Basic Biomedical and Translational Science Discovery: Early-Stage Investigator (ESI) Pilot Awards

Request for Proposals 2025

Important Dates

Request for Proposals Announced:	Tuesday, April 1, 2025
Applicant Webinar for All RFPs:	Wednesday, April 30, 2025, 3:00-4:30 PM PDT (will be recorded)
Questions Due:	Friday, May 2, 2025, 5:00 PM PDT
Letters of Intent (LOI) Due:	**Thursday, May 15, 2025, 12:00 PM** PDT
Invited Applications Due:	**Thursday, July 10, 2025, 12:00 PM** PDT
Notification of Peer Review Outcome:	Monday, December 1, 2025, 12:00 PM PDT
Performance Period:	March 1, 2026 – February 28, 2028

New or Notable This Year

- Applications may request up to $200,000 in direct costs over two years (plus indirect costs as described in the Request for Proposals [RFP], capped at 35%).
- This opportunity is restricted to applicants who are in the early stages of their careers (those who have not received substantial independent research funding per NIH definition, nor CHRP funding as PI). All eligibility criteria are provided on page 4.
- Applicants must propose a mentor at the LOI stage, and a mentoring plan in their letter of support at the full application stage.
- All questions related to this RFP must be submitted in writing by May 2, 2025, with responses being posted to our website within one week. No questions will be answered after this date unless determined vital by the program.
- Among all LOIs received, no more than the 20 most meritorious will be accepted and invited to submit a full application. See Section 10 ("Submitting a Letter of Intent") for more information.

1. CHRP Mission and Programmatic Priorities

Our mission is to support scientists in California to develop, evaluate, and disseminate innovative research for (a) eliminating new HIV infections, (b) optimizing treatment uptake and outcomes for all persons living with HIV, and (c) addressing the comorbidities and social determinants that threaten the health and well-being of persons at risk for or living with HIV.

CHRP Programmatic Priorities: *Across every aspect of our work, the California HIV/AIDS Research Program (CHRP) seeks to fund high-risk, high-reward, high-rigor research projects that aim to substantially and rapidly advance HIV epidemic control and/or treatment, and which address research priorities and gaps not supported by other funders. Further, CHRP is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion as a means of increasing the effectiveness of its grantmaking and generating new knowledge that benefits all Californians.*

The California HIV/AIDS Research Program (CHRP) is a publicly funded grantmaking organization, administered through the Research Grants Program Office (RGPO) within the Division of Research and Innovation at the University of California, Office of the President. Since 1983, CHRP has invested over $383 million dollars through over 2,000 research and capacity building grants to support the development, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination of innovative HIV projects through its stated *mission and strategic directions*. These priorities align with other Ending the Epidemic(s) strategies developed by the *State of California*, through the federal government by both the *CDC* and (former) White House Office of AIDS Policy, as well globally by the *WHO*.

2. Goals of this Funding Initiative

With this Request for Proposals (RFP), CHRP seeks to award up to $1,600,000 by March 1, 2026 to support five to nine highly innovative pilot studies in basic and translational biomedical HIV research. To do this, CHRP will fund multiple early career-stage investigators across the state of California who will conduct mentored laboratory exploration aimed at understanding mechanisms of HIV prevention, treatment, or cure at the cellular or subcellular level, or translating basic biomedical understandings from the laboratory setting into potential interventions that directly benefit humans. Specifically, this research initiative aims to:

A. Fund **highly innovative** ideas;
B. Fund research plans that will **yield the preliminary data** needed to successfully compete for larger research grants (such as National Institutes of Health [NIH] R01s);
C. Support the mentored development of the incoming generation of independent researchers by restricting eligibility to **early career stage investigators and post-doctoral trainees only and requiring a robust mentoring plan**; and
D. Support diversity in the pipeline of future investigators with **supplemental funding opportunities to support other students** and trainees from diverse and underrepresented communities, from communities that are highly impacted by HIV in California, and/or who have demonstrated commitment to diversity efforts.

