HEALTH
NIMHD – RCMI
Addictions Research and Cancer Prevention

Investigator Development Core
REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

HEALTH Center for Addictions Research and Cancer Prevention

The *HEALTH Center for Addictions Research and Cancer Prevention* is pursuing a bold research agenda to address the public health crises that health disparities inflict on minoritized and marginalized communities. With support from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD), this national center (Research Centers in Minority Institutions, RCMI) serves as an exemplar for community-engaged research. Acceptable research proposals can be from any of the translational research stages but should be in line with the Center's focus (research specifically addressing disparities in addictions research or cancer prevention; and/or health equity science in general) and have a clear plan for how results can ultimately translate into work that can be disseminated and implemented to benefit the community/communities of focus.

PILOT RESEARCH PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The purpose of the pilot research program is to strategically break new ground in addressing disparities in addictions and cancer prevention while leveraging the data to successfully transition into a developmentally appropriate NIH funding mechanism. Mentorship and professional development activities are structured to develop the next generation of health-equity scientists capable of advancing data-driven and culturally responsive breakthroughs in prevention, early detection, diagnosis, interventions, and disseminated resources addressing addictions and cancer prevention.

Although not a requirement, preference will be given to proposals that:
- *have an investigative team that an early-stage investigator leads (e.g., postdoctoral fellows, assistant professors, or associate professors) from a group underrepresented in the health sciences (e.g., racial/ethnic minority, women, individuals with disabilities, and those from disadvantaged backgrounds);*
- *have a strong investigative team that leverages a team science approach by including relevant expertise that spans more than one college at UH and/or scientists in the region – including the Texas Medical Center;*
- *include the active participation of a community-based organization, faith-based organization, and/or service provider (e.g., FQHC) that has a history of addressing health disparities in Texas; and/or*
- *are responsive to NIMHD funding priorities and advance data-driven and culturally-responsive breakthroughs in prevention, early detection, diagnosis, interventions, and disseminated resources addressing addictions and cancer prevention.*

It is expected that data from funded pilot projects will be used to support strong developmentally appropriate NIH grant applications. Applicants should plan to submit this application within six (6) months after completing the pilot study and should detail potential mechanisms for this submission in their application. These applications should represent a substantial return on investment (e.g., NIH K- and R-series), with planned submission through the *HEALTH Center for Addictions Research and Cancer Prevention*. Applications supporting HEALTH Research Institute or RCMI staff, when possible, are encouraged.

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GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE PROPOSALS

This RFA is not accepting applications for scientific work funded by other sources or proposals to extend the duration of work already ongoing. Proposals can expand upon prior research by taking it in a new direction or adding novel components; however, the proposal must align with the Center's mission and represent new multidisciplinary science being pursued. Former RCMI pilot grant awardees (Principal Investigators) are not eligible to apply for a second pilot grant through this mechanism.

KEY DATES

Letter of Intent Due: September 1, 2022, at 5:00 pm
Application Due Date: October 3, 2022, at 5:00 pm
Scientific Merit Review: November 10, 2022
Funding Decisions and NIMHD Approval: between December 2022 – January 2023
Earliest Anticipated Award Start Date: February 3, 2023

FUNDING PRIORITIES

Although not a requirement, preference for funding will be given to proposals that: 1) address health disparities related to: (1) Alcohol, Tobacco, or Other Drug Use (ATOD) – including comorbidities with other health outcomes; 2) Cancer prevention and/or treatment outcomes, especially for breast, lung, liver, or colorectal cancers; 3) Social determinants of health – including access to quality care, and 4) Culturally competent prevention and healthcare services. Furthermore, we are especially interested in innovative basic biomedical or clinical science approaches to addictions research and cancer prevention.

LETTER OF INTENT

Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to submit a letter of intent (LOI) 30 days prior to the application deadline. Although a LOI is not required, is non-binding, and does not require submission of a subsequent application, the information it contains allows the *HEALTH Center for Addictions Research and Cancer Prevention* to estimate the potential review workload and plan for appropriate expertise in the peer-review process of the scientific review. The LOI should include the following:

- Descriptive title of the proposed research
- Name, address, and telephone number of the Principal Investigator(s)
- Names of other key personnel
- Participating Departments, if applicable
- Participating Community Partners

Please submit the LOI to the Investigative Development Core (HEALTHrcmi@central.uh.edu). In the e-mail subject line, write: Letter of Intent _ PIs Last Name.

