News, Opportunities and Deadlines for April 2021

2021 8th Annual LBRN Conference on Computational Biology & Bioinformatics

We are pleased to invite you to the:

2021 8th Annual Virtual Conference on Computational Biology and Bioinformatics

April 15-17, 2021

This year’s conference is being held on April 15 - 17, 2021 Virtual. The Virtual hosting information will be provided with your registration information just before the meeting.

Topics include:

- Cancer Informatics
- Cloud Computing
- Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)
- Evolutionary Genomics and Phylogenetics
- Microbiome and Metagenomics
- Virology and Infectious Diseases
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- Cloud Computing
- Evolutionary Genomics and Phylogenetics
- Virology and Infectious Diseases

Registration: https://lbrn.lsu.edu/conference-on-biology-and-bioinformatics.html

Agenda:
Agenda

for the

8th Annual Louisiana Conference on Computational Biology and Bioinformatics

April 15-17, 2021

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Thursday, April 15
12:30 pm - 5:30 pm (CDT)

Friday, April 16
12:30 pm - 5:30 pm (CDT)

Saturday, April 17
9:00 am - 12:00 pm (CDT)

All Times given in Central Time Zone

Speakers include:

- Alexander Titus, Google Cloud Strategy Leader @ Google // Emerging Technology for Public Purpose // AI/ML, Biotechnology, and Cloud
- Ankit Malhotra, Amazon Web Services (AWS) Business development for Biomedical Research
- Catherine Lozupone, University of Colorado Denver Associate Professor • Biomedical Bioinformatics and Personalized Medicine
- Erin Chu, Amazon Web Services (AWS) Life Sciences Lead, Open Data
- Lauren Ancel Meyers, University of Texas at Austin, Director, UT COVID-19 Modeling Consortium, Cooley Centennial Professor in Biology and Statistics
- Matt Gieseke, NIH/CIT STRIDES Initiative Cloud Instructional Development Lead at
Covalent Solutions, LLC

- **Michelle Lacey**, Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, Associate Professor of Mathematics, Department Biostatistics
- **Moriah L. Szpara**, Center for Infectious Disease Dynamics, Huck Institutes of the Life Sciences, and Eberly College of Science, Pennsylvania State University
- **Ross Thompson**, Google Cloud Solutions Architect at Google
- **Sara Suliman**, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Division of Rheumatology, Immunity and Inflammation
- **Todd Reilly**, NIH/CIT STRIDES Initiative Chief Scientist, Percipient Consulting
Conference Schedule (all times are CDT):

- April 15th, Thursday from 12:30pm to 5:30pm CDT / Poster session I
- April 16th, Friday from 12:30pm to 5:30pm CDT / Poster session II
- April 17th, Saturday from 9:00am to 12:00pm CDT
LBRN PI Awarded R01 from NIH

The National Institutes of Health awarded $1.65 million to fund cancer research being done by Dr. Seetharama Jois (LBRN PI), a professor of Medicinal Chemistry at the School of Basic Pharmaceutical and Toxicological Sciences at the University of Louisiana Monroe College of Pharmacy. The National Cancer Institute of the NIH has issued a notice of award for the project titled "Molecular mechanism of EGFRs protein-protein interaction inhibition by a grafted peptide in NSCLC".

The research will be carried out in collaboration with Yong-Yu Liu, M.D., Ph.D., a cancer pharmacologist at the ULM College of Pharmacy, and a lung-cancer researcher from the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota.

Photo from Siddharth Gaulee/ULM Photo Services

Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research of the University of Louisiana Monroe, LaWanna Gilbert-Bell, said, "This is the second R01 awarded by NIH to the University since 2016. This is the highest award possible from the NIH. It reiterates and highlights the profound research being conducted by our distinguished faculty."

Southeastern Biologist Receives NSF grant

Southeastern Louisiana University Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences Dr. April
Wright (LBRN PI) has been awarded a five-year grant of $1,125,000 by the National Science Foundation to integrate information from the fossil record with data collected from living species to infer phylogenetic relationships.

The grant was one of only two CAREER grants awarded in the state. The National Science Foundation CAREER awards are in support of junior faculty who exemplify the role of teacher-scholars through research and education, and the integration of these endeavors in the context of their organizations’ missions.

The project will focus on the use of posterior predictive methods for assessing which models are most appropriate for a particular dataset. The work will provide practical guidance and research software tools for researchers to perform more complex model assessment in systemic biology, Wright said.