3. Background

Messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines, such as those deployed to prevent SARS-CoV-2 infections, originated twenty years ago from basic biomedical HIV research, including investigations into the structural biology of the HIV viral envelope, RNA delivery for dendritic cell HIV antigen presentation, the use of HIV env immunogens for T and B cell vaccine responses, and more[1]. These and other landmark findings from HIV basic biomedical research have resulted in critical advances in health care across the globe, as well as the evidence-based strategies for HIV prevention, treatment, and care that we depend on today.

Typically, the first step in these critical discoveries are pilot studies – smaller scale laboratory experiments which aims to establish proof-of-concept or feasibility of an insight or an instinct. These highly-focused investigations are essential for innovation in HIV research and are commonly the first research grant that early career stage researchers receive. With pilot data in hand, investigators can compete more readily for larger-scale funding to test their innovative ideas; investing in these pilot studies has historically yielded remarkable leveraged funding for California ($14 additional funding per $1 invested). The repeated offering of these pilot awards is intended to enable investigators to respond to particularly timely or newly emerging issues in the field. With CHRP's continued support of basic biomedical and translational HIV pilot studies via this funding initiative, we hope to contribute to the discovery and development of new tools to better prevent, treat, and cure HIV.

4. Research Objectives to be Addressed by the Proposed Work

This funding opportunity will support investigator-initiated basic biomedical and/or translational HIV research pilot studies that are highly innovative, address an important question or barrier, and may yield findings that can serve as a basis for compelling studies of larger magnitude or launch new areas of inquiry. Successful applications will propose research that meets these objectives:

Objective 1: Seeks to answer an **HIV-specific research question** that is basic biomedical and/or translational in nature, and addresses an emerging or understudied concept or area;

Objective 2: Proposes **highly innovative** ideas, approaches, applications, and/or methods which may be "**high risk, high reward**" and not necessarily fundable by other programs;

Objective 3: Proposes a **robust approach**, including a rigorous study design, methods that are appropriate to answer the research question, and a clear path toward **yielding the preliminary data** needed to successfully compete for larger research grants from other funders.

The proposed project must address an aspect of the host/pathogen interaction for HIV or SIV and must be basic biomedical or translational in nature. The project may focus on humans, non-human primates, animals with humanized immune systems and/or cells (including organoids), or any other animal model that is justified in the full application, including novel animal models. There is no restriction on the types of cells or cell lines that can be used. Leveraging biospecimens from other studies is encouraged, with appropriate assurance(s) from the applicable institutional review board(s). This opportunity does not specify any topics/topic areas that are more highly desirable than others, beyond those that address

[1] Dr. Lawrence Corey, HIV Grand Rounds, University of California at San Francisco, 12Jan2022.

basic and/or translational aspects of HIV/SIV. Topics that were funded in prior cycles are available on the CHRP website.

5. Eligibility

There are four eligibility criteria for this RFP:

1. PI is an early-stage investigator, per CHRP definition below.
2. PI currently holds (or will be granted at time of funding) Principal Investigator status at an eligible California institution, per CHRP requirements below.
3. PI will commit at least 10% effort with support each year to this project; see below.
4. PI will conduct the proposed research in California.

Principal Investigator: The applicant is required to have PI status at a non-profit institution in California, or assurance in writing from their institution that PI status will be granted "just in time" upon an offer to fund this award (e.g. a current post-doctoral scientist without PI status). In accordance with *UC policy*. PIs who are UC employees and 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. Neither US citizenship nor permanent residency are requirements for the PI, nor for any personnel, to receive CHRP funding.

This RFP is restricted to investigators who are in the early stages (ESI) of their careers. To be eligible as an ESI at CHRP, the applicant PI must:

- Meet the NIH definition of an ESI, meaning they have not received, and are not currently receiving, a substantial independent research award from NIH (e.g., such as an R01; see list of NIH grants that a PI can hold and still be considered an NIH ESI here).
- Have not received, or be currently receiving, any CHRP funding as PI (including early-stage investigator [ESI] and/or pilot funding), nor from any other RGPO program.