PROPOSAL PREPARATION

The application to this program must be prepared following the requirements outlined below and submitted as a single PDF file via email to HEALTHrcmi@central.uh.edu by the PI's affiliated pre-award research administrator in the College or the Division of Research. The signatures of applicable department chairs and college deans must be provided.

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FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

All documents should be single-spaced on US Letter size paper (8.5" x 11") with 1/2-inch margins on all sides and Arial or Georgia font size of at least 11 pt. At least 8 pt. font is required for captions to graphics and tables.

PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

- *HEALTH Center for Addictions Research and Cancer Prevention* **Cover Page**
- **Response to Prior Review** (1 pg. max)
  - If this is a resubmission, please provide a point-by-point narrative of how you addressed comments from the prior review of your application.
- **Specific aims** (1 pg. max)
  - Please detail the (1) specific aims of the pilot project, (2) potential to break new ground in addictions and/or cancer prevention, and (3) health disparity being investigated (including populations, epidemiological data, and specific mechanism(s) involved – if known), and (4) potential to transition into an independent NIH training or research project.
- **Community Advisory Board (CAB) Information** (1-pg max)
  - Please (1) use plain language to describe the relevance of this research to the RCMI mission, (2) list the community partners you plan to work with – attaching applicable Letters of Support, and (3) provide a dissemination plan.
- **Research Strategy and Timeline** (i.e., Significance, Innovation, Approach; 4 pg. max). Do not label the timeline with specific months; instead, use a Month 1, Month 2, etc. convention.
- **References** (no limit)
- **Public Health Narrative** (2-3 sentences)
  - Please use plain language to communicate the public health relevance of the project to the public.
- **Abstract** (up to 30 lines of text)
  - Please provide a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work that is understandable to a scientifically literate reader. This should include the project's specific aims, research design, methods, and long-term objectives.
- **Request for RCMI resources** (1 pg. max)
  - This could include, but is not limited to, access to core facilities and laboratories; biostatistical services; project design, execution, and dissemination expertise; meeting and storage space; program manager; community education/outreach liaisons; graphics designer; and RCMI investigators.
- **Planned Enrollment Table** (use NIH format; as applicable)
- **Project Budget Template**
  - Please use the UH budget template: https://www.uh.edu/research/resources/dor-forms/proposal-processing-forms/
- **Project Budget Justification**
- **NIH biosketches** (use the latest form – after January 25, 2022) of key personnel
  - Please include a leadership plan if a multiple primary investigator (MPI) approach is being proposed. This plan should include a rationale for choosing a MPI approach and detail the governance and organizational structure of the leadership team, communication plans, and processes for making decisions on scientific direction and resolving conflicts. Additionally, the roles and scientific responsibilities of MPIs and other key personnel should be delineated.

Incomplete applications are not accepted for review. Applications <u>must</u> be ordered as listed above.

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BUDGET GUIDELINES

The project period must not exceed one year, and all expenditures must be made within the project period. The earliest project start date is **02/03/2023**. The allowable budget for all pilot projects will range from **$30,000 - $50,000.** Three to five meritorious proposals will be funded in this call for applications. Please note that pilot funding will not be released before a completed compliance and congruency review. Failure to receive the appropriate institutional approvals in a timely manner will result in the forfeiture of this award.

Allowable Budget Costs:

- Computational services
- Consulting fees
- Data collection fees, instruments, surveys, and supplies
- Laboratory fees, supplies (disposables), and reagents
- Human subject payments
- Animals and/or biological materials
- Essential travel required to execute the project (e.g., mileage; parking; meals, as allowable)
- Salary support for postdoctoral fellows, research staff, or students (note: partial salary for research faculty positions that are entirely soft money supported may be budgeted with advance permission from Dr. Ezemenari Obasi, please obtain via email)
- Software (with sufficient justification)
- Publication/open access fees
- Electronics (i.e., computers, laptops, tablets, etc.) *may be allowable* with prior approval from Dr. Ezemenari M. Obasi (RCMI, PI) but must be relinquished to the *HEALTH Center for Addictions Research and Cancer Prevention* at the end of the funding period

