

The \$50M Anschutz Acceleration Initiative: AAI

Unlocking Patient Impact in 3-5 years

The University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus has demonstrated a long history of success in accelerating therapeutics and healthcare technologies that enhance the practice of medicine and improve outcomes for patients. Novel therapeutics derived from CU faculty research include: the Shingrix® vaccine for preventing Shingles, Letairis® for treating Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension, and Kineret® for treating moderate to severe Rheumatoid Arthritis. In the realm of devices and digital health, surgical, orthopedic, and ophthalmologic devices created at CU Anschutz are currently being utilized in millions of procedures throughout the world, and our faculty have developed novel digital solutions for addressing the mental health crisis, improving patient outcomes, and redesigning care delivery.

The Anschutz Foundation would like to build upon that history of success by inviting applications for multidisciplinary translational and clinical research and innovation programs that have the potential to generate novel healthcare solutions that will directly impact patient care within three to five years. Patient impact is defined broadly and may include programs aimed at achieving first in human clinical trials or pilots, but in every case, an expected outcome is that solutions will have a direct, near-term patient benefit. By catalyzing and accelerating research and innovation, the AAI will position CU Anschutz as a leader in innovative science, help recruit and retain outstanding faculty, and positively impact human lives and society in Colorado, the nation and the world.

Areas of focus are not prespecified and can include work that is as diverse as therapeutic and biomarker development, solutions that can alter the way that care is provided, development of informatic tools that advance care and/or population health solutions that can impact health delivery broadly.

The following characteristics may be considered in assessing proposed projects for AAI funding:

- For research projects, those eligible must involve late-stage research with the potential of patient impact within 3 to 5 years. Early-stage research ideas will not be considered.
- For projects focused on public health and prevention, mental health efforts may be prioritized.
- For projects focused on innovation, those showing economic impact through private partnerships and external investments may be prioritized.
- For all projects, multidisciplinary efforts that leverage existing campus strengths and expertise may be prioritized. Funding is intended to accelerate new treatments to patients within 3 to 5 years. The potential impact of the project will be an important consideration in the review process.

Milestone Based Funding: The campus plans to support up to seven proposals with a total budget for each initiative between \$5 million and \$15 million. Funding will be dispersed following achievement of milestones (see application process below). The AAI Central Office will provide selected programs with resources and connections aimed at translation and commercialization, including connections to product managers with industry expertise in therapeutic, medical device, diagnostic, and digital health product development, regulatory experts, business leads, patient advocates, end-users, industry connections, and marketing support.

Teams: Program participation should include faculty from different disciplines across career stages (Assistant, Associate, full Professor, or equivalent academic titles) as appropriate to the proposed project. Full proposals must describe how the team was composed and articulate how the collaboration, mentorship and shared leadership opportunities will be integrated into the proposed project and activities to achieve the programmatic goals. It is expected that to achieve impact, teams may require industry and/or hospital partners to achieve programmatic goals.

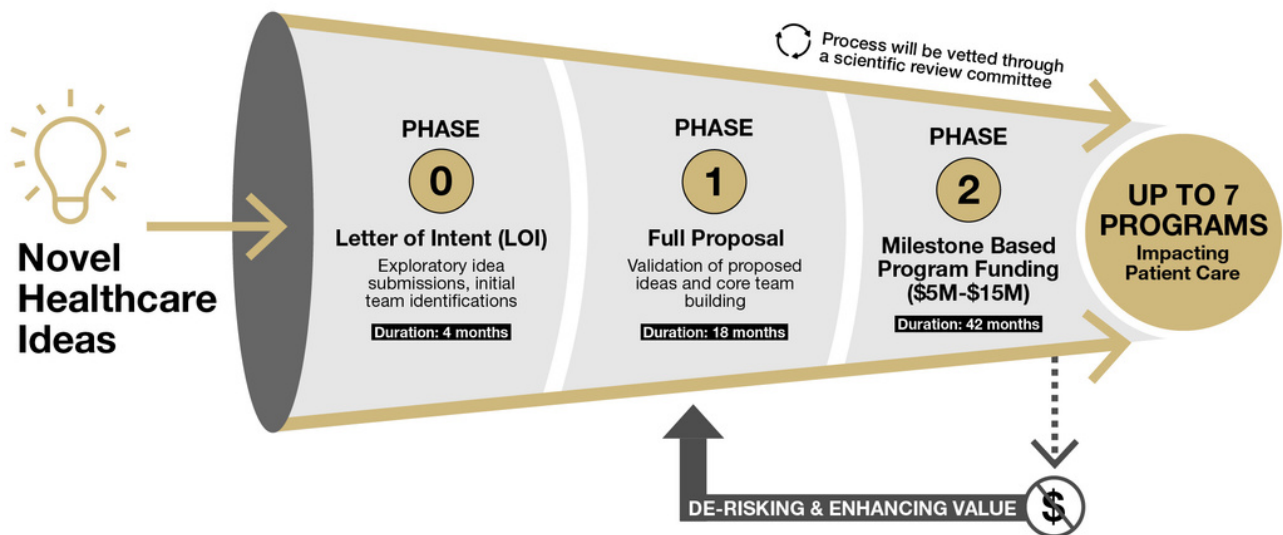
Budgets: Budgets for each initiative should be between \$5 million and \$15 million, allocated over a 5-year period, beginning March 1, 2024. Budgets should include personnel costs for existing faculty and staff; supply and small equipment purchases; any capital equipment purchases greater than \$50,000; and proposed recruitment of investigators and/or industry and/or hospital partners.

