extent and the interrelationship of ongoing research. There should be a substantial body of ongoing research on diabetes and/or its complications. The relevance to diabetes of all research included in the research base should be described. Projects at other institutions may also be included if collaborations exist with scientists at the applicant institutions. Applicants should indicate how the establishment of a Center will provide added dimensions, such as greater focus and increased cooperation, communication and collaboration.

Presentation of the research base in the application should be done in two ways: (1) by completing a Table like the one shown in Illustration III, and (2) by a full description of the diabetes and related research activities at the applicant institution and any collaborating institutions. This presentation should be organized into several areas of emphasis that demonstrate the research focus of the Center. The research of each Center participant should be discussed and interrelationships of research being conducted by Center participants should be highlighted. Since most, if not all, of the research base will have undergone separate peer review, the quality of the individual funded projects is already established. The more important aspects are: (1) interactions and interrelationships of the research efforts; (2) uses and benefits of core services; and (3) plans to develop productive collaborations among Center investigators.

For renewal applications, consideration will be given to progress and accomplishments in the research base, to development of multidisciplinary, collaborative, and cooperative interrelationships, and to alteration in the original Center design in order to meet the evolving needs of the research base. This should be described in a narrative fashion accompanied by a Table like the one shown in Illustration IV that documents the contribution of individual cores to the publications by the research base. Since one of the objectives of the Center is to extend research relevant to diabetes, new areas of research and acquisition of new funding should be highlighted.

There is obviously insufficient space in the application for a detailed presentation of the research base. However, significant research should be cited and it may be helpful to include up to 10 reprints as an appendix to the application. Appropriate presentation of the research base is very important since its assessment is a primary criterion in the evaluation of an application.

Biomedical Research Cores

Definition: A biomedical research core is a shared facility that provides a needed service to Center investigators enabling them to conduct their funded individual research projects more efficiently and/or more effectively. Cores should be designed to furnish a group of investigators with materials, techniques, determinations, instrumentations, and/or quality control to enhance research and contribute to cost effectiveness. A charge back mechanism is acceptable to help defray costs to the Center. If such a cost recovery system is developed, a detailed charge justification must be presented. Participating Center members must also be informed to include such costs with their full budget justifications in their applications for individual grant support. Cores may be proposed to support any research activity of the Center, but usually fall into one of five categories: (1) provision of a technology that lends itself to automation or preparation in large batches; (2) complex instrumentation; (3) animal preparation and care; (4) clinical resources; and (5) service and training. Limited developmental research is also an appropriate function of a core facility. Such activities, however, must be directly related to enhancing the function or utility of the core.

Justification for proposing a core: The establishment and continued support of biomedical research cores within a Center is justified on the basis of use by independently-funded Center investigators. The minimum requirement for establishing a core is significant usage by two or more investigators with independently-funded, peer-reviewed projects. While investigators holding awards from the Center pilot and feasibility program are appropriate users of the core facilities, their use does not contribute to justification for establishment or continued support of a core. Additionally, the minimum of two independently funded users does not in itself provide sufficient justification and will receive close scrutiny in review.

Personnel: A director must be named for each core. Core directors may be acknowledged experts with independently-funded research programs which will use the core services. In such cases, the percent effort on the grant is usually relatively low. The minimum effort for a core director is 5%. A core director with requisite expertise may devote a greater effort to the core and with justification could devote up to 100 percent effort. Where appropriate, an established expert in the core activities could also be included as a consultant to the core. Technicians, etc. are allowable in accordance with the volume and type of work in the core.

Facilities, space, and special arrangements: Particularly in initial applications, the description of the physical arrangements and instrumentation for the cores should be given special attention. In renewal applications, any changes should be carefully documented. Cores are encouraged, whenever possible, to enter into cooperative arrangements with established cores in other Centers or resources offering a similar type of service. However, it should be clear that DERC or DRTC cores can function independently.

Management of the core: The organization and proposed mode of operation of each core should be presented. Included should be a plan for prioritizing investigator use of the core as well as a definition of qualified users. If use by investigators outside the parent institution is proposed the mechanism by which such investigators will apply and be evaluated and selected should be detailed. The definition of qualified users should not be too narrow. Some minor core use could serve to entice established investigators in other fields into the field of diabetes research. Any proposed, ongoing or completed developmental efforts should be described. If the core is used to train investigators in special techniques, the mechanism for this training should be included.