Applicants should affirm their ESI status by checking the "New Investigator" box in the online application and should include a brief ESI statement on the first page of the research plan document. ESI are required to be supported by a seasoned mentor. While a mentor is required, these awards should be considered early independence awards, and the PI is fully responsible for the execution of the project. Mentors may provide effort without support but must be listed in Key Personnel whether support is requested or not.

Institution: CHRP requires that applicant institutions are non-profit research, academic, or community-based institutions located in California. CHRP will accept applicants from any non-profit organization or institution, provided that the organization can manage the grant and demonstrate financial health. The organization must also meet our liability insurance requirements. Before funding, the University will collect additional information, such as tax ID numbers and financial reports, to review the organization during the pre-funding process to ensure all financial management and project management eligibility criteria can be met.

Applicants Who Are Listed as Key Personnel on Existing CHRP Funded Awards: Applicants who are key personnel (with or without support) on any current CHRP research awards are eligible to apply for funding under this initiative if the required scientific and fiscal reports on their existing grants are up-to-

date, even though they are not the PI of those existing awards. This means that Progress/Final Scientific Reports or Fiscal Reports that are more than one month overdue may subject an application to disqualification unless the issue is either (i) addressed by the PI and Institution within one month of notification, or (ii) the PI and Institution have received written permission from CHRP to allow an extension of any report deadlines.

Multiple Applications, Multiple PIs: An applicant **PI may submit only one LOI to this RFP**; failure to comply with this requirement will result in the rejection of all their applications under this RFP without peer review. Multiple principal investigators (Co-PI) are not allowed under this mechanism. PIs may participate as non-PI personnel on additional applications under this or other CHRP RFPs. Individuals, community-based organizations, and health systems/jurisdictions may participate in more than one application under this mechanism.

Applicants who submit an application as an ESI to this mechanism and simultaneously submit an application to another CHRP RFP (e.g., "Innovative Approaches to HIV Prevention and Care: Social and Behavioral Research Open Call") may only receive one award as an ESI; should both applications be selected for funding, the PI can propose which award to accept and which to decline, but the final decision of which application to fund will be made by the Program, taking into account programmatic priorities as well as merit scores.

6. Available Funding, Anticipated Number of Awards

CHRP receives its funding as part of the University of California's unrestricted general fund revenue from the State of California. The number of awards to be offered is not predetermined but will depend on the number of meritorious 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). Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the CHRP Director and are subject to oversight from the CHRP Advisory Council and the Research Grants Program Office. Declined proposals may be submitted to future competitions without prejudice.

7. Award Duration, Budget, and Requirements

Each award will support up to two year(s) of related activities and budgets may not exceed $200,000 in direct costs over the entire project period. Monies can be unevenly distributed across the years in the two-year project period to adjust for project lifecycle (e.g., lower annual costs in earlier time periods during start-up and planning, and higher annual costs during implementation). Continued funding beyond year one is contingent on progress toward milestones enumerated in the application.

Allowable direct costs include salaries and fringe benefits; supplies; subcontracts (out-of-state subcontracts and collaborations are generally not allowed); equipment (defined as any item costing $5,000 or more); and limited travel. Travel includes (a) scientific conference travel and travel for the PI (and one mentee if applicable) to at least one CHRP-hosted grantee meeting per award, limited to 2% of total direct costs or $2,000, whichever is higher); and (b) project-related travel as needed to carry out the funded research, such as travel of project staff between clinic sites, which is not limited.

Indirect (F&A) costs are capped at 35% F&A Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) and 25% MTDC for off-campus projects for all institutions. Organizations that do not have a federally approved F&A rate may request a De Minimis rate of 25%. The *Grants Administration Manual* outlines all policies and regulations with respect to allowable indirect costs (IDC) and restrictions on use of funds. Some institutions will not accept awards with IDC capped at 35%; PIs may wish to discuss this requirement with their institutions before submitting a full application.