“I will be working with statistical methods to integrate fossil data with extant molecular data to estimate dated phylogenetic trees,” said Wright. “Phylogenetic trees are one of our key ways of understanding the evolution of organisms, form, and function. And fossils are often our only direct source of information about past organisms. What we’ll be doing in the lab is evaluating different mathematical models for estimating phylogenetic trees from joint fossil and molecular data.”

... to see more details

• LSU Heath Researcher receives $750k NASA grant

Project: Develop a novel single-cell biodosimetry for brain genomic instability and
neurodegeneration to predict clinical health outcomes in human spaceflight crews.

The research team includes project investigator, Xiaohong Lu, LSUHSC-S, co-investigators Dr. Lynn Harrison, Professor of Molecular and Cellular Physiology at LSU Health Shreveport; Dr. Jeffery Chancellor, Assistant Professor at LSU Baton Rouge; and Dr. Urska Cvek (LBRN PI), Professor at LSU Shreveport.

As NASA plans future exploration missions to the Lunar and Martian surfaces, realistic ground-based analog studies and more predictive biodosimetry are needed to assess whether the space radiation poses a detrimental risk of brain genomic instability and neurodegeneration that leads to late-onset behavioral deterioration for spaceflight crews. Implementing a recently developed method of recreating the intravehicular (IVA) radiation environment expected on spaceflight vehicles and habitats and a novel genetic sensor, this proposal addresses Research Topic 3 – Animal Biology Studies in support of Human Space Exploration and Sub-topic AB1-A: Behavior and underlying neural function in Appendix D: Solicitation of Proposals for Flight and Ground Space Biology Research. We propose to determine how the space environment and sex affect brain genomic stability and consequent age-related brain structure and function changes. Our studies will support Human Space Exploration, by contributing the first biodosimetry for quantifying brain DNA instability and neurodegenerative changes to predict clinical health outcomes in human spaceflight crews and the utility of available ground-based analogs to realize basic mechanisms that can lead to the development of biologic counter-measures.

... to see more details

- **BioMorph Lab at Louisiana Tech receives two USAF contracts**

Louisiana Tech’s BioMorph Lab, directed by professor Dr. David Mills (LBRN PI), recently received a pair of research contracts from the U.S. Air Force that call for the development of an antimicrobial filament for 3D medical device printing and a multifunctional bandage.

The antimicrobial filament is a bioplastic that contains agents to kill bacteria, fungi, and other elements that cause infection. The bandage will be multifunctional because it can be used in combat, at a military hospital, or for civilians. Components of the bandage will be printed.
This is the first time the BioMorph Lab has received a USAF grant, but the Lab has had Department of Defense funding in the past. The contract is classified as Phase I, which is for 90 days. Mills’ major goal is to locate a military medical partner for his Phase II proposal. Specifically, the research contracts are a collaboration between the USAF, Tech’s BioMorph lab, and Mills’ two startups, organicNANA and Nano Medicine.

... to see more details

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**Notice of Special Interest (NOSI) : NIH**

- **Administrative Supplements for Research on Women’s Health in the IDeA States**

Notice Number: NOT-GM-21-018  
First Available Due Date: April 19, 2021

The Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH) and the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS), along with Institutes and Centers (ICs) of NIH participating in this Notice, announce the availability of administrative supplements to IDeA awards to expand research and research capacity in the IDeA states to address important issues of women’s health across the lifespan. The proposed research must address at least one of the strategic goals of the 2019-2023 Trans-NIH Strategic Plan for Women's Health Research "Advancing Science for the Health of Women." Research on maternal and infant morbidity and mortality is of particular interest.
Availably of Administrative Supplements to INBRE Awards to Fund Research Collaborations

Notice Number: NOT-GM-21-016
First Available Due Date: April 30, 2021

The National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) announces the availability of funds for Administrative Supplements to NIGMS-funded Institutional Development Award (IDeA) Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE) (P20) awards. These funds are intended for existing INBREs to develop collaborations between investigators at the INBRE partner institutions, including primarily undergraduate institutions (PUIs), community colleges (CCs) and Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs), and investigators in research areas that are currently supported by one of the following programs:

- Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE)
- IDeA-Infrastructure for Clinical and Translational Research (IDeA-CTR)
- IDeA co-funded R01s and R15s in their first or second year of awards
- IDeA States Pediatric Clinical Trials Network (ISPCTN) awards
- National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) to institutions located in IDeA states

The goal of this supplement program is to encourage collaborations among investigators in IDeA states while providing students a broad continuum of research opportunities. Although in-state collaboration is encouraged, the collaborative projects can also be proposed between programs across the IDeA states.

