# NCATS
## Improving Health Through Smarter Science

# Clinical and Translational Science Awards Program

NCATS' Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) Program provides critical resources and support needed to strengthen the entire spectrum of our nation's clinical and translational research enterprise. CTSA Program biomedical research institutions — called "hubs" — provide core resources, essential mentoring and training, and opportunities to develop innovative approaches and technologies designed to re-engineer existing capabilities. Program support and collaborative initiatives harmonize efforts, foster collaboration and strengthen this network to improve the quality, safety, efficiency and speed of clinical and translational research nationally.

## CTSA Program Goals

- Train and cultivate the translational science workforce;

- Engage patients and communities in every phase of the translational process;

- Promote the integration of special and underserved populations in translational research across the human lifespan;

- Innovate processes to increase the quality and efficiency of translational research, particularly of multisite trials; and

- Advance the use of cutting-edge informatics.

## CTSA Program Activity Highlights

NCATS supports program activities to test and develop innovative approaches to barriers in clinical research. Examples include:

- The Trial Innovation Network, which brings together diverse medical research institutions from across the country to address roadblocks in clinical translation and to develop and test innovations that will effectively turn potential new interventions into therapies. The goal is not only to execute trials better, faster and more cost-efficiently, but also to be a national laboratory to study, understand and innovate the processes for conducting multisite studies. Composed of Trial Innovation Centers, a Recruitment Innovation Center and the CTSA Program hubs, the network soon will launch its first collaborative clinical trials with NIH Institutes and Centers and other partners.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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- The NCATS Streamlined, Multisite, Accelerated Resources for Trials (SMART) Institutional Review Board (IRB) Platform, which provides flexible resources to harmonize and streamline human subjects reviews for multisite studies. The goal is to provide flexible resources that investigators nationwide can use for IRB review of their own multisite studies. The platform is based on the successful experiences of NIH central IRB initiatives and on a CTSA Program demonstration project using a single-IRB reliance model called IRBrely. In addition to being a critical component of the Trial Innovation Network, the NCATS SMART IRB Platform is now serving as a roadmap to implementation of the new NIH-wide policy that expects all NIH-funded multisite clinical studies to use a single IRB.

- The CTSA Program Collaborative Innovation Awards (CCIAs), which support collaborative investigations among two or more CTSA Program hubs to improve research methods at any step in the translational process. Through these awards, NCATS is fostering research collaboration by encouraging teams from multiple hubs to work together to develop, demonstrate and disseminate multisite experimental approaches that overcome translational science roadblocks.

- NCATS also is leading an effort to develop common metrics to measure and improve the impact of the CTSA Program. These metrics will serve as a management tool, supporting data-driven, results-based strategic plans to improve performance in key areas, such as workforce development and clinical study efficiencies. The metrics also will aid in planning for the continuing evolution of the program to best meet the needs of researchers developing interventions for patients.

## For More Information

**About the CTSA Program**
ncats.nih.gov/ctsa/about

**CTSA Program in Action**
ncats.nih.gov/ctsa/about/action

**CTSA Program Funding**
ncats.nih.gov/ctsa/funding

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**About NCATS**
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