



CALIFORNIA HIV/AIDS
RESEARCH PROGRAM



One Step Ahead Initiative for 2017

An Open Call for Applications for

Highly Visionary

Investigator-Initiated HIV Research in California

In this time of rapid change in HIV science, what highly visionary research would you propose?



An Open Call for **Visionary Research**

The California HIV/AIDS Research Program (CHRP) is pleased to announce our funding initiative for 2017, *One Step Ahead*, an **open call** for investigator-initiated HIV research projects that have the potential to innovatively advance the field a leap beyond our current knowledge and practices. **The overall goals of the *One Step Ahead* initiative are to:** (1) facilitate visionary research in HIV science that significantly impacts the HIV epidemic; and (2) fund innovative and highly meritorious projects that have the potential to shift the current paradigm and move the field “one step ahead.”

CHRP seeks proposals from investigators in any area of HIV research, including, but not limited to:

- basic biomedical;
- clinical;
- social-behavioral;
- epidemiologic;
- prevention, treatment, cure, vaccine;
- access to care, health services, implementation, policy;
- or any other area of investigation within HIV science.

Background

In the 35-year history of HIV research, certain notable groundbreaking developments have shifted the paradigm of HIV science. Currently, the discovery pipeline is extremely active and moving quickly. We are now implementing interventions that we didn't dream to be possible only a few years back. In the context of multiple recent paradigm shifts in the field, typical research proposals for “the next logical step” in existing lines of inquiry won't be sufficient. California is enriched with a robust community of visionary scientific thinkers; CHRP is calling on this community to imagine the next paradigm shift and to conceive a research agenda that is beyond that horizon. The vision for the present initiative is to provide a flexible funding source for California HIV research that will aid in continuing to move the field forward dramatically. This initiative asks: in order to leap one step ahead of the current state of the science, what visionary HIV research would you propose?



Key Dates and Deadlines

Letters of Intent (LOI) are required, and will be used to determine which applicants are invited to submit full proposals. All submission deadlines are **12:00 noon Pacific Time**. All materials will be submitted electronically via proposalCentral. Late submissions will not be accepted.

February 1, 2017	Call for Applications released
February 23, 2017, 3pm-4pm PT	Informational webinar for potential applicants: click here <i>(Will be available for offline viewing the next day)</i>
March 15, 2017, 12pm PT	LETTERS OF INTENT DUE
April 19, 2017	Invitations extended to select applicants for full proposals
June 22, 2017, 12pm PT	INVITED FULL PROPOSALS DUE
December 1, 2017	Notification of the outcome of peer review
April 1, 2018	Earliest award start date

About The Awards

We anticipate up to \$7.5 million over four years in total funding for this initiative. Applicant budgets can range from \$100,000 up to \$750,000 **per year in direct costs**, and project duration can range from one to four years. At the full proposal stage, applications will be categorized as “small” (\$100,000 to \$299,999 per year) or “large” (\$300,000 - \$750,000 per year), based on annualized budget; small projects will be ranked as a group, and large projects will be ranked as a separate group. The number of funded projects in total, and the mix of small vs large projects to be funded, will depend on the outcome of the peer review process, with the highest ranked applications recommended for funding. Final funding allocation will depend on proposal merit/ranking, available funding, and portfolio balance. Training awards (such as Postdoctoral or Dissertation Awards) will not be funded in the CHRP 2017 grant cycle, but support for trainees and mentoring are allowable costs.

Requirements

Projects must demonstrate a focus on the California HIV epidemic. Applicant institutions and all project activities must be located in California. There is no restriction as to the discipline (see list on page one for examples and note that all areas of research, whether listed or not, are eligible), only that the work, if successful, would significantly advance the field of HIV research. All LOIs and full proposals must conform to the requirements of the final Call for Applications or instructions provided; applicants are responsible for checking for updates to the Call on the CHRP website prior to submitting their final LOI or proposal.

Who is Eligible?

Individual Principal Investigators or collaborations of multiple Investigators from single or multiple non-profit institutions located in California are eligible to apply. Past and current recipients of CHRP research funding ARE eligible to apply for concurrent funding under this initiative, and must disclose any current CHRP funding support in their proposals. Overlap in funding may be considered in the CHRP funding decision with regard to maintenance and scope of effort. Applicants may participate as key personnel (including PI, Co-PI, or Co-Investigator) in only ONE proposal under this Initiative. Each application must identify one Lead Investigator who holds Principal Investigator status at their home institution (UC campuses should contact their campus Office of Research, or refer to Section 1-530 of the *UC Contracts and Grants Manual* for guidance). The Lead PI is responsible for the overall coordination of the research, and cannot be changed after the LOI is approved.

