2015 REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA): FOR CYSTIC FIBROSIS RESEARCH
ADMINISTERED BY THE CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCES INSTITUTE (CTSI) WITH FUNDING FROM HUNT FOR A CURE (HFC)

1. NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THIS RFA
The Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute (CTSI) announces a request for applications (RFA) for pilot funds to support research on cystic fibrosis. This limited support is intended to allow generation of preliminary data necessary for success in obtaining significant extramural funding (e.g. NIH).

Hunt for a Cure (HFC), a 501(c) (3) organization, provided the funds for this program. The mission of Hunt for a Cure (http://www.huntforacure.com/) is to assist efforts to cure or control cystic fibrosis and to improve the quality of life of those with the disease. Proposals should adhere to the mission of the foundation, and be designed as pilot and/or feasibility studies that investigate critical questions in CF disease research such as mechanisms underpinning pathophysiology of the disease and/or methods to prevent or treat cystic fibrosis. Proposals will be selected primarily based on responsiveness of the proposal to each of the following:

- research has a high probability of leading to extramural funding
- research may lead to a cure for, or control of, cystic fibrosis
- research will have a rapid impact on the future of individuals afflicted by cystic fibrosis

These projects must test new hypotheses or methods and open innovative areas of investigation. Specifically, those proposals that can address the following high priority specific objectives will be considered most responsive to this RFA:

- Studies focused on the molecular or biological factors that contribute(s) to CF patients being highly susceptible to bacterial infections and/or makes these infections difficult to treat.
- Studies focused on addressing the production of excess mucin and/or the disruption of the mucociliary clearance mechanisms found in CF patients.
- Studies focused on the dysregulation of the immune response to bacterial infection in CF patients. [Ex. Neutrophils dominate the inflammatory response causing tissue destruction.]
- Studies of CFTR protein synthesis, including protein trafficking and structure/function studies.
- Molecular characterization of CF mutations that can lead to more severe CF phenotypes.
- Research that leads to new therapeutics for CF patients.

2. ELIGIBILITY AND CRITERIA FOR FUNDING
Principal Investigators (PI) must be employed by Michigan State University at the time of the award. There are no restrictions on employment status of other team members.

Investigators who have been awarded funds under this mechanism last year are eligible to apply again. However, past awardees must submit a progress report with their application in order to be eligible for additional support. Progress reports from previous awardees should clearly show tangible and meaningful data that supports the previous hypothesis or clearly supports an alternative hypothesis or approach. Previous awardees must justify how additional funding will help close the knowledge gap on the topic previously funded.

3. KEY DATES FOR GRANT APPLICATION SUBMISSION
- email your intent to submit an application by 5:00 p.m. on August 10, 2015 to ctsi@msu.edu. To facilitate the assignments for the external review, please provide a brief summary of your project with your intent notification.
- full application is due on or before September 4, 2015 by 5:00 p.m.
- anticipated start/end date October 19, 2015 to October 18, 2016.
4. AWARD BUDGET AND FUNDING CRITERIA
It is anticipated that up to 3 or 4 awards will be funded depending on the merit of the applications received. Up to $40,000 may be requested for a period not to exceed one year. At this level of funding, the applications should be focused on near-term deliverable experiments that fit into an overall research strategy that can ultimately be supported by extramural funding. Funds may be used for any legitimate research purpose related to the HFC proposal submitted, such as research assistants, equipment, supplies, laboratory testing, or data management and analysis. Use of MSU core facilities for laboratory work is encouraged. The Principal Investigator’s salary support, travel costs to scientific meetings, and indirect costs will not be supported.

5. FORMAT AND ELEMENTS OF THE PROJECT GRANT APPLICATION
This will be an online submission. The application should be uploaded as one file in an Adobe Acrobat (pdf) format and emailed to ctsi@msu.edu.

Required elements of the full application are listed below. The body of the application (sections a-e) is limited to 7 pages in length. Biosketches, figures, tables, references, and if applicable, the progress report are not included in this page limit.

a) Summary (limited to 250 words);
b) Background
c) Specific aims
d) Research plan
e) Specific plans and timeline for seeking extramural funding support
f) Budget and Justification - (one year time period)
   Budgets should be broken down into three categories:
   1) Salary and fringe benefits for key personnel: segregate regular employees, student & temp labor
   2) Supplies and services
   3) Equipment (individual items costing over $5000)
   4) Append biosketches for principal investigator(s) and all key personnel using the NIH-format

g) Past awardees only
   Progress Report – no more than two pages

6. REVIEW
The CTSI and appointed external reviewers will perform a review of all submitted grant applications to ensure their close alignment with the overall strategic goals of the funding sponsor. Reviewers will score the proposal on a 1–9 scale employing the same criteria used in NIH peer review. The written critiques serve as feedback for the applicants, with reviewers’ names removed. The CTSI Hunt for a Cure Scientific Committee will make a final decision on funding according to the criteria and principles discussed above.

7. POST-AWARD RESPONSIBILITIES OF HFC Awardees:
Upon the one year completion of the award period, written summary reports will be provided to CTSI. The summary should be brief, but specifically highlight data resulting from the project and how it moves the field forward. Summary reports should clearly describe the overall usefulness of the data toward a cure or treatment for CF. Intellectual property and or Invention Disclosures resultant from the research project should be included in this summary. The summary report should also note any peer-reviewed scientific research abstracts, presentations, or manuscript(s) that have been generated or published. No-cost extensions will be considered, but are not guaranteed. Therefore no expenditures are to be made after the grant year ends until a decision is made regarding a requested no-cost extension. If an extension is denied, all unspent funds must be immediately returned to CTSI. All manuscripts, abstracts, and presentations of research findings derived wholly or in part from an HFC award should ACKNOWLEDGE HFC as the source of funding for the research, as well CTSI should be made aware of any future grant awards to HFC awardees garnered wholly in part due to prior HFC funding.