The PI must commit a minimum of 10%, or 1.2 person-months, of effort in each project year, with support. Periods of effort without support are allowable for other key personnel, including the mentor, but not for the PI.

Applicant PIs must propose a seasoned mentor with enough experience to guide the PI as they conduct their study; the proposed mentor should be named in the LOI; full applications will require a Letter of Support from the mentor, which must include a mentoring plan and a statement of commitment from the mentor to meet regularly with the funded PI.

Proposals may utilize material of human origin from persons 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.

8. Prospective Applicant Webinar

CHRP will hold an informational webinar (**see date on page one**) to provide an overview of the intent of the award mechanism(s), the application process(es), and allow prospective applicants and community members to ask questions relevant to their submission. Information on how to access the applicant webinar, and a recording of the webinar, will be posted on the *CHRP website*. During the webinar potential applicants will have the opportunity to submit questions, or ask for clarifications, through the chat window. We request that questions be submitted by chat so a written record can be retained.

9. Applicant Questions that Arise After the Webinar

After the webinar prospective applicants can submit additional questions via email by the date and time listed on page one of this RFP. CHRP will post written responses to all submitted questions on our website within one week. Questions or inquires submitted to CHRP after this date will not be answered unless determined vital by CHRP staff and leadership; in this instance all potential applicants who have initiated an LOI in *SmartSimple* will be notified of the question and the Program's response by email.

10. Submitting a Letter of Intent (LOI)

RGPO uses *SmartSimple*, an electronic submission portal, for all official correspondence (e.g., LOI and application submission). PIs are required to register and use their accounts. Complete LOIs must be submitted via *SmartSimple* **no later than on the date and time shown on page one**. LOIs received after the deadline will not be accepted. Any partnerships involved are allowed to be in formative stages at the

time of LOI submission but must be established by the time of full application submission. Official signatures are not required by CHRP at the LOI stage; however, any differing applicant institutional policies supersede CHRP policy.

Investigators can submit only one LOI as PI to this RFP but can submit as PI to other CHRP RFPs in the current cycle. A complete LOI for this RFP consists of the following:

- ◊ Project Title (100 characters)
- ◊ Project Duration (up to two years), Performance Period (enter dates on page one of this RFP)
- ◊ New Investigator Checkbox (yes/no)
- ◊ Referral Source(s)
- ◊ PI Applicant Profile and Contact Details (including ORCID ID)
- ◊ **LOI Scientific Abstract** (limit 2,400 characters) with hypotheses to be tested and mentor's name.
- ◊ **LOI Specific Aims** (limit 2,400 characters)
- ◊ CHRP Research Priority Area; Subject Area; Focus Area (see LOI instructions)
- ◊ Total Amount of Funding Requested per Project Year (direct costs only)
- ◊ Applicant Electronic Signature and Date.

Competitive Review of Letters of Intent: LOIs will undergo a three-step review process.

Stage 1. Compliance Review. CHRP staff assess to ensure that the applicant, mentor, and institution(s) meet eligibility criteria (Sections 4 and 5 of this RFP).

Stage 2. Merit-Based Peer-Review. at this stage all eligible LOIs will be assessed for merit using the criteria and scoring rubric below, and no more than the 20 most meritorious applicants will be invited to submit full applications. Our intention is to engage fewer scientists with the labor-intensive requirements of writing the full proposal, which in turn will increase the proportion of applications we are able to fund. All LOIs will be reviewed by at least two persons who are subject matter experts. Reviewers will receive a manual of policies and procedures for LOI scoring and review before distribution of any LOI content; the manual is available to applicants by request. Current *RGPO policies and procedures* concerning confidentiality and conflicts of interest will be observed. Letters of Intent will be extracted from *SmartSimple* without investigator or institutional identifiers and these "blinded" files will be sent to the review panel. Reviewers who recognize the identity of and have a potential conflict of interest with an applicant or institution will recuse themselves from all applicable LOIs/applications.

