The Center for Targeted Therapeutics (CTT), supported by NIH COBRE grant 1P20GM109091, is seeking applications for pilot research grants in the field of targeted therapeutics. Tenured, tenure-track, research-track and clinical-track faculty members of any rank from any college at USC and from the South Carolina College of Pharmacy at MUSC are eligible to apply, with the exception of (i) target PIs, mentors, core directors or managers of the CTT and (ii) principal investigators on an active NIH R01 or an equivalent grant. Principal investigators of the currently active CTT pilot grants may apply for a competitive renewal. **Completed applications must be received by 3:00 pm on Monday, March 2, 2015.**

The CTT anticipates awarding 3 pilot grants of up to $30,000 each for studies conducted during the period of May 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016. In addition to direct funding, pilot project PIs will receive assistance in study design, execution and data interpretation from the CTT core facilities, namely:

- **Functional Genomics Core** [Directors: Kim Creek and Igor Roninson] (transcriptomic analysis, lentiviral vector construction, molecular target discovery and functional protein domain identification using shRNA and Genetic Suppressor Element lentiviral libraries).
- **Synthetic Chemistry and Drug Discovery Core** [Director: Patrick Woster, MUSC] (small-molecule library screening, synthetic chemistry, rational drug design).
- **Microscopy and Flow Cytometry Core** [Directors: Gary Schools and Chang-uk Lim] (various light microscopy services, including confocal and real-time video microscopy; flow cytometry, flow sorting).

Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact Dr. Alex Gasparian (gasparia@sccp.sc.edu), the CTT Scientific Coordinator, for advice on core utilization and other scientific aspects of the application process.

**CTT Topics.** CTT supports research on targeted therapeutics in any area of medicine. Appropriate “CTT topics” include:

1. Identification and/or validation of novel molecular targets for the treatment of a disease.
2. Designing/discovering new prototype therapeutic agents (of any chemical nature) acting on a defined molecular target or signal transduction pathway.
3. Targeted drug delivery.
4. Design and laboratory testing of novel drug combinations based on the biology of the drug target.

The pilot project **must** utilize support from **at least one** of the CTT core facilities.

**Budget.** CTT Pilot Project funds may be used to cover salaries, fringe benefits and scholarships for laboratory personnel and students, supply costs and facility charges. Pilot project funds may not be used for PI salaries/fringe benefits or travel. The total budget limit is $30,000 over 12 months. All awarded funds must be spent by April 30, 2016; no budget transfers will be allowed. Preliminary progress reports will be due on February 5, 2016.

**Review criteria and process.** Applications will be judged based on the following criteria:

- Scientific quality
- Matching with the CTT topics
• Qualifications of the applicant
• Likelihood that data from the project will lead to external funding
• Appropriateness of the budget
• Need for and appropriate utilization of the CTT cores

Each application will be reviewed and scored by at least one internal reviewer assigned by the CTT and also reviewed by directors of the corresponding CTT cores in regard to core utilization. The final round of reviews and recommendations for funding will be carried out by the CTT External Advisory Board.

Application format and submission. The pilot project applications should follow the current NIH format including fonts and margins (except as indicated below) and include the following:

• Project title
• Applicant’s name, position and departmental affiliation
• Specific Aims (no more than two Aims) (1 page limit)
• Research Strategy (Background, Significance, Approach) (5-page limit, including figures and figure legends and excluding references)
• [For current CTT pilot grant recipients] Progress Report (2-page limit)
• CTT relevance statement: explain and justify (i) which of the CTT topics are addressed in the proposal, (ii) the utilization of the CTT cores, and (iii) why the success of the pilot project is likely to result in the PI’s winning of an external research grant (1 page limit)
• Statements on the use of human subjects and vertebrate animals and the evidence of the requisite IRB and IACUC protocol approvals (1 page limit). Due to the short duration of the pilot projects, any required IRB or IACUC protocol approvals should be in place at the time of the application, except that simple amendments to the active IACUC protocols (not requiring IACUC meetings) may be submitted immediately upon the award of the pilot grant
• References (no page limit)
• Detailed budget (in the NIH format) and budget justification (no page limit)
• Biosketch of the applicant (and of any co-applicants and other key personnel) in the NIH format (4-page limit)

Complete applications should be assembled into a single PDF file, named
[APPLICANT'S LAST NAME]_CTT_PILOT

and submitted by e-mail to Tiffanie Aiken (aikent@sccp.sc.edu) no later than 3:00 pm on March 2, 2015. These proposals do NOT need to be submitted through USCeRA. Applications that are late or incomplete will not be considered.