Unallowable Budget Costs:

- Equipment
- Faculty salary support (see exception above)
- Food and beverages that are not travel-related
- Indirect cost (IDC) recovery
- Maintenance fees
- Office supplies

PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA AND REVIEW PROCESS

Submission Deadline: **5:00 PM CST; 10/3/2022**

Each application will be scored and reviewed according to the current NIH scoring system, ranging from 1 (high impact, exceptional) to 9 (low impact, poor), with scores of 5 being average (moderate impact, good). Reviewers will provide integer scores for the following sections: (1) Significance; (2) Investigator; (3) Innovation; (4) Approach; and (5) Environment. These five scores will inform an Overall Impact score ranging from 1-9. Additionally, reviewers will provide an independent score for the following: (1) "Relevance to the RCMI" – reviewed by the Community Advisory Board and based on the published funding priorities; and (2) "Potential to make a breakthrough addressing health disparities in addictions and/or cancer prevention" – based on the Pilot Grant's likelihood of generating cutting-edge data capable of transitioning into a developmentally appropriate NIH funding mechanism. Finally, reviewers will indicate if they approve the budget as submitted or recommend modifications based on the RFA budget guidelines and/or perceived project needs.

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<u>Pilot Grant Review Meeting (December 2022)</u>: The Investigator Development Core (IDC) will adopt the NIH study section review protocol to guide the review meeting with two significant exceptions: (1) The applications receiving an initial overall impact score ≤5 are discussed (with a maximum of 10 applications being discussed); and (2) the PI is allowed to present their application to the scientific review group (SRG). After conflicts are dismissed from the room, each PI will be given 10 minutes to present their science, followed by 5 minutes of Q&A with the SRG. The PI will then be dismissed from the room, and 10 minutes allotted for reviewer discussion. Finally, each reviewer will record their final Overall Impact score on the scoring sheet and submit it at the end of the Pilot Grant Review Meeting. Applicants will be given access to reviewer feedback following the meeting via email.

Additional Reviews (December 2022 – January 2023): Select documents will also be reviewed by the RCMI Community Advisory Board, with their scores influencing funding decisions. Additionally, please note that the applications the RCMI select for funding need to be approved by the NIMHD before issuing a Notice of Award to the PI/PIs.

COMPLIANCE AND CONGRUENCY REVIEW

Compliance review by the Research Integrity and Oversight office is required for all research submitted to this program. <u>The review must be conducted within a timely manner, or the funds will be forfeited.</u> Compliance review includes human subjects, animal usage, biological materials (rDNA, human samples, microorganisms, etc.), and radiation (radioactive materials, lasers, and x-rays). All projects involving human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the **Institutional Review Board (IRB)** <u>before</u> the grant cost center will be established. All projects involving the use of animals in research must be reviewed and approved by the **Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)** <u>before</u> the grant cost center will be established. All projects involving biological materials must be reviewed and approved by the **Biological Safety Manager and the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)** <u>before</u> the grant cost center is established. All projects involving radiation must be reviewed and approved by the **Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) & Laser Safety Officer (LSO)** and authorized by the **Radiation Safety Committee (RSC)** <u>before</u> the grant cost center will be established. Congruency reviews will also be conducted to ensure that the compliance protocol is reflective of the scientific proposal submitted to the NIMHD for funding approval.

We encourage you to prepare your compliance proposals prior to receipt of a notice of award. We will provide you with instructions for necessary internal steps to link the application to the Center when we notify you of the approval of your proposal for funding and before your proposal is sent to the NIMHD for review.

PILOT GRANT PROGRAM WEBINAR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Feel free to watch our online webinar (15 min) to hear more detailed information about the PGP by clicking here. You can also contact the RCMI at HEALTHrcmi@central.uh.edu with any questions about this request for application (RFA). Applicants are strongly encouraged to watch the online webinar and meet with the RCMI PI (Dr. Ezemenari M. Obasi, emobasi@central.uh.edu) or the Director of the Investigator Development Core to learn about RCMI resources and staff and maximize your proposal's responsiveness to the purpose of this Pilot Grant Program.

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