California HIV/AIDS Research Program

Basic Biomedical Sciences Discovery Initiative 2019

Call for Applications

Call for Applications Release:	April 8, 2019
Letter of Intent (LOI) Due:	**May 15, 2019, 12:00 PM Pacific Time***
LOI Approval Notification:	May 24, 2019
Webinar for Invited Applicants:	Early June 2019 (a recording will be available)
Invited Applications Due:	**July 18, 2019, 12:00 PM Pacific Time***
Decision Notification:	December 2, 2019
Performance Period:	February 1, 2020 – January 31, 2022

* Please note that the online submission portal, proposalCENTRAL, displays Eastern Time.

The California HIV/AIDS Research Program (CHRP) seeks to award approximately $2,000,000 on February 1, 2020 to support pilot studies in basic biomedical HIV science.

Important changes to the Call for Applications this year include: (a) an increase in allowable direct costs from $160,000 to $200,000 total; (b) the use of samples from an Investigator's clinical research cohort is now allowable; (c) the submittal of applications by UC employees must now be through their UC Contracts and Grants office; (d) indirect costs are capped at 30%; and (e) a provision toward ensuring a robust pipeline of HIV researchers.

Contact: Lisa Loeb Stanga, Program Officer, lisa.loeb.stanga@ucop.edu or 510-587-6041
www.californiaaidsresearch.org

Goals of this Funding Initiative

Since 1983, CHRP has advanced HIV/AIDS science and supported the interests of California research institutions by funding numerous small awards for basic biomedical discovery. These pilot awards support early-stage laboratory exploration aimed at understanding mechanisms of HIV prevention, treatment, or cure at the cellular or subcellular level. This initiative is intended to fund discrete projects of highly innovative ideas that will yield the preliminary data needed to successfully compete for larger research grants (such as National Institutes of Health R01s).

Scientific Priorities

Applications should propose basic biomedical HIV research that is highly innovative, addresses a significant question or barrier in HIV science, and shows clear promise to yield findings that can serve as a basis for compelling studies of larger magnitude. Applications in the disciplines of biology (including molecular, cellular, structural, and microbiology), virology, immunology, chemistry (organic and biological), and other basic biomedical science disciplines are all welcome.

Allowable topics include any aspect of the host/pathogen interaction for HIV or SIV that has not yet been fully explored. Reviewers will not be instructed to prioritize specific topics, but will use their knowledge of the state of HIV science to assess the degrees of significance and innovation achieved. Topics that were funded in the 2015 cycle included mucosal immunity, novel host-viral protein interaction, vaccine development, genetic therapeutics, molecular virology, and next-generation imaging; abstracts for those studies are available on the **CHRP website**. Applications must directly address HIV or SIV; this opportunity excludes proposals on any non-HIV/SIV infectious agents, except when studies directly relate to co-infection with HIV or SIV and are both significant and relevant in the current context of the HIV epidemic.

Source of Funding, Available Funding, and Anticipated Number of Awards

CHRP receives all of our funding from the State of California. For this Basic Biomedical Discovery Initiative, CHRP has committed $2,000,000 over two years; the number of awards made will depend on the number and quality of applications received. Awards are contingent on the availability of funds, and funding allocations may be adjusted based on performance (criteria will be provided in the instructions for the Full Application). Research Training Awards (for Dissertation or Postdoctoral Training) will not be funded as freestanding awards in the CHRP 2019 grant cycle.

Award Duration, Amount, and Requirements

Grants are one-time, non-renewable awards for a two-year project period (shorter periods are allowed). Awards may not exceed $200,000 in direct costs in total over the proposed project period. Exceptions to the direct costs limit may be considered with very strong justification. University of California (UC) institutions are eligible for indirect costs up to 30% of modified total direct costs, effective for awards starting after July 1, 2019; non-UC institutions are eligible for the same, or their negotiated indirect cost rate

agreement with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (or other similarly established rate), whichever is lower.

Allowable direct costs include salaries, fringe benefits, supplies, sub-contracts (out-of-state sub-contracts and collaborations are generally not allowed), equipment (defined as any item costing $5,000 or more), and limited travel (scientific conference travel of no more than $2,000 per year). The Principal Investigator (PI) must commit a minimum of 10% effort to this project (1.2 person-months of effort for a 12-month appointment, or equivalent). Effort without support is allowable for key personnel but not for the PI.