Allowable Costs and Budget Restrictions

Funding requests must be judicious and well-justified, and conform to the budget guidelines below (and further detailed in the application instructions, which will be made available to approved LOI applicants). Proposal budgets may include direct cost expenditures that are incurred to directly support the proposed research activities only. Institutions are eligible for additional indirect costs of up to 25% of total eligible direct project costs, or at the rate established for the institution through a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (or other similarly established rate), whichever is lower. Both UC and non-UC institutions are eligible for indirect costs. Awards are one-time, non-renewable grants. Non-allowable costs include patent execution costs, fundraising costs, and institutional core support. To ensure that funds support novel research efforts, all applicants must disclose all current and concurrent research support.

Review Process

LOI REVIEW: LOIs will be evaluated for responsiveness to this Call for Applications in two areas: Eligibility and Merit. Eligibility will be assessed in an unblinded fashion by CHRP staff, and will include completeness and adherence to instructions. Merit will be determined by the degree to which the proposed work is visionary (“one step ahead”) and would aid in significantly moving the field of HIV research forward considering recent paradigm shifts. This will be assessed via three open-ended questions (see **How Do I Apply** section). Merit will be rated on a scale of 1 to 5 by at least two reviewers. For the LOI merit review phase, all reviewers will be blinded as to the names and institutions of the applicants. Significantly discordant scores will trigger a third reviewer. All LOIs will be scored, and no more than 50 LOIs will advance to the full application phase. CHRP anticipates that the thorough review of 50 full applications will yield a portfolio of highly meritorious projects, and that review of more than 50 full applications would not change the final portfolio of funded work. Moreover, we wish to minimize the burden of the full application to only those investigators who have a strong chance of securing funding. No feedback or comments will be provided on the LOI, nor reasons for selection or non-selection, and the program decision is binding.

Approved LOIs will be given access to the full application on proposalCentral at the time the notification of approval is provided. Applicants are responsible for following the policies, procedures, and timelines required by their institutions and to confirm that any collaborators have secured institutional approval, if required, in advance of application submission. No application may move forward without an approved LOI.

FULL PROPOSAL REVIEW: Highly meritorious proposals will (a) demonstrate how the proposed work is One Step Ahead and represents the next paradigm shift in HIV research; (b) provide detailed plans regarding the proposed activities; and (c) clearly articulate goals and metrics for success of the work. CHRP will manage a competitive peer review process, including a full face-to-face multidisciplinary peer review panel where scoring and ranking of all full applications will be based on the criteria and requirements set forth in the application materials. Peer reviewers will be selected for their subject matter expertise, and will include reviewers from all scientific discipline areas; the panel will also include community reviewers. Reviewers will be based outside of California so as to minimize the potential for conflicts of interest or bias. Review assignments will be made to ensure qualified and fair assessment, and to address conflicts of interest.



How Do I Apply?

We strongly encourage all applicants to begin the online registration, LOI, and application submission processes early to accommodate account set up and any potential delays due to technical issues.

To ensure fairness and equity across applicants, all submission deadlines will be strictly enforced.

A webinar for potential applicants will be held in February; please see the **Key Dates** section above for details. No pre-registration is necessary, and call-in information will be available on our [website](#).

Scientific program staff will be available to answer questions during the webinar, and by phone or email afterward. The FAQ will be updated frequently to include questions posed (by email, phone, or during the webinar) and staff responses. Participation in the webinar is strongly recommended, as understanding the intent of the initiative and the application process are central to the success of applicants.

LETTER OF INTENT SUBMISSION: Applicants must submit a complete LOI via proposalCentral (go to <https://proposalcentral.altum.com>, click on “Grant Opportunities” and scroll down to California HIV/AIDS Research Program), which will include the following required information:

- **Proposal title, estimated budgets** (total and annual), and requested award term;
 - Lead PI name and campus/institutional affiliation; and for any Co-Investigators;
 - Identification of primary discipline and keywords;
 - Brief text responses addressing the eligibility criteria;
- **Abstract** describing the overall goal of the research and scope of activities (about 350 words);
- **Brief responses to three questions** regarding visionary aspects of the research (350 words each):
 1. How would you define success for this project?
 2. How might this project impact HIV research or the HIV epidemic within the next five years?
 3. Why is this project *One Step Ahead*?