One goal of this Research Funding is to maximize the return on the investment. The return will be measured subjectively by the generation of novel science and objectively by patient impact, follow on funding and novel IP.

Application Process:

The Application Process will proceed as follows:

The \$50m Anschutz Acceleration Initiative Process



Letter of Intent: A Letter of Intent, two pages maximum, outlining the focus of the proposal and listing potential faculty applicants and partners (e.g., industry and/or hospital partners), is due on July 14, 2023. The purpose of the letter is three-fold: (1). To filter out applications that are not responsive to this RFA,; (2) to identify independent applications that have significant overlap to facilitate collaboration and, ideally, one submission on a theme rather than multiple competing applications, and (3) to allow identification of external reviewers with appropriate expertise to review the submissions.

Full Proposals: On August 8, 2023, select LOIs were invited to submit proposals by October 18, 2023. Those proposals should be organized as follows*:

- **Executive Summary: 1 page**
 - High-level program aims and description of healthcare problem(s) to be addressed, significance and patient impact.

- **Program Design: maximum of 10 pages**
 - Detailed program aims and description of healthcare problems addressed.

 - Existing strengths, infrastructure and/or industry or hospital partnerships
 - If clinical components are part of the proposal, consideration of the relationship of these to clinical priorities of UCHealth University of Colorado Hospital and Children's Hospital Colorado should also be presented.

 - Forecast of patient impact: How would you demonstrate and measure direct patient impact from your proposal in the next 3-5 years? Please provide specific information to show how this is responsive to the RFA and timeframe.

 - Milestones, proposed metrics and associated benchmarks of success, timeline of deliverables, overall budget (milestone-based):
 - ~Continued funding is dependent upon the timely achievement of agreed upon milestones.
 - Please include a basic timeline of translation to the clinic with activities/funds distribution – this should be in 6-12 month landmark periods with the major objectives for that period and the rough costs for each milestone.
 - Budget template will be sent directly to you from AAI inbox.

 - Sustainability Plan

 - Include any Intellectual Property (IP) related to the proposal. Please include who owns IP or who has licensed the IP (e.g. CU, private company, faculty start up)? Please provide details around patents, licenses, financial return to the university, etc. and explain the role and IP ownership of any outside company included in the work.
 - In addition, if drugs, technology, equipment, etc. are required from the company to complete the project, this commitment from them to supply should be stated (e.g. The external company supports this and will supply the drug necessary to complete the proposed trial).

- **NIH Biosketches (academic members) or resumes (business partners)**
- **Private Partnership Acknowledgement Letter**
 - To the extent that a funded project could potentially generate financial benefit to that partner, there will be an expectation that the final funding agreement will include consideration of how the financial benefit to the company will be shared with the University. **Applications that include a commercial partnership should include a letter from the company indicating that they are aware of this expectation and are open to negotiation.**

**Please note that this section was updated August 16, 2023.*

NIH budget forms and guidelines should be used:

- Salary costs should be budgeted according to NIH salary cap guidelines.
- Some administrative costs, consistent with large programmatic initiatives, may be incorporated.
- Travel and other expenses can be included, if they contribute to achieving the milestones of the proposal.
- Large equipment purchases and upgrade costs may be appropriate for this RFP provided they contribute to achieving the milestones of the proposal.
- While collaborative relationships with other sites are allowed, major expenditures should be deployed on the Anschutz Medical Campus, where reasonable.

Full proposals will undergo a review process by a panel of external reviewers (under NDA) with expertise in translating knowledge, research, and products to patients. Funding recommendations will be written up by the Central Office staff and final approval will be provided by the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor of Health Affairs. Awards are contingent on availability of funding. Final decisions may not be appealed, but declined proposals may be submitted to future competitions and opportunities without prejudice.

Questions about this initiative should be submitted in writing to aai@cuanschutz.edu so that written responses may be provided to the entire community.