The collaborative project should be an expansion of a project currently supported by a COBRE, IDeA-CTR, IDeA co-funded R01s and R15s in their first or second year of awards, ISPCTN or CTSA award. The project must not constitute a change in scope of the parent awards.

For these supplements, the INBRE must be active when the supplement application is submitted (e.g. within the originally reviewed and approved project period), regardless of the time remaining on the current project. This applies also to COBRE, IDeA-CTR, IDeA co-funded R01s and R15s in their first or second year of awards, ISPCTN or CTSA programs that will collaborate with INBREs.
The National Institutes of Health (NIH) have announced upcoming changes to the Biographical Sketch and Other Support format pages for proposals due on or after May 25, 2021.

For the Biographical Sketch format page, Section B: ‘Positions and Honors’ has been renamed ‘Positions, Scientific Appointments, and Honors.’ For the Fellowship Biosketch, Section D has been updated to remove ‘Research Support.’ Meanwhile, for the non-Fellowship Biosketch, Section D has been removed. As applicable, all applicants may include details on ongoing and completed research projects from the past three years that they want to draw attention to within the personal statement, Section A.

The Other Support format page has been re-organized to separate funded projects from in-kind contributions. A signature block has been added, for Program Director/Principal Investigator or Other Senior/Key Personnel to certify the accuracy of the information submitted. For Other Support submissions that include foreign activities and resources, recipients are required to submit copies of contracts, grants, or any other agreement specific to senior/key personnel foreign appointments and/or employment with a foreign institution as supporting documentation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format Page</th>
<th>Changes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biographical Sketch Format Page</td>
<td>• Section B ‘Positions and Honors’ has been renamed ‘Positions, Scientific Appointments, and Honors’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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• Signature block added, for Program Director/Principal Investigator or Other Senior/Key Personnel to certify the accuracy of the information submitted. Each PD/PI or senior/key personnel must electronically sign their respective Other Support form as a PDF prior to submission.

... Continue reading to learn more

Louisiana Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information


"COVID-19 vaccines are effective at protecting you from getting sick. Based on what we know about COVID-19 vaccines, people who have been fully vaccinated can start to do some things that they had stopped doing because of the pandemic.

We’re still learning how vaccines will affect the spread of COVID-19. After you’ve been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, you should keep taking precautions in public places like wearing a mask, staying 6 feet apart from others, and avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces until we know more.
People are considered fully vaccinated:

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, like the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, like Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen vaccine

If it has been less than 2 weeks since your shot, or if you still need to get your second dose, you are NOT fully protected. Keep taking all prevention steps until you are fully vaccinated.

Cases per capita in Louisiana
The following information was provided by The New York Times Interactive Coronavirus website.

We want to remind everyone to continue practicing safety with regards to prevention of spreading and contracting the COVID-19 virus.

We remind everyone of the information provided here on our website: LBRN COVID-19.

NIH Extramural Nexus (NIH/OD)

- The NIH SABV Policy: E-learning Opportunities and a Symposium Provide Guidance and Inspiration

Interest in sex and gender in research—and resources to help investigators—is growing. In the 5 years since NIH enacted its pioneering Policy on Sex as a Biological Variable (SABV) (see our progress report here), there has been a lot of activity, including increased attention on sex differences and influences and many questions and requests for assistance. I’m pleased to announce the NIH Office of Research on Women’s Health (ORWH) has issued two new courses, Sex as a Biological Variable: A Primer and Bench to Bedside: Integrating Sex and Gender.
Before discussing these e-learning opportunities, I would like to invite you to a related symposium where we will explore current gaps or barriers within different sectors of the biomedical research enterprise, introduce areas of scientific opportunity that the study of sex and gender presents, and underscore its impact on science and public health. Our Fifth Annual Vivian Pinn Symposium: Integrating Sex and Gender into Biomedical Research as a Path for Better Science and Innovation will be held virtually on May 11-14, 2021. Registration information can be found here. I look forward to seeing you at the symposium.

To enhance transparency, researchers should consider the potential influence of sex on the disease, condition, or phenomenon being studied, whether there is already a proven influence or not. Investigators should design research that studies both sexes whenever possible, collecting data in a way that allows for disaggregation of data by sex. Even when a study isn’t sufficiently powered to detect a sex-based difference in analysis, data can be reported separately for each sex, to facilitate meta-analyses and inform future studies.