Relation of core services to individual research project grants: When a Center is first established, individual investigator-initiated research project grants may include funds for a part of the services which will ultimately be available from the cores. At the time of renewal (competitive and noncompetitive) the budgets of individual research project grants must be reduced to reflect the costs supported by the Center grant. If there are charge backs, these should be detailed in the submitted budget justification and described as allowable budgetary items in the investigator's individual grants. Some mechanism should be proposed in the Center application to monitor these budgetary adjustments and

to ensure that Center core users describe their relation to the Center in their individual grants.

Renewal applications: Information relative to cores in renewal applications should generally cover all of the same points as initial applications. In addition, past performance and accomplishments should be described. The effect of the service provided by a core on investigator productivity and cost effectiveness should also be addressed.

Pilot and Feasibility Program

Research projects associated with a Core Center will in general be funded from other resources, such as R01 or P01 grants from NIH, similar project funding from other Federal agencies, or nonfederal sources. There is one exception--pilot and feasibility studies.

Definition: The Pilot and Feasibility Program provides modest research support for a limited time (one to two years) to enable eligible investigators to explore the feasibility of a concept related to the mission of the Center and generate sufficient data to pursue it through other funding mechanisms. The pilot and feasibility studies are intended to: (1) provide initial support for new investigators; (2) allow exploration of possible innovative new leads or new directions for established investigators in diabetes and (3) stimulate investigators from other areas to lend their expertise to research in this area. Pilot and feasibility study support is not intended for large projects by established investigators that would otherwise be submitted as separate research grant applications. Pilot and feasibility funds are also not intended to support or supplement ongoing funded research of an investigator.

Requirements: Each Center must propose a minimum of 2 pilot and feasibility studies to be supported from NIDDK funds.

Eligibility and related guidelines: Investigators eligible for pilot and feasibility funding generally fall into three categories: (1) new investigators without current or past NIH research support as a principal investigator (current or past support from other sources should have been modest); (2) established investigators with no previous work in diabetes who wish to apply their expertise to a problem in this area; and (3) established investigators in diabetes who propose testing innovative ideas that represent clear departure from ongoing research interests. It is expected that the majority of the investigators will fall into the first category. All eligible investigators, however, must have faculty appointments and be independent investigators. Postdoctoral fellows or their equivalent are not eligible. Each pilot and feasibility study proposal should state clearly the justification for eligibility of the investigator under one of the above three criteria.

A proposed pilot and feasibility study should present a testable hypothesis and clearly delineate the question being asked, detail the procedures to be followed, and discuss how

the data will be analyzed. It must be on a topic related to the objectives of the Core Center. Projects should be focused, since funding for these studies is modest (less than \$50,000 direct costs per year per project) and is limited to two years or less. Any one investigator is eligible only once for this support, unless the additional proposed pilot and feasibility study constitutes a real departure from his/her ongoing research.

Use a separate Form PHS 398 for each project, and number each project sequentially. Each pilot and feasibility project should be identified clearly by the same title as that provided in the Table of Contents. Each project should begin with a face page, abstract, and budget pages, followed by information requested in Sections A through I of the instructions for Form PHS 398. It should be submitted generally using the NIH research project application format, but the description of the proposed research should be limited to five pages.

The application should clearly describe and justify the pool from which potential pilot and feasibility applications will be selected. This can be limited to investigators at the parent institution or expanded to include investigators at institutions with a well defined affiliation with the Core Center. Such an affiliation can occur either through a subcontractual relationship for support of core resources or through inclusion of funded projects at a collaborating institution in the research base utilizing the shared resources of the Core Center. The mechanisms by which information on the availability of pilot and feasibility awards will be disseminated and by which applicants will apply and be selected for these awards must be described and will be an important element in the review of the pilot and feasibility component of the Core Center.