FULL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION: Applicants who are invited to submit a full proposal will be provided with detailed application instructions and templates at the time of LOI approval. On the CHRP website, click the “proposalCentral Sign In” button to go directly to your active CHRP application materials.

Stipulations

FUNDING: This Initiative is administered by CHRP in the Research Grants Program Office at the University of California Office of the President. Awards are contingent upon availability of funding, as well as compliance with all research and reporting requirements. Availability of funds is ultimately contingent upon receipt of a sufficient state funding allocation to CHRP. CHRP reserves the right to reallocate research funds for other purposes if there are not a sufficient number of eligible and meritorious applications (with an overall merit score of either very good, excellent, outstanding, or exceptional). Grantees will be subject to funding renewal on an annual basis contingent upon adequate performance, using metrics established with CHRP.

CONFIDENTIALITY: CHRP maintains confidentiality for the contents of every application and the outcome of all reviews. CHRP will make public selected information from funded projects only (more information is provided in the instructions for the full application). For applications or LOIs that are not funded, no information will be released by CHRP without prior approval from the PI.

HUMAN OR ANIMAL SUBJECTS: Approvals or exemptions for use of human or animal subjects are not required before the time of LOI submission or review, but will be required before any funded work commences. PIs are encouraged to apply to the appropriate board or committee as soon as possible after submitting a full application in order to expedite the start of the project.

OPEN ACCESS: Recipients of all CHRP grant awards are required to make all resulting research findings publicly available in accordance with the terms of the Open Access Policy of the Research Grants Program Office (RGPO) of the University of California, Office of the President (UCOP), effective April 22, 2014.

RGPO Open Access Policy: The UCOP Research Grants Program Office (RGPO) is committed to disseminating research as widely as possible to promote the public benefit. To that end, all RGPO grantee institutions and researchers grant RGPO a nonexclusive, irrevocable, worldwide license to exercise any and all rights under copyright and in any medium for all scholarly articles and similar works generated as a result of an RGPO grant award, and agree to authorize others to do the same, for the purpose of making their articles widely and freely available in an open access repository. This policy does not transfer copyright ownership, which remains with the author(s) or copyright owners.

Scope and Waiver (Opt-Out): The policy applies to all scholarly articles and similar works authored or co-authored as a result of research sponsored by an RGPO grant, except for any articles published before the adoption of this policy and any articles for which the grantee institution and/or researchers entered into an

incompatible licensing or assignment agreement before the adoption of this policy. Upon express written request of the institutional grantee and/or researcher, RGPO will waive the license for a particular article or delay “open access” to the article for a specified period of time.

Deposit of Articles: To assist the RGPO in disseminating and archiving the articles, the grantee institution and all researchers to the grant award will commit to helping the RGPO to obtain copies of the articles that are published as a result of an RGPO sponsored grant award. Specifically, each author will provide an electronic copy of his or her final version of the article to the RGPO by the date of its publication for inclusion in an open access repository, subject to any applicable waiver or delay referenced above.

Notwithstanding the above, this policy does not in any way prescribe or limit the venue of publication.

APPEALS OF REVIEW DECISIONS: Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the CHRP Director, and are subject to oversight from our external Advisory Council and the Research Grants Program Office. Decisions may not be appealed, but declined proposals may be submitted to future funding competitions without prejudice.

GRANTS MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES AND POLICIES: Details concerning the requirements for grant recipients are available in a separate publication, the University of California, Office of the President, “RGPO Grant Administration Manual.” The latest version of the Manual and programmatic updates can be obtained from the Program’s office or viewed on our Web site: <http://www.ucop.edu/research-grants-program/grant-administration/index.html>

How to Contact CHRP

- For general questions regarding electronic submission of an LOI or application, please contact our Contracts and Grants personnel at either RGPOGrants@ucop.edu or 510-987-9386.
- For technical support with proposalCentral (the online submission system), please contact pcsupport@altum.com or call 800-875-2562 between 5am and 2pm Pacific Time.
- For guidance on the suitability of a project for this funding opportunity, or for questions regarding the scientific content of your application, please contact either Dr. Tyler Martz (Tyler.Martz@ucop.edu) or Dr. Lisa Loeb Stanga (Lisa.Loeb.Stanga@ucop.edu), the Program Officers for this Initiative.

The California HIV/AIDS Research Program (CHRP) fosters outstanding and innovative research that responds to the needs of all people of California, especially those who are underserved, by accelerating progress in prevention, education, care, treatment, and a cure for HIV/AIDS.

www.californiaaidsresearch.org