**SABV Across the Biomedical Research Continuum**

... Continue reading to learn more

- The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the
Extramural Scientific Workforce – Outcomes from an NIH-Led Survey

One year later, the COVID-19 pandemic has drastically affected our individual lives and communities. We have observed disproportionate effects observed in underserved populations, leaving them vulnerable to higher infection and mortality risk. These effects have led to an increased reliance on biomedical researchers and clinicians to offer public health solutions to this crisis. Within the research workforce, early-career scientists may bear the brunt of pandemic-related mitigation measures at institutions and limitations due to inability to be in the physical workspace.

At NIH, we recognized the many ways the COVID-19 pandemic could adversely affect the biomedical workforce, particularly members of underrepresented groups and vulnerable populations. In October 2020, NIH fielded two online surveys to objectively document COVID-19’s impact on extramural research. One survey assessed the perspective of individual research administration leaders at extramural institutions, and the other survey assessed the perspective of the researchers themselves. In this post, we offer a high-level overview of general trends noted within both surveys. This infographic here also describes the outcomes from the surveys.

![Institutional High-Level Findings](Image)

The heat map below presents how research leaders across various institution types perceived the impact of COVID-19 on their financial and research functions, as well as their efforts to mitigate the pandemic’s impact.

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<tr>
<th>Sections:</th>
<th>Section #8</th>
<th>Section #9</th>
<th>Section #10</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Respondents</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate-granting University with a Professional School (17%)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate-granting University without a Professional School (17%)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Research Institution (10%)</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Focus/Other Institution (7%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority-Serving Institution (24%)</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Minority Serving Institution (76%)</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: For certain dependent variables, higher percentages correspond to a more negative impact, whereas for other dependent variables, higher percentages correspond to a less negative impact. MSI = Minority Serving Institution; MMSI = Non-Minority Serving Institution*
As I noted in my March 1 Open Mike post NIH Stands Against Structural Racism in Biomedical Research, the NIH seeks to do its part to end structural racism and to ensure greater diversity in all aspects of the biomedical workforce. One longstanding area of concern has been our small business programs, which account for over $1 Billion in annual investments. Unfortunately, entrepreneur scientists from diverse backgrounds remain under-represented in the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs.

We are working to identify ways to lower barriers for all new applicants to the NIH SBIR and STTR programs. Conferences have the ability to bring people together expressly to share perspectives and exchange expertise, including the lessons of personal experience. That is why I am pleased to announce as a first step in addressing these concerns we will be sponsoring the 2021 HHS Small Business Program Conference with the theme “Diverse Perspectives SEEDing Impactful Innovations.” The meeting will take place virtually April 26-30 and registration is free.

The conference will be held under the auspices of SEED, the new NIH office focused on Small business Education and Entrepreneurial Development. We plan an introduction to the plethora of resources and biomedical product development tools that SEED has to offer to the small business community, with particular focus on the wider series of initiatives at NIH aimed at diversifying the biomedical workforce.

Other informative session topics will include:

- Diversity and Bias-Perceptions and Reality
- Secrets to a Successful Submission
- Persistence is Key: Resources for Resubmission
- Entrepreneurs in Action: Stories of Success
- Beyond Research: Building a Business

The last two days of the meeting will provide opportunities for you to schedule individual meetings with federal program staff who can provide personalized guidance on how best to move your small business grant application, SBIR or STTR, forward and point you toward other resources that may be available.

We are committed to holding ourselves to the same standards that we published in guide notice (NOT-OD-21-053) for conference grant applicants and recipients, which describes plans to enhance diversity by increasing the participation of individuals from diverse backgrounds in all aspects of the conference. We hope you will join us for this important and informative event.

Questions? For further information reach out to seedinfo@nih.gov, visit the conference.
Reminder: NIH Will Continue to Accept Preliminary Data as Post-Submission Material Through January 2022 Council

In recognition of the fact that COVID-19 may still be adversely affecting the ability of applicants to generate preliminary data, NIH will continue to accept a one-page update with preliminary data as post-submission materials for applications submitted for the January 2022 Council (beginning with applications submitted for the May 25, 2021 due date for Fall 2021 review meetings), ONLY if the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) used for submission allowed preliminary data in the application (NOT-OD-21-095).

The deadline for submitting all post-submission materials, including preliminary data, will be 30 days before the study section meeting or as stipulated in the FOA. Because applications for emergency competitive revisions and urgent competitive revisions undergo expedited review, post-submission materials will not be accepted for those applications.

For a visualization of the peer review process and timelines during COVID-19, see this infographic.

