

**Arkansas Center for Health Disparities
ARCHD**

Pilot Research Program

PILOT FUNDING APPLICATION

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www.uams.edu/archd

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Program Overview

Center Purpose

The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) College of Public Health (COPH) established the **Arkansas Center for Health Disparities (ARCHD)** to develop research that improves access to quality prevention and health care programs for racial and ethnic minorities with the goal of reducing health disparities. The Center was established in the Fall of 2007 with funding from NIH's National Center for Minority Health Disparities. Center priority areas focus on chronic diseases broadly defined, with an emphasis on diseases that disproportionately impact ethnic and racial groups in Arkansas. These diseases include coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension, diabetes, many types of cancer and some sexually transmitted diseases.

Pilot Research Program

ARCHD aims to advance the science of disparities research by supporting pilot/feasibility studies ranging from descriptive research to clinical trials. The Center has allocated funds to support 4 to 6 one- to two-year pilot research grants with each project ranging in direct cost funding from \$20,000 to \$50,000 per year. It is expected that funded pilot grants will lead to successful NIH applications for projects to address health disparities.

2. Eligibility

All faculty members of UAMS and Arkansas Historically Black Colleges and Universities (Arkansas Baptist College, Philander Smith College, and the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff), as well as employees of the Arkansas Department of Health with adjunct faculty appointments at the UAMS COPH, are encouraged to apply.

Research proposals must address racial and ethnic health disparities. Based on the Center's priority areas developed from analyzing statewide health disparities data to identify areas of the most significant disparity, priority will be given to applications targeting disparities in: coronary heart disease, stroke, and cancer; and modifiable risk factors for these diseases, including dietary habits, physical inactivity, obesity, and tobacco use. However, applications focused on health disparities but addressing other chronic diseases will be considered.

Priority will also be given to research that fits the T2 category of translational research. T2 research is the translation of results from clinical studies into everyday clinical practice and health decision making. The "laboratory" for T2 research is the community and ambulatory care settings, where population based interventions and practice-based research networks bring the results of T1 research to the public. T2 research skills include mastery of the "implementation science" of developing and evaluating interventions in real world settings and of the disciplines that inform the design of those interventions, such as clinical epidemiology and evidence synthesis, communication theory, behavioral science, public policy, financing, organizational theory, system redesign, informatics, and mixed methods/qualitative research.

Studies deemed to fall within the T1 category will not be funded. T1 research has been described as the transfer of new understandings of disease mechanisms gained in the laboratory into the development of new methods for diagnosis, therapy, and prevention and their first testing in humans. T1 research requires mastery of molecular biology, genetics, and other basic sciences; appropriately trained clinical scientists working in strong laboratories and with cutting-edge technology; and a supportive infrastructure within the institution

3. Submission Dates

Letters of Intent. Applicants are required to submit a brief letter of intent by 4:00 p.m. on March 9, 2009. An electronic form is attached (and is also available on the Center website at <http://www.uams.edu/archd>) and letters may be returned via email. Letters must include the proposed title, contact information for the pilot project principal investigator and all co-investigators, and a one-paragraph description of the overall research objective. Applications not preceded by a letter of intent will not be reviewed. Submit the completed letter of intent as an email attachment in PDF format to ARCHD@uams.edu by 4:00 p.m. on March 9, 2009

Completed Applications. Completed applications are due on April 15, 2009, by 4:00 p.m. The earliest anticipated start date for the 2009-2010 pilot grants is June 1, 2009. Actual start dates will depend on timing of receipt of project approvals from NIH.

4. Expected Outcomes

Following award, pilot researchers are expected to:

- a. Attend monthly ARCHD Research Core Meetings.
- b. Complete the National Institutes of Health's Overview and Specific Guidance Form three times annually.
- c. Provide information for Center progress reports as requested.

Upon completion of pilot studies, investigators are expected to submit applications to external funding mechanisms (e.g., R01s) to build on the pilot work for support of a larger study. If appropriate, pilot project findings are also expected to be presented at national meetings and published in peer-reviewed journal(s).

B. APPLICATION GUIDELINES

These guidelines are intended to assist investigators in preparing applications for the pilot research program. The level of detail specified in the guidelines is required by NIH in order to review and provide final approval to fund pilot projects. Awards will not be made until all appropriate forms and institutional assurances have been provided (e.g., human subjects). Use the NIH PHS 398 forms for the proposal as indicated below. Instructions for the PHS 398 forms can be found at:

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>, Modifications to the PHS 398 instructions to be used in preparing pilot project applications are described below.

1. Applications must consist of the following:

- a. **Cover page, consisting of: project title, and name and contact information for the Principal Investigator**
- b. **Project Abstract** (limit to 30 lines)
- c. **PHS 398 Form Page 4:** Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period
 - Awards will be made through the Center's Administrative Core
 - Awards cover direct costs of \$20,000 to \$50,000 per year for a one to two year period
 - Awards are subject to review and approval of the NIH project office.
- d. **PHS 398 Biographical Sketch**

- In addition to material specified in the instructions, please include relevant information such as research and/or clinical training experience
- Include project mentors and any other key personnel including consultants.
- Include current funding and past funding for all research.

e. Research Plan NOTE: items 1 – 5 are not to exceed a total of 10 pages single spaced with 1” margins and 12 point font.