Reviewers will assign three component scores to each LOI, reflecting their relative scientific merit:

- **LOI ONLY: Innovation (50% of LOI score)**: Does the project challenge and seek to shift current research paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches, or models? Does the project address the proposed question in a new and creative way, test a hypothesis beyond the leading edge of the field, or explore an unusual biological phenomenon or unexpected previous result? Is the project taking risks rather than simply the next logical step? Do any proposed new tools or technologies offer clear and significant improvement over currently available methods?

- **LOI ONLY: Significance of the Research Question and Potential Impact (25% of LOI score)**: Does the project address an important problem or critical barrier to progress in the field? If the aims are achieved, how will scientific knowledge or technical capability be improved?
- **LOI ONLY: Approach and Feasibility (25% of LOI score)**: Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? If the project is in the early stages of development, will the strategy establish feasibility, and will particularly risky aspects be managed?

Score values correspond to the following descriptors.

Score	Descriptor	Strengths/Weaknesses
1	Exceptional	Extremely strong with essentially no weaknesses
2	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
3	Excellent	Very strong with only some minor weaknesses
4	Very Good	Strong but with numerous minor weaknesses
5	Good	Strong with at least one moderate weakness
6	Satisfactory	Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses
7	Fair	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness
8	Marginal	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness
9	Poor	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness

Stage 3. Programmatic Review. LOIs identified as meritorious at Stage 2 will undergo final review to ensure that alignment with CHRP priorities, portfolio equity, distribution of resources, and representativeness of the HIV epidemic in California are considered. This review will be undertaken by CHRP staff in collaboration with leadership from our independent Advisory Council. Final LOI scores will be ranked, and no more than the 20 most meritorious will advance to the invited full proposal stage. All applicants will be notified of LOI approval/rejection via *SmartSimple* at the same time, on or before the date shown on page one. PIs with approved LOIs will gain access to the full application materials at time of LOI notification. No application may move forward without an approved LOI.

11. Submitting a Full Application

Full applications must be submitted by the **date stated on page one** of this RFP. Documents providing a comprehensive description of all application sections are found on *SmartSimple,* as are required templates for certain sections. Proposal narratives should be succinct, self-explanatory, and organized in alignment with the sections outlined below and in supplemental attachments. The Full Application will include the following sections:

- Scientific Abstract, Lay Abstract, Specific Aims
- Demographics of Anticipated Study Volunteers
- Milestones and Timetable
- Institution Contacts
- Personnel Table
- Biosketches for all Key Personnel
- Budget and Justification

- Assurances to be Secured (if applicable: Human Subjects; Vertebrate Animals; Biohazards; DEA Controlled Substance use)
- **Research Plan – limit 16 pages (including New Investigator statement)**
- Facilities
- Appendix List and Attachments: must include letter of support from mentor with detailed mentoring plan and commitment to meet with the applicant regularly.

12. Peer Review and Scoring Criteria for Full Applications

All complete applications will undergo a similar three-stage review process to that outlined above for LOIs. However, the Stage 2 Merit Based Peer-Review will be conducted by a panel of independent scientific experts and community leaders which includes (a) persons with lived experience in communities that are highly impacted by HIV in California, and (b) scientists from outside California who are subject matter experts and experienced peer reviewers. Reviewers will receive training and a manual of policies and procedures for application scoring and review before access to the applications is allowed; the manual is available to applicants by request. Current *RGPO policies and procedures* concerning confidentiality and conflicts of interest will be observed.