All awards in CHRP's 2019 Funding Cycle will require an activity to help ensure a robust pipeline of HIV researchers, such as funding an internship or mentorship, or co-authoring a manuscript with an early stage investigator. More information will be provided during the applicant webinar (see dates above, and a recording will be posted on our website shortly after) and in the full application packet, which will be sent to Investigators upon approval of their Letters of Intent (LOI; see dates above). Our intention is that this activity will be achievable within the relatively smaller scope and budget of this award mechanism.

- *New This Year*: Proposals may utilize material of human origin from subjects with whom the PI interacts if appropriate institutional assurance is provided (an approved IRB protocol naming the present project by title and funder, on a "just in time" basis; informed consent documentation does not need to name this funded project). Appropriate animal models are also allowable.

Eligibility

Applicant institutions must be non-profit research, academic, or community-based institutions in California. The applicant is required to have PI status at a non-profit institution in California. US citizenship is not a requirement. Investigators may submit only one application as PI to this Call for Applications; failure to comply with this requirement will result in the rejection of all of their applications before review. In accordance with **UC policy**, PIs who are UC employees and who receive any part of their salary through UC must submit grant proposals through their UC campus Contracts and Grants office. Exceptions must be approved by the UC campus where the PI is employed.

- *Nonprofit Institutions Submitting for the First Time to CHRP*: CHRP will accept applications from PIs at any non-profit organization or institution provided that the organization can manage the grant, demonstrate financial health, and meet CHRP's liability insurance requirements. If recommended for funding, the UC Research Grants Program Office (RGPO) will review financial reports for the organization (including tax ID numbers) during the pre-funding process to ensure all financial and project management eligibility criteria can be met.

Letter of Intent

Instructions for completing the LOI are on page seven of this document. A complete LOI for this mechanism consists of: Title; New Investigator Checkbox; Applicant Profile including ORCID identifier (PI only; Key Personnel are named at the Full Application stage); Sponsoring Institution Information and Named Officials (official signatures are not required by CHRP at the LOI stage but your institution may have

different rules); LOI Narrative (limit approximately 500 words); and Keywords (limit three; limit 25 characters). Budget information is not included at the LOI stage.

Complete LOIs must be submitted no later than 12:00 PM Pacific Time on May 15, 2019 (the online submission portal, proposalCENTRAL, displays Eastern Time). LOIs received after the deadline will not be accepted. CHRP staff will review all LOIs to ensure that the proposed research is responsive to the scientific priorities listed in the Call for Applications (page 2) and that the applicant and institution meet eligibility criteria (page 3). LOI approval notifications will be emailed to all prospective applicants at the same time, by May 24, 2019. Investigators with approved LOIs will be invited to submit full proposals, and will receive the full application packet with the LOI approval notification.

Full Application

Instructions for completing the full application will be distributed to PIs at the time of LOI approval. The full applications are due no later than 12:00 PM Pacific Time on July 18, 2019 (proposalCENTRAL displays Eastern Time). Applications will be reviewed by subject experts from outside California who have experience serving both as NIH grant application reviewers and as Principal Investigators on substantial NIH research project grants (e.g., R01s, P01s, but not R03s or other NIH-defined **smaller grant mechanisms**).

Review criteria for scoring applications include:
1. Significance and Innovation (30% score weighting)
   - Significance and potential for advancing science in HIV/AIDS;
   - Innovation in concept, approach, and/or methods;
2. Research Plan (60% score weighting)
   - Clarity of the research problem;
   - Strength and feasibility of the conceptual framework, analytical plan, and methodology;
   - Potential to leverage results and compete for subsequent funding after the pilot stage;
   - Investigator's capacity or potential (if new investigator) to conduct the proposed research.
3. Special Considerations (10% score weighting)
   - Attentiveness to the needs of Californians;
   - Addressing the HIV research pipeline.

To support the careers of new investigators (those who have not yet received substantial independent NIH funding per **NIAID definition**,), they will be held to a more favorable payline than established investigators. The final paylines for this CHRP mechanism will be determined by taking into account the proportion of awards that are deemed to be meritorious, and the relative proportions among them of those from new vs. established investigators.

