Mission: As part of the strategic plan for research and in pursuit of creating a nurturing and supportive environment for faculty and institutional research capacity development, the LSOM Dean’s Office has allocated funds to establish Research Affinity Teams (RAffTs). These teams will provide a socialization and infrastructure framework for faculty across the research spectrum and from varied backgrounds to coalesce around a common disease, condition, or population of interest.

Description: RAffTs are workgroups supported and approved by the LSOM Dean’s Office. Ultimately these working groups should serve as the foundation of a Program Project Grant, multidisciplinary (U01) grant, or other similar large award, though outcomes including increased cross-departmental collaborations for publications, enhanced sharing of data/equipment/best practices, etc. are also encouraged.

Examples of areas suitable for establishment of a RAffT include, but are not limited to:
- Clinical trials workgroup
- Basic-Clinical science collaborations
- Patient-centered outcomes
- Translational research topics
- PCORI grant submissions

Eligibility: Applications must be submitted by investigators whose primary faculty appointment is the Long School of Medicine. Faculty are encouraged to collaborate with individuals from partner organizations including other UT Health San Antonio (UTHSA) schools, San Antonio Metropolitan Health District, San Antonio Military Health System, South Texas Veterans Health Care System, Texas Biomedical Research Institute, University Health System, University of Texas San Antonio, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, University of Texas School of Public Health–San Antonio and Brownsville Regional Campuses, and University of Texas College of Pharmacy.

Amount and Term: $2,000 will be awarded for a project period of up to 1 year. Funds are available to support up to 10 RAffTs.

Application Submission: Applications must be submitted via the REDCap platform. Documents should be uploaded as Portable Document Format (PDF), use Arial 11 point font, single spacing, and .75-inch margins in all directions. Failure to follow these or the following guidelines may result in the application being administratively withdrawn.

The application should include the following (2 page maximum):
- Proposed RAffT name
- Proposed RAffT goals and timeline for accomplishing them. Applicants are encouraged to use the SMART acronym to guide development of their goals
- RAffT leadership, current participants (if applicable) and target population for additional members

Please refer questions to Courtney Peebles, MPH, Program Manager in the LSOM Dean’s Office of Research, at 210-562-6869 or peeblesc@uthscsa.edu.
Budget and Financial Policies: A formal budget is not necessary to establish a RAffT. $2,000 will be awarded to each newly established RAffT and may be used to support activities to accomplish the goals outlined in the application, including meetings, grant writing or editorial assistance, publication fees, etc. Logistic support, including meeting coordination and other associated functions, is available to RAffTs as needed through the LSOM Office of Research.

Continued LSOM support of a RAffT is contingent upon progress toward or attainment of the goals established in the RAffT proposal. An annual report to LSOM Research is required to document activities, events, outcomes, and progress made in the previous year as well as updated goals for the coming year.

Review process and criteria: Applications will be reviewed by the LSOM Associate Dean for Research and submitted to the Dean for final approval. Considerations for award of a RAffT include the following criteria:

• Likelihood of submission for/securing extramural funding within 12 months of establishment
• Extent of meaningful interdisciplinary collaboration and/or community engagement
• Contribution to career development of clinical/translational scientists

Other criteria for review include:
• Fit with LSOM Research priorities including aging, cancer, diabetes, infectious disease, neuroscience, and population health.

Please note: These teams are not to take the place of existing department/center/institute activities, and must focus on topics that are not addressed by an existing LSOM or UTHSA entity. Proposals that seek to establish a RAffT that is potentially duplicative of existing entities will not be awarded.

Administrative management: An annual report to LSOM Research is required to document activities, events, outcomes, and progress toward achieving the goals outlined in the initial RAffT application. Updated goals for the coming year should also be included.

Continuation of LSOM Dean’s Office support of the RAffT is contingent upon evaluation of return on investment (i.e., extramural funding).