The following scoring criteria will be used to review invited full applications:

1. **Innovation** (30% of total score): Scoring will reflect innovation in concept, approach, and/or methods. Does the project address the proposed question in a new and creative way, test a hypothesis beyond the leading edge of the field, employ novel methods or approaches to address an existing question, or explore an emerging issue in need of further study? Is the project taking risks rather than simply the next logical step? Do any proposed new tools or technologies offer clear and significant improvement over currently available methods?
2. **Significance** (20% of total score): Scoring will reflect the importance of the research question, and the potential for the work to advance HIV science. Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge or technical capability be improved? How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, or preventative interventions that drive this field?
3. **Approach and Feasibility** (50% of total score)**:**
    a. **Overall Research Plan and Design:** Scoring will reflect the appropriateness and scientific rigor of the overall approach(es) used to address stated aims.
    b. **Conceptual Framework(s):** Scoring will reflect how frameworks and/or models will be used to support stated outcomes.
    c. **Implementation Strategy:** Scoring will reflect the feasibility and rigor proposed to execute all aspects of the investigation.
    d. **Management Plan**: Scoring will reflect the capacity or the potential of the team/institution to carry out the work, the value of the partnerships brought forward from other disciplines, how the project will be managed, the feasibility and completeness of the milestones and timeline, and strategies for addressing roadblocks that may impact study completion.
    e. **Dissemination Plan**: Scoring will be based on the breadth of the dissemination plan and the degree to which it is inclusive of all relevant stakeholders.

Reviewers will comment on but not score the following:

- **Budget**: Appropriateness of the budget request for the project.
- **Inclusion of Women, Minorities and Individuals Across the Lifespan in Research**: If human subjects are involved, the adequacy of plans to include subjects of all genders, all racial and ethnic groups (and subgroups) as well as individuals across the lifespan (including children and elderly individuals) as appropriate for the scientific goals of the research will be assessed.
- **(Where Applicable) Protection of Human Subjects from Research Risk**: Appropriateness of protections from research risk relating to human participation in the proposed research.
- **(Where Applicable) Vertebrate Animals**: If vertebrate animals are involved, the adequacy of plans for their care and use.
- **Sex as a Biological Variable (SABV):** CHRP requires all proposals in all areas of study to account for sex as a biological variable in the Research Plan. CHRP policy is based on current NIH Policy but goes further, to include exogenous and endogenous sex hormones. Applicants must explain how relevant biological variables (e.g. sex assigned at birth; exogenous sex hormone levels) are factored into research designs and analyses, and should demonstrate inclusion of SABV in the literature review, study sample (cells, cell lines, animals, humans), data collection strategy, data analysis, and reporting plan.

Reviewers will assign component scores for each criteria listed reflecting the relative scientific merit of the proposal sections. RGPO generally adheres to NIH scoring methods. Each criterion will receive a score of between 1 and 9 corresponding to the table in the LOI section above. Final scores will be ranked, and the most meritorious by score will be advanced for review and approval by CHRP's Advisory Council for funding consideration. CHRP is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion as a means of increasing the effectiveness of its grantmaking and generating new knowledge that benefits all Californians. Final funding decisions may take into account these and other programmatic priorities.

13. Supplemental Funds Available by Application After Year One

After completion of the first year, all continuing projects under this RFP may be invited to apply for an additional $10,000 in supplemental funds to partially support the scientific contributions of students or trainees (high school, undergraduate, graduate/clinical, post-doctoral) from sociodemographic groups that are underrepresented among health researchers, or with lived experience in a community with elevated HIV incidence in California, to the funded project. More details will be provided to PIs with applications that are selected for funding.

14. 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 the electronic submission of an LOI or application, including using SmartSimple, please contact the Research Grants Program Office, Contracts and Grants Unit at *RGPOGrants@ucop.edu*, or 510-987-9386.

APPENDIX: Standard Policies and Procedures for all CHRP RFPs

A. RGPO Award Pre-Funding Requirements Policy

Following notification by RGPO of an offer of funding, the PI and applicant organization must accept and satisfy standard RGPO pre-funding requirements in a timely manner. Common pre-funding requirements include:

- Supplying approved indirect (F&A) rate agreements as of the grant's start date and any derived budget calculations.
- Supplying any missing application forms or materials, including detailed budgets and justifications for any subcontract(s).
- IRB or IACUC applications or approvals pertaining to the award.
- Resolution of any scientific overlap issues with other grants or pending applications.
- Resolution of any Review Committee and Program recommendations, including specific aims, award budget, or duration.
- Modify the title and lay abstract, if requested.