Initial review and management of the pilot and feasibility program: By the very nature of this program, a significant responsibility for its management will be left to the Center administration during the project periods. For new Center grant applications, the pilot and feasibility proposals are reviewed for scientific merit and eligibility by the initial review group. These initial pilot and feasibility studies must have been reviewed by the Center in the manner proposed for review of future studies so that only those considered to be the highest quality are included in the grant application. The amount of pilot and feasibility funds provided for the first year will be based on the review of the proposed studies. The budget for future years is recommended by the initial review group based on the quality of the proposed pilot and feasibility studies, and the proposed method for management and review (as evidenced by this set of projects). Also considered will be review group's evaluation of the future justification for continued pilot and feasibility support.

Since pilot and feasibility studies can be awarded for any period of time up to two years, studies end at various times. In addition, the studies may also be terminated by the Center administration before their approved time limit for various reasons: e.g., (1) the investigator may receive outside funding for the project; (2) the project was found not to be feasible; (3) the investigator may leave the Center institution; etc. When this occurs, the Center may make new awards for pilot and feasibility studies with the remaining funds.

While a Center's administrative framework for management of the pilot and feasibility program is basically left up to each Center (subject to NIH peer review), certain minimal requirements must be met. The program must have a director who is an established investigator in diabetes. There must also be a committee representing all the aspects of the Center to assist the director in the management of the program. The major responsibilities of the director and the committee will be to:

- (1) Maintain oversight and review of ongoing pilot and feasibility studies;
- (2) Make recommendations regarding termination or other actions to the Center Executive Committee (or equivalent);
- (3) Prepare and ensure appropriate distribution of announcements of the availability of pilot and feasibility funding;
- (4) Arrange and preside over the scientific merit review of proposals. At least one reviewer from outside the parent institution must be used for each proposal. All reviewers should assign priority scores in accordance with the NIH system. Copies of all of the proposals with written documentation of their reviews, priority scores, and final action must be retained by the Center. These records must be made available to reviewers if requested at the time of a renewal application;
- (5) Maintain, insofar as is possible, a record of subsequent career events of each pilot and feasibility study recipient. This record must also be made available to reviewers at the time of the renewal application;
- (6) Make recommendations to the Center Executive Committee (or equivalent) for final decisions. A record of actions by this committee must be documented and be available if requested by the initial review group.

All applicants should describe how these requirements will be met and have been met in the case of renewal applications. Also included should be an assessment of the relevancy of the proposed individual pilot and feasibility studies and of the program as a whole to research on diabetes and related areas of research and to the specific goals and objectives of the individual Center and of the Center program generally.

Review of the pilot and feasibility program in renewal applications: After the initial review of pilot and feasibility proposals as described above, all responsibility for review and funding during the remainder of the project period will reside within the Center itself. This approach provides each Center with the needed flexibility for effective and efficient management of the program. In competing renewal applications, the review of this program will be based on the past track record, the management of the program, and an assessment of overall potential needs and opportunities.

In general, a competing renewal application will include: (1) an historical overview; (2) a description of Center management of the program; (3) a description of the method for solicitation for pilot and feasibility projects and the number of respondents received for each solicitation; (4) a listing of all previous, ongoing and approved proposed pilot and feasibility studies with reports on those which were supported by the Center during the last project period; and (5) a statement of the benefits of the program to the Center as well as the contribution of the uniqueness of the Center environment to the program. These points are detailed in the following paragraphs.

The historical overview will cover the pilot and feasibility program since the inception of the Center. This should include, in summary format, all pilot and feasibility projects ever awarded. For each project listed, the following should be included: (1) publications as a result of the studies; (2) peer-reviewed funding as a result of the studies; and (3) whether the recipient is still active in the area of diabetes. The pilot and feasibility program director may wish to highlight certain studies or certain aspects of the past studies. Collaborations which resulted in lasting relationships, acquisition of new skills by the study recipient, or other significant outcomes should be identified. The relationship of the scope of the various studies to that of the Center should be emphasized. Details such as back-up documentation (described earlier in relation to the arrangement of the pilot and feasibility program) should not be included, but should be available for examination by the reviewers if requested.

The description of center management of the program will present in detail the current system used to manage the pilot and feasibility program, including its integration with and relationship to the rest of the administrative structure. The use of outside consultants for review should be included in the discussion. Important features of the solicitation process should be provided including the distribution and the number of respondents.