Standard RGPO Application-Related Policies and Pre-Award Requirements

CHRP uses **proposalCENTRAL**, an electronic submission portal, for all official correspondence (e.g., LOI and application submission). PIs are expected to register and use their accounts. All CHRP grant recipients must abide by other pre- and post-award requirements pertaining to Cost Share, Indirect Cost Rates,

Monitoring & Payment of Subcontracts, Use of Funds, Conflict of Interest, Disclosure of Violations, Return of Interest, Equipment and Residual Supplies, Records Retention, Open Access, and Reporting as outlined in the **Grants Administration Manual (GAM)**. Failure to comply with instructions, or to submit complete forms, may result in application rejection before review.

Upon request, awardees must supply the following information or documents:
1. Verification of Principal Investigator status from an appropriate institutional official.
2. Documentation of 501(c)(3) non-profit organization status for the organizations.
3. Documentation of the DHHS-negotiated (or equivalent) indirect cost rate for non-U.C. institutions.
4. Detailed budgets and justifications for any subcontract(s).
5. IRB or IACUC applications or approvals pertaining to the award.
6. Resolution of any scientific overlap issues with other grants or pending applications.
7. Resolution of any study section recommendations.

Human Material and Animal Subjects: Approvals for use of human material and animal research subjects are not required at the time of application. Applicants are encouraged to apply to the appropriate board or committee as soon as possible in order to expedite the start of the project, and you must do so within 21 days of notification that an award has been offered. This deadline may be negotiable depending on the circumstances of the proposal. If all reasonable efforts are not made to obtain appropriate approvals in a timely fashion, funds may be reallocated to other potential grantees' proposed research projects.

Publications Acknowledgement and Open Access: All scientific publications and other products from any RGPO-funded research project must acknowledge the funding support from UC Office of the President, with reference to CHRP and the assigned grant ID number. RGPO is committed to disseminating research as widely as possible to promote the public benefit, and all publications based on funding received from RGPO are subject to the University's Open Access Policy. To assist RGPO in disseminating and archiving research results, grantee institutions and/or the Principal Investigator must deposit an electronic copy of all publications in **eScholarship**, UC's open access repository, promptly after publication. Notwithstanding the above, this policy does not in any way prescribe or limit the venue of publication.

RGPO Applicant Appeal Policy and Procedures

The only basis on which an appeal regarding a decision concerning the funding of a grant application will be considered is in the case of an alleged error in, or violation of, the peer review process and procedures. For example, the principal investigator may believe that he or she has a conflict of interest with a member of the review panel that was not known to the program at the time of the review. Appeals based on substantive disagreement with the peer review evaluation will not be considered. In such cases, applicants may resubmit applications in a subsequent grant cycle.

Before submitting appeals, applicants are encouraged to talk about their concerns informally with the appropriate program officer and program director.

Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Vice President of Research and Graduate Studies, University of California, Office of the President, within thirty (30) days of receiving the Summary Statement. The Vice President may, if an applicant shows good cause, grant a reasonable extension of time for the submission

of the request for review. The appeal must contain a complete statement of the basis for the appeal, including pertinent facts, supporting arguments, and documentation. If the application was submitted through an institution, the appeal must be submitted officially through that institution, and it must be signed by the official authorized to sign for the institution, as well as by the principal investigator. No appeal shall affect any authority of the University of California, Office of the President, the Vice President of Research and Graduate Studies, the Executive Director of the Research Grants Program Office, or the applicable Program Director.

Upon receipt of an appeal, the Vice President of Research and Graduate Studies shall make a decision as to whether the dispute is reviewable under this appeals policy and notify the applicant, the Program Director and the Executive Director of the Research Grants Program Office of the determination. If the appeal is reviewable, it shall be transmitted to an appeal review committee appointed by the Vice President. This committee will be comprised of two persons who are knowledgeable about both the type of research in question and the review procedures. The appeal review committee shall provide the applicant an opportunity to submit additional statements and documentation relevant to the appeal review committee's deliberation of the issues. The appeal will consider the application as submitted. Therefore, such supplemental appeals materials may not include additional data or clarification of the original application. The appeal review committee may, at its discretion, invite the applicant and any other person(s) to discuss the pertinent issues with the committee and submit such additional information as the committee deems appropriate. The committee may also request information from the program director regarding the review procedures or other issues raised in the appeal.

