**Launchpad: Innovation Pilot Awards**

**2023 FAQ**

**Q. What is a Launchpad: Innovation Pilot Award?**

1. Launchpad: Innovation Pilot Awards provide funding local community-based proof of concept demonstration (demo) projects submitted by local innovative clinicians, engineers, inventors, scientists, and other local innovation contributors who submit their application in conjunction with a letter of support from one of the BRHD’s member institutions. Applicants have the opportunity to request up to $30,000 to use as seed funding for launching their innovative pilot project idea.

Recipients of the 2023 Launchpad Innovation Pilot Awards will be funded through a combination of U.S. EDA Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship – Build to Scale program and local matching funds.

**Q. Is a match required?**

1. No match required, direct project related expenses are covered up to $30,000 (adapt from NC example)

**Q. What is the proposal review process?**

1. Submitted proposals will be subject to preliminary review by a Health-Tech Catalyst internal review panel with no direct conflict of interest to any Health District Member Institutions. Preliminary review will ensure proposal eligibility based on criteria outlined in this RFP and alignment to Baton Rouge Health District priority areas. Finalists will be invited to present their pilot proposals at an Innovation Forum Launchpad Pitch Night event on May 9, 2023. A presentation template will be provided to selected finalists. Finalists will be announced by April 17, 2023. During the May 9, 2023, Launchpad Pitch Night event, an external review panel of subject matter experts will determine the technical and innovation merits of each application.

Reviewers will rate proposals on a 1-9 rating scale for the following criteria:

1. Anticipated meaningful outcomes/significance of the work
2. Novelty/innovation of the idea
3. Soundness of the proposed approach/methods
4. Feasibility of accomplishing the stated project goals within the one-year project period
5. Degree of alignment with the goals of the Baton Rouge Health-Tech Catalyst and priorities of the Baton Rouge Health District

Proposals with the following elements will be given strong consideration:

1. Cross-disciplinary, multi-partner, and diverse teams
2. Promotion of equity and inclusivity
3. Potential for being positively disruptive
4. Scalable and sustainable ideas

**Q. How do I submit an application?**

1. Launchpad Innovation pilot project proposals can be submitted either online or via email:
2. To complete online use the [2023 Launchpad Innovation Pilot Awards Application](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1YPYHsFtM2LrUlsOlobRhVMdLElLlrCb6MT0HpW7ewjs/edit?pli=1) (please note: if you choose to utilize the online application, you will have the capability to submit the required attachments within the online application. However, if you have trouble uploading your attachments in the google form you can still complete the application questions online and email the required attachments to kai986@brhealthdistrict.com prior to the March 31, 2023 at 12:00 noon)
3. To email your proposal, complete the questions within the fillable [**2023 Launchpad Word Document Application**](https://brhealthdistrict.com/s/2023-Launchpad-Application-Final.docx). Email both your completed application questions and required attachments to kai986@brhealthdistrict.com prior to the application deadline.

You will receive an email confirmation to verify Baton Rouge Health-Tech Catalyst receipt of any emailed proposal components. The application deadline is March 31, 2023, at 12:00 noon. Both a completed application and email with required attachments must be submitted prior to this deadline. No late submissions will be considered for funding.

**Q. What is Launchpad Pitch Night and what does it entail?**

A: Launchpad Pitch Night is an afternoon reception held at Pennington Biomedical Research Center to celebrate all Launchpad applicants and most important to identify award recipients. Prior to Pitch Night, applicant finalists will be announced and at the May 9th Pitch Night Reception, each of the selected finalists will present their pilot project in a pitch style presentation lasting 5-10 minutes. Pitch presentations will be showcased to a panel of neutral, third-party reviewers who have subject matter expertise in the life sciences with knowledge of entrepreneurship and innovation as well as to an audience of community stakeholders. The pitch style presentations allow our panel of final reviewers the opportunity to meet the finalists, hear a presentation from those finalists about their pilot-grant idea, and ask questions as they determine which pilots will receive funding.

**Q. How soon will projects start after receiving an award notice?**

1. Projects are envisioned to start shortly after the notice of award in June 2023, with an anticipated scope of work of up to 1 year.

**Q. How many pilot grants will be awarded?**

1. The inaugural round of Launchpad funding awarded 3 pilot projects in May 2022. During this second round of funding, we anticipate awarding 2 additional pilot projects with a latest possible start date of June 1, 2023.

**Q: Who are the current Launchpad awardees?**

1. The inaugural round of Launchpad Innovation Pilot Awards provided funding to three projects in May 2022. Congratulations to our initial pilot project award recipients:
2. **BRG Fit! Total Health and Wellbeing** - Baton Rouge General, in partnership with EBR School System
3. **Increasing Endometrial Cancer Awareness and Cure for Louisiana Women** - Pennington Biomedical Research Center, in partnership with Our Lady of the Lake Hospital, Woman's & LSU Health Science Center - New Orleans
4. **Palliative Care Program for Persons Living with Dementia** - Pennington Biomedical Research Center, in partnership with Our Lady of the Lake Hospital

**Q. Can students apply for the Innovation Pilot Awards?**

* 1. Graduate students, residents, and fellows can participate as members of a pilot team, but the application must be submitted with a health district member institution employee or faculty member as the Principal Investigator or project leader.

**Q: Are Launchpad awardees expected to complete progress reports?**

1. Yes, recipients are required to complete mid-way and final reports that demonstrate pilot project process achieved Launchpad awards are intended.

To view the previous progress report questionnaire, click [here](https://brhealthdistrict.com/s/2022-Launchpad-Innovation-Pilot-Award-Reporting.docx).

**Q. Can the Innovation Pilot Awards be used to fund a study or project already in process?**

1. Launchpad awards are intended to fund projects that are not currently unfunded by other sources and that need seed funding to launch pilot activities. However, if there is a discreet and separate scope of work with independent aims that can easily be distinguished from an existing project, it will be considered. In this case it is important to clearly articulate the scope of the existing project vs. the pilot in the application.

**Q. Can Innovation Pilot Award funds be used to pay a vendor outside of the Baton Rouge Health District for services? (e.g., software development, training, etc.)**

* 1. Yes, pilot award funds can be used to pay an outside vendor for services rendered within the scope of the pilot. We strongly encourage teams to get an estimate or quote for any third-party services before submitting the application.

**Q. What makes a great proposal?**

1. Successful proposals contain all the requirements listed in the “Eligibility” section and demonstrate that the pilot project applies to all or most of the criteria outlined in the “Review Criteria” section of the RFP. To view the RFP, [click here](http://www.brhealthdistrict.com/2023-launchpad-rfp).

Also, applicants are welcome to meet with BRHD staff during “office hours” in advance of submission for general guidance and feedback. Please note that preliminary and general staff feedback does not factor into the scoring or ranking of proposals. Please reach out to kai986@brhealthdistrict.com to schedule a follow-up if interested.