The historical review of all pilot and feasibility studies ever awarded should include a report on each pilot and feasibility study conducted during the last project period. These reports should be brief (1-2 pages) and contain (1) the name of the investigator, degree(s), professional career status at the time awarded, and current professional career status (if known); (2) an overview of the project including its significance and salient results; (3) a list of resulting publications; and (4) peer-reviewed subsequent funding in the same or related area. The proposals should be available, if requested by the reviewers.

The recommendation of the initial review group will be based on the overall performance of the center's pilot and feasibility program as documented in the application. This recommendation will be based on: (1) the extent to which awarded funds were fully utilized during the previous project period; (2) awards were made to investigators who fully met the eligibility criteria for pilot and feasibility support as outlined above; (3) Center-relatedness; and (4) success of previously supported pilot and feasibility studies (e.g., publications, subsequent independent R01 or other peer-reviewed support, and/or attraction of new investigator into Center related research).

Research Training

Training postdoctoral fellows to conduct research in diabetes is an associated activity of a Center. While stipends for fellows cannot be funded from the Center, the establishment of a Center should provide an enhanced environment for research training. Just as in the case of funding for individual research projects, funding for fellowships should be sought from NIH NRSA institutional training grants (T32, T35) and individual fellowships (F32, F33), and other sources such as private foundations, and commercial companies.

Although no budgetary items would be included for research training, a section should be included in both initial and competing renewal applications documenting the research training program in diabetes its relationship to the Center, and how the presence of the Center may enhance the program.

IV. PRE-APPLICATION PROCESS

It is the policy of the NIDDK that new and competing continuation Center applications are only accepted in response to a Request for Applications (RFA) announced in the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts. It is strongly encouraged that potential applicants for a Center submit a letter of intent. The letter should be sent at least one month prior to submission to allow NIDDK staff to identify potential opportunities and problems early in the development of the application. The letter of intent needs to include only: (1) names of the principal investigators and principal collaborators, (2) identification of the organization(s) involved; and (3) announcement to which the potential application is responsive. The purpose of the letter of intent is to establish communication between the potential applicant group and NIDDK staff. It is not part of the peer review material. Upon receipt of the letter, the appropriate NIDDK program director contacts the prospective principal investigator to assist in a number of areas that include scientific content and objectives, organization, and clarifications. However, applicants should not construe advice given by the NIDDK staff as assurance of favorable review. The staff will not evaluate or discuss the merit of the scientific aspects of the application.

V. PREPARATION OF APPLICATION

Description

Applications must be submitted using PHS Form 398 (Rev. 5/01). The RFA label contained in the application kit must be affixed to the bottom of the face page of the original copy of the application. Failure to use this label could result in delayed processing and review of your application.

Submit the signed original application, including the Checklist, plus three signed photocopies, in one package to:

CENTER FOR SCIENTIFIC REVIEW

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
 6701 ROCKLEDGE DRIVE, ROOM 1040 - MSC 7710
 BETHESDA, MD 20892-7710
 BETHESDA, MD 20817 (for express/courier service)

At time of submission, two additional copies of the application must be sent to:

Chief, Review Branch
 Division of Extramural Activities, NIDDK
 6707 Democracy Boulevard, Rm. 653 MSC 5452
 Bethesda, MD 20892-5452
 (for express/courier service: Bethesda, MD 20817)

The arrangement of materials should follow both the instructions in the PHS Form 398 application kit and the more specific guidance detailed below. Applications not in accordance with Center guidelines will be returned to the applicant by the Center for Scientific Review.

Applicants should keep in mind that the written application is the basis for the merit review. Particular attention should be given to the format of the application. Awards for Center grants are for five-year project periods. Basic information useful for preparing the application follows. Applicants may also consult with NIDDK staff concerning the technical aspects of preparing the application.