Webinar Available on Progress Towards Reducing Administrative Burden While Maintaining Animal Welfare and Scientific Integrity

The NIH’s Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW), along with their colleagues from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA), recently presented a webinar discussing progress towards implementing the 21st Century Cures Act. The new webinar focuses on how the three agencies recommend reducing administrative burden on investigators while maintaining the integrity and credibility of research findings and the protection of research animals. The actions discussed follow the release of their final report in 2019 (see also this NIH Open Mike blog). Topics of note for Assured institutions conducting research involving animals include:

- Updates to guidance and policies, such as harmonizing the reporting period of the Annual Reports to OLAW and USDA
- Requests for Information regarding encouraging the use of sections of the AAALAC International Program Description in the Animal Welfare Assurance, clarifying institutional
responsibilities for grant to protocol congruence review, and the flexibilities for conducting semiannual inspections

- Requests for Information under development related to expanded use of designated member review, exemptions from IACUC review, non-compliance reporting requirements, and clarifying requirements for departing from the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals

- Continued Extension of Policy Flexibilities for Basic Experimental Studies Involving Humans (BESH)

NIH has extended flexibilities for registration and results reporting for studies submitted to BESH funding opportunities. This policy flexibility, originally announced in NOT-OD-18-212 and NOT-OD-19-126, is now extended through September 24, 2023.

While BESH investigators are strongly encouraged to register their studies and report summary results to ClinicalTrials.gov, NIH is continuing to offer the flexibility for investigators to register and report results on alternative publicly available platforms at this time. It is important to note that this flexibility only applies to studies submitted through funding opportunities that are designated as “Basic Experimental Studies with Humans” in the title.

Refer to NOT-OD-21-088 for more details.

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LBRN Bioinformatics Needs Survey

This survey is conducted by the Division of Biotechnology & Molecular Medicine (BioMMED) of the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM). The Division operates the core facility GeneLab that currently conducts illumina-based Next Gen Sequencing, Single-Cell Gene Expression (10X Genomics) and the Protein Laboratory that provides protein production, and purification, and antibody production and characterization. These Core Laboratories are supported by SVM, the Louisiana Biomedical Research Network (LBRN) and the Center for Lung Biology and Disease (CLBD). Current Bioinformatics support is provided through arrangements with Pine Biotech Inc through GeneLab. The Pine Biotech proprietary pipelines are available through GeneLab as fee-for-service for a specified time interval. The Illumina BaseSpace Sequence Hub is expected to be available in February, 2021 for all GeneLab clients.
Molecular Cell Biology Research Resources Core (MCBRC) and Bioinformatics, Biostatistics, and Computational Biology Core (BBCC) are calling for proposals to carry out short term projects in collaboration with the Cores. All LBRN researchers can submit a proposal for a defined project that can be carried out in collaboration with the Core facilities listed in the attached Call for Proposals (CFP) on a competitive basis. Each selected project will be allocated $1,500 to fully or partially offset Core expenses. Please contact your LBRN Steering Committee Member.
To support the LBRN / BBC Core community on LONI HPC systems, we have renewed our high-performance computing allocation for 2020/2021.

This can be utilized in lieu of individual investigators having to apply for and acquire their own allocations to access the HPC resources. If any of your campus members need access to high performance computing, please have them interface with Dr. Nayong Kim.
NIH LBRN Acknowledgement

So that we can most effectively communicate the scope and results of our funding support, we would like to know when you are planning news announcements about IDeA awards or program activities and achievements...

When you produce such material, please be sure to identify the IDeA program, not just the INBRE, COBRE or sub-program, and to provide context about the program’s goals along the lines of:

The University of _________ has received $XXX from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to support an Institutional Development Award (IDeA) Center of Biomedical Research Excellence. The IDeA program builds research capacities in states that historically have had low levels of NIH funding by supporting basic, clinical and translational research; faculty development; and infrastructure improvements.

In journal articles, news releases, or other materials about your program’s activities or achievements, please use funding acknowledgement language such as:

Research reported in this {publication, release} was supported by an Institutional Development Award (IDeA) from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health under grant number 5 P20 GM103424-18 and 3 P20 GM103424-15S1.

• In journal articles, oral or poster presentations, news releases, news and feature articles, interviews with reporters and other communications, acknowledge the IDeA program's full or partial support of the research. The citation in scientific publications should use the following format:

  Research reported in this publication was supported by an Institutional Development Award (IDeA) from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health under grant number P20GM12345.

• If you wish to acknowledge NIH/NIGMS funding on your Web site or other communication product, you may use wording such as:

  Funded by an Institutional Development Award (IDeA) from the National Institutes of Health.
Funded by the LBRN (2P20GM103424-19) an Institutional Development Award (IDeA) from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health.

Please do not use the NIH or NIGMS logo to acknowledge funding, as these logos are only to be used for material produced by NIH and its components.