B. Stipulations

Funding: Awards are contingent upon availability of funding, as well as compliance with all research and reporting requirements. Grantees will be subject to funding renewal on an annual basis. The number of awards made will depend on the number and quality of applications received.

Condition of award for UC faculty on payroll at a non-UC entity: In accord with University of California policy, investigators who are University employees and who receive any part of their salary through the University must submit grant proposals through their campus contracts and grant office ("Policy on the Requirement to Submit Proposals and to Receive Awards from Grants and Contracts through the University", Office of the President, December 15, 1994). Exceptions must be approved by the UC campus where the investigator is employed.

Human or animal subjects: Approvals or exemptions for the use of human or animal subjects are not required before the time of LOI or full application submission or review but will be required before any funded work with such subjects commences. Principal Investigators are encouraged to apply to the appropriate board or committee as soon as possible after submitting a proposal to expedite the start of the project. If all reasonable efforts are not made to obtain appropriate approvals in a timely fashion, funds may be reallocated to other projects. If a project proposes activities that pose unacceptable potential for human subject risks, then a recommendation either not to fund or to delay funding until the issue is resolved may result. IRB approval, human subject "exemption" approval, or animal assurance documentation must be provided prior to funding, but is not needed for application review. Applicants are encouraged to apply to the appropriate board or committee as soon as possible to expedite the start of the project, and you must do so before or within 21 days of notification that an award has been offered. 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.

Application and award confidentiality: CHRP maintains confidentiality for all submitted applications with respect to the identity of applicants and applicant organizations, all contents of every application, and the outcome of reviews. For those applications that are funded, CHRP makes public: (i) the project

title, Principal Investigator(s), the name of the organization, and award amount; (ii) direct and indirect costs in CHRP's annual report, (iii) the project abstract on the CHRP website. If the Program receives a request for additional information on a funded grant, the Principal Investigator and institution will be notified prior to the Program's response to the request. Any sensitive or proprietary intellectual property in a grant will be redacted and approved by the PI(s) and institution prior to release of the requested information. No information will be released without prior approval from the PI for any application that is not funded.

Award decisions: Applicants will be notified of their funding status in December. The written critique from the review committee, the merit score average, component scores, percentile ranking, and programmatic evaluation may be provided later. Some applications may be placed on a "waiting list" for possible later funding.

Publications acknowledgement: 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 the program (CHRP) and the assigned grant ID number. RGPO is committed to disseminating research as widely as possible to promote the public benefit.

Open access policy: As a recipient of a grant award, you will be 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). This policy, which went into effect on April 22, 2014, is available here. To assist RGPO in dissemination and archiving these materials, the grantee institution and all researchers on the grant will deposit an electronic copy of all publications in the *UC Publication Management System*, 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. This policy does not transfer copyright ownership, which remains with the author(s) or copyright owners.

Appeals of review decisions: Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the CHRP Director and are subject to oversight from the CHRP Advisory Council and the Research Grants Program Office. Declined proposals may be submitted to future competitions without prejudice. An appeal regarding the funding decision of a grant application may be made only on the basis of an alleged error in, or deviation from, a stated procedure (e.g., undeclared reviewer conflict of interest or mishandling of an application). **The period open for the appeal process is within 30 days of receipt of the application evaluation from the Program office**. Before submitting appeals, applicants are encouraged to talk about their concerns informally with the appropriate Program Officer or the Program Director. Final decisions on application funding appeals will be made by the Vice President of Research and Graduate Studies, University of California, Office of the President. The full appeals policy is in the *Grants Administration Manual*.

Grant management procedures and policies: All grant recipients must abide by other pre- and post-award requirements pertaining to Cost Share, Indirect Cost Rates, Monitoring & Payment of Subcontracts, Conflict of Interest, Disclosure of Violations, Return of Interest, Equipment and Residual Supplies, Records Retention, Open Access, and Reporting. 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 website: https://www.ucop.edu/research-grants-program/grant-administration/index.html.