Content Order for Applications

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

- Face Page (398-AA) Center applications are only accepted in response to an RFA. The RFA label must be affixed to the bottom of the face page and the title must be typed on line 2 and the 'yes' box must be marked.
- Description and Key Personnel (398-BB)
- Table of Contents
- Budgets
 1. Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period (398-DD)
 2. Budget for Entire Proposed Project Period (398- EE)
 3. Consolidated budget for first year of requested support (such as the one shown in Illustration I) (Budgets for each individual Core should immediately precede the narrative for each Core)
- Biographical Sketches for all Center participants beginning with Center Director and Associate Director and followed by other participants in alphabetical order (398-FF)

- Distribution of Professional Effort (such as the Table shown in Illustration II)
- Summary of total current and pending support of all Center participants including percent efforts. List support related to diabetes first, followed by noncenter-related research support. (Such as the Table shown in Illustration III)
- General description of the proposed or established Center
For Renewals: Changes from the original Center design should be highlighted

SECTION 2: ADMINISTRATIVE COMPONENT

- Budget with comprehensive budgetary justifications
- Director and Associate Director
- Presentation of the administrative structure
- Relationship and lines of authority and sanction by appropriate institutional officials
- Committee structure (include committee for the pilot and feasibility program)
- General overall description of facilities and institutional commitment
- Description of plans for the enrichment program
- Other Considerations

SECTION 3: BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH COMPONENT

- Overview of ongoing research and impact of Center on this research. Description of Research Base - Grouped into areas of emphasis for the Center
- For Renewals: Progress Report including description of significant findings, new participants and new funding. Publications Citing Support from this Core Center (such as the chart shown in Illustration IV)
- Biomedical research cores (present each core separately)

Descriptive Abstract

Budget with justifications

Objectives of the core

Core function, including quality control

Benefits from core

Proposed developmental research or training

Funded investigators who will use the core and proposed extent of use (such as the Table shown in Illustration V)

For Renewal: Core Use during the last grant period (such as the Table shown in Illustration V)

- Pilot and Feasibility Program

Composite budget with budgetary justifications for future years

Introduction

Director and Committee

Management of the pilot and feasibility program

Description of future of the pilot and feasibility program

In initial applications include: budget and justifications, justification of eligibility as well as the scientific proposals with their justification for core usage.

For competing renewal applications, also include: overview; listing and reports of pilot and feasibility studies; and additional pilot and feasibility proposals, if applicable, as requested for an initial application.

- Research Training Program

Description

Other considerations

- Checklist

VI. BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Unless otherwise indicated in the Notice of Grant Award, allowable costs and policies governing the research grant program of the NIH will prevail. The anticipated award will be for five years. The maximum dollar request in any budget period is limited to \$1,250,000 in direct costs for DRTC (P60) and \$1,000,000 in direct costs for DERC (P30) applications with the following exceptions. Not included in these direct cost limits are: 1) requests for equipment in the first year of a competitive award; 2) direct costs on subcontracts for the purpose of establishing collaborations and providing access to the research infrastructure to investigators at historically black colleges and universities (HBCU's), health departments, community health centers or other agencies that focus on underserved populations and offer special opportunities to foster research to reduce or eliminate health disparities in populations disproportionately affected by diabetes; and 3) Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs associated with any subcontract. Approximately 20-25% of the direct costs requested in P30 and P60 applications, exclusive of equipment, should be for support of a Pilot and Feasibility program. Each pilot/feasibility study is limited to \$50,000 per year and a two year duration of support. Future budget period escalations may not exceed a 3 percent increase over the previous budget period.

Budget Categories

Professional Personnel: This category may include support for salaries of key personnel within the Center who contribute to allowable activities of the Center. The salaries derived from the Center grant will depend on the effort provided and institutional salary as well as existing NIH policies; however, current NIDDK practice limits annual increments to 3 percent. The Center Director is expected to devote at least 20% of his/her efforts to the Center. The Center application should include salaries for individual principal investigators only to the extent that they provide an essential Center function. No overlap of time or effort between the Center and separately-funded projects is permitted.

Salaries of professional personnel engaged in research activities supported by pilot and feasibility funds of the Center are an allowable cost item as are salaries of professional personnel in core facilities.

Technical and Support Personnel: This may include salaries for identified positions to be filled in the Center. No overlap of time or effort between the Center and separately funded projects is permitted.

Equipment: Requests for large equipment costs must include documentation of similar equipment already available at the institution and provide a clear justification in terms of core need and service to Center investigators. General purpose equipment needs should be included only after surveying the availability of such items within the institution.

Supplies: Consumable supplies related to the operation of the Center are allowed and include office materials, as well as scientific supplies, but should not be supplements to

separately funded projects. The supply budgets of individual projects must be reduced to reflect cost savings through core usage.