Participants in an appeal review (i.e., committee members and outside experts) and any materials considered will be subject to the same rules of confidentiality that govern the initial handling and evaluation of the application.

Based upon its review, the committee will prepare a written decision to be signed by the members. The appeal review committee shall send the written decision as advice to the Vice President, who will render a final written decision and transmit it to the applicant, the members of the appeal review committee, the Program Director and the RGPO Executive Director. No further appeals within the University of California are available.

How to Get Help

For scientific questions regarding application preparation or guidance regarding the suitability of a proposed project, contact Lisa Loeb Stanga at **lisa.loeb.stanga@ucop.edu**.

For general questions regarding application preparation and submission, including using proposalCENTRAL, please contact the Research Grants Program Office, Contracts and Grants Unit at **RGPOGrants@ucop.edu**, or 510-987-9386.

For technical assistance, contact proposalCENTRAL at 1-800-875-2562 from 5:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Pacific Time, Monday through Friday, or by e-mail at **pcsupport@altum.com**.

Instructions

STEP A: Submit a Letter of Intent

1. **Log in to proposalCENTRAL** (new users must create a profile), and **complete LOI Section 1 now.**
   - Click on the *Grant Opportunities* tab, Click on *Filter List by Grantmaker*, and select *California HIV/AIDS Research Program.*
   - Find the entry for *Basic Biomedical Pilot Awards*, and click on *Apply Now*.
   - LOI Section 1: Enter a **working title** (which can be changed, <=60 characters, including spaces). If the PI meets the definition of a "**New Investigator**" (those who have not yet received substantial independent NIH funding per **NIAID definition**), tick that box.
   - Click on *Save.* This creates the LOI file, which can be edited any time. The remaining sections can be completed in any order in any number of visits, under the "Manage Proposals" tab.
2. **Complete the rest of the LOI and submit it before 12:00 PM Pacific Time on May 15, 2019.**
   - LOI Section 2: The Call for Applications and Instructions are available for download in this section.
   - LOI Section 3: Provide access to other registered users of proposalCENTRAL. "Administrator" is typically used for contracts and grants signing officials.
   - LOI Section 4: Click on *Applicant* and review the PI information; update it if needed. A required field entitled "ORCID ID" has been added to Professional Profile Page, at the bottom of Section 4: Personal Data for Applications. ORCID provides a persistent digital identifier that distinguishes you from every other researcher and, through integration in key research workflows such as manuscript and grant submission, supports automated linkages between you and your professional activities ensuring that your work is recognized. If you do not have an ORCID ID number, you may get one here: **http://orcid.org/.** Enter your 16-digit identifier in the space provided on your profile page in the following format: xxxx-xxxx-xxxx-xxxx.
   - LOI Section 5: Click on *Institution*, and review the information. When you first register with proposalCENTRAL you should select an institution with a valid IRS tax ID number (EIN) from the pull-down menu. You can directly add your institution's "Signing Official", "Contracts & Grants Official", and the "Fiscal Contact" who will handle budget and fiscal reports. If these individuals are not present on the pull down menu, then you need to contact them and have them register with proposalCENTRAL. If your institution is not in the database, or has multiple entries, please contact your Contracts and Grants office for guidance.
   - LOI Section 6: Enter the **LOI narrative**, which consists of a concise description of the research question and activities that you propose (limit 3,500 characters, or approximately 500 words). Provide three **keywords** to describe the proposed project, which will be used to plan for reviewers at the next stage (limit 25 characters each).
   - LOI Section 7: Validate the LOI by resolving any missing information noted in this section. Validating the LOI does NOT submit it to CHRP. If you have trouble, contact proposalCENTRAL.
   - LOI Section 8: **Submit** the LOI. The PI should receive e-mail confirmation of successful submission within 30 minutes; if not, please contact the Program Officer listed on page one.

STEP B: Submit a Full Application

Upon receiving LOI approval, applicants can access the full application materials on proposalCENTRAL at the *Manage Proposals* tab, which will display the approved LOI. Clicking "Edit" will launch the full application section, including all instructions and templates needed.

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