

2024 Mentored Pilot Grant Program

The Center for HIV, Identification, Prevention and Treatment Services (CHIPTS) is proud to announce our 2024 mentored pilot grant program for emerging and new investigators (ranging from Doctoral Students to Assistant Professors). Through this grant program, applicants will obtain individualized, mentored research from engaged and committed faculty mentor/sponsors while conducting a well-defined research project. The successful completion of the proposed mentored research project is expected to enhance emerging and new investigators' potential to develop into productive, independent research scientists. We are committed to increasing the diversity of the health-related research workforce, and strongly encourage proposals led by individuals with backgrounds that are underrepresented in the biomedical, behavioral, or clinical research workforce, including underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, gender, and sexual minorities and those with disabilities.

Proposals must contribute towards CHIPTS scientific theme of addressing the intersection of HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention and mental health and/or substance use co-morbidities. We encourage submissions that specifically address social and structural determinants of health (e.g., housing insecurity, stigma, and racism), resiliency, and protective factors, and the intersection of HIV/AIDS with sexually transmitted infections, substance use and mental health disorder syndemics. HIV-related health outcomes (e.g., HIV testing; PrEP uptake, adherence, continuation; HIV care continuum) should be examined. Applications that explore the impact of disruptors (such as COVID-19, MPOX) on HIV prevention, substance use, and/or mental health services (e.g., expansion of telehealth, self-testing, etc.) for communities impacted by HIV are also encouraged.

Proposals may budget up to \$45,000 in direct costs with total costs not exceeding \$56,700. Doctoral students are limited to a budget of up to \$15,000 in direct costs with total costs not exceeding \$18,900. UCLA's indirect cost rate must be factored along with the applicant's institutional indirect cost rate. Projects must be able to be completed within 12 months, and all funds must be spent by December 31, 2024. It is anticipated that at least two awards will be made. Proposed projects may build on existing projects or secondary data analysis and be able to obtain IRB approval/exemption shortly after selection of funding. Investigators from any Southern California university, college, healthcare organization, or community-based organization (CBO) may apply but must work with a UCLA CHIPTS faculty mentor/sponsor on the proposal draft application prior to submission (see below).

Three-page applications are due Friday, June 30, 2023, by 5pm Pacific Time by email to Damilola Jolayemi (OJolayemi@mednet.ucla.edu). Applicants must meet with their CHIPTS faculty mentor/sponsor to review drafts of their application and incorporate feedback prior to final submission of their application. Applicants are highly encouraged to submit their intention to apply by Monday, May 22, 2023, using our [online form](https://forms.gle/RMusHAN4TV9nKC8e9) (https://forms.gle/RMusHAN4TV9nKC8e9). This information will assist CHIPTS in planning the review process. The information submitted is non-binding and applicants can revise their proposal/project titles up until the full applications are due. Review of full applications and notice of funding decisions will be made by Friday, September 8, 2023.

Questions about the pilot call or assistance in identifying a CHIPTS faculty mentor can be directed to both Norweeta Milburn, PhD, Director of CHIPTS Development Core at nmilburn@mednet.ucla.edu and Dallas Swendeman, PhD, MPH, Co-Director of CHIPTS Development Core at dswendeman@mednet.ucla.edu. Information on CHIPTS faculty mentors can be found on our website: <http://chipts.ucla.edu/people/>

Application details are outlined below.

1. Applicant Eligibility

- Assistant Professors
- Assistant to Associate Research Scientists (or equivalent level within their organization), with a statement of intent for an independent research career

- Post-Doctoral Fellows
- Doctoral Students (budget limited to \$15,000)
- Applicants may be from any Southern California university, college, healthcare organization, or CBO.

2. CHIPTS Faculty Mentors/UCLA Sponsors

- Applicants must note in their proposals a senior mentor (i.e., Associate Professor level or higher) with whom they have an established relationship at their institution or at UCLA.
- Doctoral students and post-doctoral fellows may propose a mentor at the Assistant Professor level, but CHIPTS may also match an additional mentor for the team.
- If the proposed mentor is not from UCLA, then CHIPTS will match the applicant with a UCLA CHIPTS faculty mentor for additional mentoring and for IRB requirements (see below).
- Applicants needing assistance with linkage to a CHIPTS faculty mentor may contact Dr. Swendeman at dswendeman@mednet.ucla.edu by May 22, 2023.

3. UCLA Institutional Review Board (IRB) Requirement

- In accordance with [NIH Single IRB policy](#), a single IRB of record will be used for applications that involves non-exempt human subject research protocols at more than one site. Applicants from an institution or organization other than UCLA will be matched with a UCLA CHIPTS faculty sponsor to meet this IRB requirement.
- **IRB protocols must be submitted and approved after notice of selection for funding.** Once IRB approvals are received, application packets will be submitted by CHIPTS to NIMH for final review and approval of funding. NIMH may take up to two-months to give final approval for the applications and release of funds.