Research Patient Care Costs: Research patient care costs (both in-patient and out-patient expenses) will be considered in the context of other existing institutional clinical resources. Attempts should be made by the applicant institution to utilize existing clinical facilities, such as General Clinical Research Centers and individually supported beds. Costs relating to the clinical research efforts of Center investigators may be funded through the Center, provided there is no overlap of funding. Costs already budgeted in individual projects should be appropriately reduced if such costs are to be transferred to the Center budget. The Center is not intended to be a facility for health care delivery; thus, only those patient costs directly related to research activities may be charged to the Center.

Alteration and Renovation: Funds for alteration and renovation of an existing structure to provide suitable core facilities for the Center may be made available from the grant under current PHS guidelines.

Travel: Domestic and foreign travel of project personnel directly related to the core activities of the Center is allowable. Travel of Center participants for attendance at annual Center directors meetings is also allowable.

Consultants: Consultants and any associated costs (consultant fees, per diem, travel) may be included when their services are required within the Center.

VII. REVIEW PROCESS AND CRITERIA

Upon receipt, applications will be initially reviewed by the Center for Scientific Review (CSR) for completeness. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant without further consideration. Evaluation of responsiveness to the program requirements and criteria stated in the RFA is an NIDDK staff function.

Applications that are complete and responsive will be evaluated in national competition in accordance with the criteria stated below for scientific/technical merit by an appropriate peer review group convened by the NIDDK. It is essential that the written application be in a form to be reviewed on its own merit, since no site-visit is anticipated. Following this review, the applications will be given a second level review by the National Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases Advisory Council.

Upon receipt, applications will be reviewed for completeness by the CSR and responsiveness by the NIDDK. Incomplete and/or non-responsive applications will be returned to the applicant without further consideration.

Applications that are complete and responsive to the RFA will be evaluated for scientific and technical merit by an appropriate peer review group convened by the NIDDK in

accordance with the review criteria stated below. As part of the initial merit review, all applications will receive a written critique and undergo a process in which only those applications deemed to have the highest scientific merit, generally the top half of the applications under review, will be discussed, assigned a priority score, and receive a second level review by the National Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases Advisory Council.

Review Criteria

The goals of the DRTCs and DERCS are to advance our understanding of biological systems relevant to diabetes and its complications, and to facilitate development of new methods to treat, prevent and ultimately cure diabetes and its complications. DRTCs have the additional goal of improving the control and prevention of diabetes and its complications and enhancing health by facilitating translational research, particularly in underserved populations and populations disproportionately affected by diabetes. In the written comments, reviewers will be asked to discuss the following aspects of the application in order to judge the likelihood that the proposed research will have a substantial impact on the pursuit of these goals. Each of these criteria will be addressed and considered in assigning the overall score, weighing them as appropriate for each application. The most important component of DRTCs and DERCS is the quality (strengths, breadth and depth) of its established, independently supported, ongoing base of diabetes research at the institution(s) to be served by the center. For the DRTC this research base must include translational research in addition to the biomedical research base required for DERCS.

Specific review criteria are:

- o Scientific excellence of the Center's research base that must have a broad and central focus in diabetes and may extend to related research in metabolism and endocrinology. The relevance of the separately funded research to the Center objectives (see above) and the likelihood for meaningful collaboration among Center investigators must be demonstrated.
- o Potential of the cores for contribution to ongoing research, including their appropriateness, impact, relevance, uniqueness, modes of operation, and suitability of facilities. Renewal applications must document the use, impact, quality control, and cost effectiveness of each core, and demonstrate progress of any developmental research in the cores. Progress will be judged in part by the publications supported by the cores. While a minimum of two users (exclusive of Pilot and Feasibility projects) are required to establish a core, a greater number of users will be considered to be more cost effective.
- o Scientific and administrative abilities of the Center Director and Associate Director and their commitment and ability to devote adequate time to the effective management of the Diabetes Research Center.

- o The qualifications, experience, accomplishments, and commitment of the Center investigators and their inter-relatedness and collaborations.

- o For new applications, the pilot and feasibility program is judged on the basis of: (1) scientific merit of the studies as submitted and (2) the merit of the administrative process for selecting subsequent studies. The scientific merit of the submitted pilot and feasibility studies will be evaluated for:

(1) Significance: Does this study address an important problem? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge be advanced? What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts or methods that drive this field?