1) Specific Aims

- Aims or purpose of the project and fit with the Center’s goal. In addition to material specified in the PHS 398 instructions, include statements regarding how the proposed project fits into the applicant’s long-range research plans with emphasis on plans to apply for external funding; and 2) how the proposed project relates to other research funding currently being received or under review.

2) Background and Significance

3) Preliminary Studies

4) Research Design and Methods

- Include subject recruitment, access to sites (if relevant), and analysis plan

5) Timeline

- Should cover entire project period for which support is being requested (one or two years)

6) Human Subject’s Information

- In accordance with the Research Plan, as described in the PHS Form 398 Section on Human Subjects (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>).

7) Vertebrate Animal Information

- In accordance with the five items described in the PHS Form 398 instructions.

8) Data Safety and Monitoring Plan, if applicable

9) Literature Cited

g. Data Safety and Monitoring Plan, if applicable

h. Appendices

- If available and appropriate, include relevant data collection instruments, letters of support, related manuscripts

2. Budget Instructions

Four to six studies will receive one or two year awards of \$20,000 to \$50,000 per year. Although up to \$50,000 may be requested, applicants are encouraged to apply for only those funds necessary to conduct the study. The budget and budget justification of each approved

application will be reviewed for appropriateness. Alterations in the budget may be recommended. The awards are for research related activities (collection of data, data analysis, etc.), not scholarship of other types. Salary support for faculty, staff, and students is allowed. If more than \$20,000 to 50,000 per year is needed to complete the research, please show how the additional funding will be obtained (e.g., loaned equipment, other funding, etc.).

All pilot funding activities require NIH approval. Verification of Human Subjects approval must be received before study funds will be released

3. Submission Instructions

Any changes to submission guidelines will be posted on the ARCHD website (www.uams.edu/archd). Please **check the website for any updates prior to submitting a letter of intent and completing application.**

Required Letter of Intent. Letters of Intent are due no later than 4:00 p.m. on March 9, 2009. Please complete the attached form (also available on the Center website) and return via email attachment to ARCHD@uams.edu. All electronic submissions should be saved in PDF format. If you do not receive notification that your letter has been received by the end of the next work day, please call 501-526-5064.

Completed Application. Completed applications are due April 15, 2009, by 4:00 PM. Please submit **an electronic copy as well as an original paper copy** of the entire application. Proposals **should not** be entered into ARIA or routed through the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP).

Electronic copies should be emailed to ARCHD@uams.edu, formatted as a PDF. If you do not receive notification that the electronic copy of your proposal has been received by the end of the next business day, please call 501-526-5064.

Original paper copies may be delivered via mail, but Investigators should be mindful that mailed proposals must be sent early to clear campus mail before the April 15 deadline. Mailed proposals should be sent to:

Melanie Goodell, MPH
Arkansas Center for Health Disparities
UAMS College of Public Health
4301 W. Markham, Slot 863
Little Rock, AR 72205
Telephone: (501) 526-5064

Proposals may be hand-delivered as late as 4:00pm April 15, 2009, to the UAMS College of Public Health Dean's Suite, Ed II Building, Room 2273. A box for ARCHD applications will be set up at the desk of Marilyn Smith.

C. REVIEW CRITERIA

The ARCHD Review Committee will use the following criteria to assess each application. These are provided so applicants will understand items of importance to reviewers.

1. Significance

- a.** Does this study address problems associated with racial and ethnic disparities? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge related to racial and ethnic disparities be advanced?
- b.** Is the study consistent with the aims of the center, and does it have relevance to the Center's goals? (See Center goals on www.uams.edu/archd)
- c.** What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts or methods that drive racial and ethnic health disparities research?

2. Approach

- a.** Are the conceptual framework, design (including composition of the study population), methods and analyses adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project?
- b.** Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics/approaches to address these potential problems?
- c.** Is the research design clearly articulated and appropriate for the objectives and hypotheses?
- d.** Are data collection, management and analysis methods detailed and adequately justified?
- e.** Are inclusion and exclusion criteria specified and justified? Are recruitment methods adequate? Is the proposed sample size justified by a power analysis if applicable? Will enough subjects be recruited to achieve the study's objectives?
- f.** Is the study feasible to accomplish within the stated time frame (one or two years) and with requested resources?

3. Innovation

- a.** Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches or methods?
- b.** Are the aims original and innovative?

- c. Does the project challenge existing standards or develop new methodologies or technologies?

4. Environment

- a. Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success?
- b. Does the proposed study employ useful collaborative arrangements?
- c. Is there evidence of departmental support?

5. Applicant

- a. Does the principal investigator (or co-investigators) explicitly demonstrate a clear commitment to the study of racial and ethnic disparities?
- b. Does the applicant's training, experience and accomplishments indicate the applicant is likely to accomplish the project's objectives?
- c. Is there evidence of interdisciplinary and community collaboration?
- d. Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the principal investigator and other researchers?

6. Budget and Resources

- a. Is the budget appropriate and well justified?

7. Potential for Future Funding

- a. How likely is it that the project, if funded, will produce data that could form an important part of an application for support from an extramural agency like NIH?

8. Subjects

- a. Does the study include an appropriate human subjects plan?
- b. Are appropriate measures taken for the protection of human subjects?
- c. Are minorities and both genders (if appropriate) represented in the study sample?
- d. Have IRB requirements been considered in the development of the research plan?