

TRAINEE PILOT AWARDS – 2024

CEMB is soliciting applications from trainees (applying as individuals or in small groups (2-3 applicants)) to carry out innovative pilot studies in mechanobiology. Up to 4 grants will be awarded: amounts will be **up to \$10,000** (for individual applicants) or **\$15,000** (for small groups). The trainee(s) will be considered the PI(s) of the grant.

The program is open to any trainee (postdoc or graduate student) affiliated with a CEMB institution or in the CEMB Network of Educational Partners; however, if you are in the Network, you must take the group approach and apply in collaboration with a trainee from a CEMB lab.

We're looking for BOLD and INNOVATIVE ideas in mechanobiology. Projects must be in line with overall CEMB goals in mechanobiology (see cemb.upenn.edu for details). They may be in the area of your primary project/thesis work but must represent a new idea for you/your lab. Collaborative grants between trainees working at different institutions, in different disciplines, or between kingdoms are particularly encouraged.

Trainees will be asked to submit short progress reports at the midpoint (paragraph only) and at the end of the funding period, including signoff by the mentor(s). Additionally, trainees must agree to present their work at a center-wide meeting (such as the CEMB Retreat or a Friday seminar) and as a poster at the annual NSF site visit.

DEADLINE:

Proposals are due to Annie Jeong (annjeong@seas.upenn.edu) by **5:00 PM (eastern) on Friday MAY 10, 2024, no exceptions.**

FORMAT:

Please combine all parts of your application into a single PDF file with the names of the trainee(s) in the file name. Proposals will be judged by a committee of CEMB faculty members; the selection committee excludes mentors of applicants.

Required Documents:

1. 200-word abstract with project title
2. 1-page (maximum) research plan (not including references). Preliminary data are not required. Highlight the potential significance of this work to the mission of CEMB, and, if more than one trainee is applying, note explicitly the work to be done by each trainee.
3. In a separate section (2-page maximum), include:
 - a. A brief budget and justification.
NOTE: An award of \$10,000 or \$15,000 is a TOTAL amount. Your budget should incorporate an indirect rate appropriate to your institution (please contact Annie Jeong for this information). **See note below*

- b. Proposed milestones/deliverables and timeline (1-2 paragraphs).
- c. Paragraph on how this is related, or not, to your primary research.
- d. All proposals must include a plan for at least one mini-sabbatical. These are up to 2-week trips to a CEMB lab to learn a new technique or engage in a similar academic pursuit. Applications for these funds are made separately, but you should include a short paragraph detailing how you will make use of a mini sabbatical as part of this pilot program. Any CEMB lab is eligible, if the technique(s) you will learn are relevant to the proposed project.
- e. If you are in a small group, describe in a few sentences how your faculty advisors will provide mentorship for this pilot award (*i.e.* a once monthly joint zoom meeting).

ADVISOR SUPPORT:

Each proposal must include a cover letter signed by the trainee faculty advisor(s) stating explicitly that they approve of the application and that the proposed work is not currently underway in the lab (*although note that it may be related to the primary or thesis project*). Note in the cover letter the position of the trainee(s), and how long the trainee(s) has held that position (*i.e.* third-year graduate student in Bioengineering).

Individual trainees may apply. This program is open to any trainee at a CEMB institution or a CEMB Network of Educational Partners institution (*if part of a small group, one must be in a CEMB lab*). Trainees who have previously been awarded CEMB pilot grants are not eligible. Trainees may not submit more than one application per year.

Note on indirect costs: Awards represent total costs, direct costs plus indirect costs. Indirect costs are charged by the institution to cover costs such as electricity, heat, IT services, etc. The rate varies per institution. For example, if you apply for a \$10,000 individual award at the University of Pennsylvania, the indirect rate is roughly 62.5%. Direct costs (*the money you can use for your experiments*) would be \$6,154, and your indirect costs (*money that stays at the institution*) would be \$3,846.

Support and FAQs

Please view this video link to learn from the experience of previous Pilot Grant recipients:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I3IEmXZxYFc>