(2) Approach: Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?

(3) Innovation: Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches or methods? Are the aims original and innovative? Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies?

(4) Investigator: Is the investigator appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work? Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the principal investigator and other researchers (if any)?

(5) Environment: Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Do the proposed experiments take advantage of unique features of the scientific environment or employ useful collaborative arrangements? Is there evidence of institutional support?

In competing renewal applications, emphasis is placed on the pilot and feasibility program as a whole, including past track record and management of the program.

- o The Administrative organization proposed, including: coordination of ongoing research; establishment and maintenance of internal communication and cooperation among DRTC investigators; mechanisms for prioritizing usage of shared resources; mechanisms of selecting and replacing essential personnel within the Center; mechanisms for reviewing the use of and administering funds for the pilot and feasibility program, and management capabilities.

- o The appropriateness of the DRTC budgets for the proposed and approved work to be done in core facilities, for pilot and feasibility studies, and for enrichment in relation to the total Center program.

- o Institutional commitment to the program, including lines of accountability regarding management of the DRTC grant and a commitment to establish new positions as necessary.

o Although the DRTCs do not specifically support research training, demonstration of accomplishments and future plans related to the training of investigators necessary to conduct research in diabetes and related metabolic and endocrine disorders will be considered in assessing the potential to meet Center objectives. The integration of these efforts into the overall Center, including core facilities is of particular importance. Efficient and effective use and/or planned use of the limited enrichment funds, including the contribution of these activities in enhancing the objectives of the Center will also be considered.

In addition to the above criteria, in accordance with NIH policy, all applications will also be reviewed with respect to the following:

o Adequacy of plans to include both genders, minorities and their subgroups, and children as appropriate for the scientific goals of the research. Plans for the recruitment and retention of subjects will also be evaluated.

o The reasonableness of the proposed budget and duration to the proposed research.

o The adequacy of the proposed protection of humans, animals, or the environment, to the extent that they may be adversely affected by the project proposed in the application.

o The adequacy of the proposed plan to share data.

Funding decisions will be based on the quality of the proposed Center as determined by peer review, overall balance in the Diabetes Research Centers program, and the availability of funds.

VIII. EVALUATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The annual Application for Continuation Grant (Progress Report), which is due two months before the anniversary date of the award, should be submitted as described in the PHS Form 2590 application kit which is sent automatically to NIH grantees. The following order for presentation of information in the Continuation Grant Progress Report is suggested:

- (1) Cumulative Budget
- (2) Budget for each Core
- (3) List new Key personnel followed by biosketches
- (4) Other support for all Key personnel

- (5) Listing of current Center Investigators, with member's name, department, and area of interest; indicate those who are new to center in past year and who are collaborative (outside center) members
- (6) Administrative Core: Highlight significant accomplishments, evaluation activities, and enrichment activities
- (7) Biomedical and Translational Research Cores: Highlight significant changes from previous report; Describe services provided and number of users; and List publications citing support from the Center which used this core
- (8) Pilot and Feasibility Projects: Describe new projects and progress on ongoing progress and projects that terminated during the previous funding period; List publications and new peer-reviewed research support emanating from the pilot and feasibility projects.

IX. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Each Center will be expected to develop its own program in accordance with local talents, interests, and resources. Each Center must also be responsive to national needs to develop new approaches to the prevention, treatment and cure of diabetes and its complications and must be willing to work with the NIDDK and other organizations in furthering the overall goals of the Centers Program. In this regard, the Center Director and selected other Center participants may be invited to meet periodically with NIDDK staff and its consultants to review progress, identify emerging needs and opportunities, and plan approached for future investigations.

Within the context of these guidelines, potential applicants for Center grants are encouraged to exercise the flexibility necessary to utilize the strengths of their particular institutions in preparing a plan which will eventually cover the spectrum of required activities. While types of activities that should be included are indicated in the guidelines, specific approaches for their accomplishment are left to the individual applicant.

Because of resource limitations and in light of the size of the Center grants, it is unlikely that NIDDK will be in a position to provide hardship allowances in the event that an application for renewal of Center support is not funded.

ILLUSTRATION I
CONSOLIDATED BUDGET FOR 1st YEAR OF REQUESTED SUPPORT

Budget Category	Core A	Core B	Core C	P&F 1	Total
Personnel					
Consultant Costs					
Equipment					
Supplies					
Domestic Travel					
Foreign Travel					
Patient Care Costs					
Alterations and Renovations					
Other Expenses					
Contractual Costs					
Total					

ILLUSTRATION II
DISTRIBUTION OF PROFESSIONAL EFFORT (%) ON THIS APPLICATION

Participating Investigators*	Core A	Core B	Core C	Core D	P&F 1	Application Total	Other Support
Dr. A.	*10			10		20	50
Dr. B.		10			*10	20	40
Dr. C.	5					5	
Dr. D.			15	*10		25	55
Etc.							

*Star the percent effort (See Admin) when that individual is the core director or the principal investigator on a pilot and feasibility study.

Minimum effort for Core Director is 10%. Minimum total effort for Center Director is 20%.

ILLUSTRATION III
SUMMARY OF TOTAL CURRENT AND PENDING SUPPORT OF ALL CENTER PARTICIPANTS

DIABETES RESEARCH BASE: Current Support						
Principal Investigator Co-Investigator*	Supporting Organization and Grant Number	Title	Project Period	Total Amount	Current Annual Amount	Percent Effort
Example: Doe, Joe	P01 DK00000	Immunopathogenesis of Diabetes	4/1/90-3/31/96	\$600,000	\$125,261	40
Jones, Sam	K04 DK-00000	Cellular Therapy for Diabetes	6/1/92-5/31/98	\$100,000	\$ 35,000	50
Lane, Andrea (G. Under)	R01 DK-00000	Genes for Type 2 Diabetes	7/1/91-6/30/97	\$162,518	\$ 50,000	15
DIABETES RESEARCH BASE: Pending Support						
Principal Investigator Co-Investigator*	Supporting Organization and Grant Number	Title	Project Period Requested	Total Amount Requested	First Year Support Requested	Percent Effort Requested
NON-CENTER-RELATED RESEARCH: Current Support (as above)						
NON-CENTER-RELATED RESEARCH: Pending Support (as above)						

* If co-investigator's name is used, put principal investigator's name in parentheses below.

**ILLUSTRATION IV--FOR COMPETING RENEWALS ONLY
PUBLICATIONS CITING SUPPORT FROM THIS CORE CENTER
GRANT**

<u>Core or P&F/P.I. Name</u>	<u>Publications</u>	<u>Core A</u>	<u>Core B</u>
Core A/ Brown	Brown, A.C; Jones R.C.; Smith, A.J. Metformin reduces hepatic glucose output. Diabetes, 1996	P	
	Brown, A.C.; Cheng, A.G.; Anderson, J.C. Results of Islet Transplantation. Diabetes, 1994	P	S
Core B/ Cheng,	Cheng, A.C.; Meyer, G.C. Linkage Studies in Animal Models for Diabetes Nature Genetics, 1995.	S	P
	Smith, F.G.; Cheng, A.C.; Tissue Specific Knockout of Glut 4 PNAS, 1996		P

*List each publication only once under the project number most significantly contributing to the work. The project most significantly contributing to the work should be signified by a P (primary). All other contributing projects and cores are designated by an S (secondary).

**ILLUSTRATION V
USE OF CORE FACILITIES**

CORE: NAME

Determination/Services Rendered

A.

B.

Users	Funded Projects with Identifying Number	Period of Performance	Determinations Services	Estimated Use and Comments
1.				
2.				
3.				

EXAMPLE

Core A: Molecular Biology

Determination/Services Rendered

A.

B.

C.

D.

Users	Funded Projects with Identifying Number	Period of Performance	Determinations Services					Estimated Use and Comments
			A	B	C	D	E	
1. J. F. Smith	R01 DK00000-00	3/7/89-3/7/98	X	X				A. 5 per month C. 100 per month
2. S. R. Jones	K04 DK00000-00	1/4/92-1/4/98		X				B. 40 per week
3. R. G. Brown	R01 GM00000-00	9/1/89-9/1/98	X					A. 16 per week for 6 months

Core B: Morphology

Determination/Services Rendered

Same format