4. Research Priority – Intersection of HIV/AIDS with Mental Health and or Substance Use

- The proposed research must focus on CHIPTS' core theme of addressing the intersection of HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention and mental health and/or substance use co-morbidities. This vision recognizes that getting to 90-90-90 and ending the HIV/AIDS pandemic will require supporting the most vulnerable and marginalized communities living with and at-risk for HIV to progress through the HIV Care or Prevention Continua. This call is intentionally broad to encourage a wide range of innovative proposals with high potential to impact either HIV incidence or rates of HIV virologic suppression.

5. Intention to Apply – Due Monday, May 22, 2023, by 5:00 PM Pacific Time

- Applicants are encouraged to submit their intention to apply using our [online form](https://forms.gle/RMusHAN4TV9nKC8e9) (https://forms.gle/RMusHAN4TV9nKC8e9) by May 22, 2023, at 5:00 PM Pacific Time. This is NOT a requirement for this funding opportunity but highly recommended. The information will be used to assist CHIPTS in planning the review process. The information submitted is non-binding and applicants are able to revise their proposal/project titles up until the full applications are due.
- The online form will request the following information:
 - Your name, degrees, and full contact information (position, institution affiliation, email, phone, mailing address)
 - Title/descriptive title of the proposed project
 - Brief statement about the project or specific aims
 - Mentor's name (as available)
 - Total amount of funding requested

6. Proposal Mentoring

- The applicant and CHIPTS Faculty mentor must meet at least once prior to proposal submission to discuss a draft of the research proposal and to provide feedback on design, aims, budget, and timelines. In addition, feedback should be provided on how the aims, design and implementation of the proposed research will be informed by the degree to which the applicant has experience collaborating with and/or identifies with the population or

community that they will be investigating. Applicants who have not had prior collaborations with or do not identify with the population or community that will be involved in their proposed research are expected, with their mentors, to demonstrate how the new collaboration and experience will be developed and supported as part of the proposed research. These issues should be explicitly addressed in the applicant's biosketch statement and research plan. Applicants who propose conducting research in community-based settings are also encouraged to add a community mentor from the community-based setting to provide feedback on the aims and design (e.g., feasibility, relevance, and appropriateness for setting and community, etc.).

7. Application – Due Friday, June 30, 2023, by 5:00pm Pacific Time

The application must include:

- **Three-page proposal narrative**, which should include:
 - Specific aims (< 0.5 page)
 - Research plan, which includes Significance (< 0.5 page), Innovation (< 0.5 page), Approach (~1 page).
 - Training and mentoring statement (< 0.5 page) highlighting the training opportunities provided to the applicant by the proposed research, including the mentor(s) and their role(s).
 - Proposed publications and NIH grant applications expected to result from the research (< 0.5 page)
 - References may be included on additional page(s) and do not count towards the 3-page limit.
 - Format should be single spaced, 0.5-inch margins, 11-point font.
- **Budget:** Applicants must use the [PHS 398 Form Page 4 \(Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period\)](#) to submit their budget. Download the form from the linked NIH site.
- **Budget justification:** Applicants must submit a brief budget justification (<1 page) describing their expenses and include a timeline of activities. Please make special note of the following:
 - Research personnel costs, supplies and small equipment costs are allowable in pilot grants to the extent that they can be justified as being directly related to the proposed research project.
 - Travel may be included only if deemed necessary to conduct the study.
 - CHIPTS may not award the full budget requested based on expert review and balancing funds for meritorious proposals.
 - Funding is subject to final award approval from the National Institute of Mental Health. **No funds will be transferred until all NIH regulatory documents and approval have been received (including IRB approval).**
 - **If selected for funding, all award funds must be spent by December 31, 2024.**
 - **Anticipated date of funding release is January 1, 2024 (at earliest contingent on IRB and NIMH approval).**
 - Any overdrafts are the sole responsibility of the individual pilot grant awardee. Consistent with NIH policy, any change in key personnel effort or budget category (such as personnel, supplies, equipment) of 25% or more requires prior written approval by the Development Core Director.
- **Checklist form:** Applicant must use the [PHS 398 Checklist Form](#). Download from the linked NIH site.
- Only the biosketch of the lead investigator is required and must be in the new NIH format (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>). Biosketches of mentors or other faculty participants are not required.
- No additional appendices or materials will be reviewed as part of the application.

Applications that do not follow the above guidelines, including those that exceed the page limit, may be returned without review.

8. Review of Applications and Notice of Funding Decisions by September 8, 2023

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee of reviewers. At least three reviewers will be assigned to review each application using NIH review criteria and scoring guidelines. Reviewers with conflicts of interest, serving as a mentor or collaborator with the applicant, will not be assigned to review the application. A peer review meeting will be held to discuss scores, resolve discrepancies in scoring and comments, and finalize scoring and award decisions.

Review criteria are based on:

- Responsiveness to CHIPTS' broad theme of addressing the intersection of HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention with mental health and or substance use;
- Significance and potential impact on advancing behavioral and combination bio-behavioral science with a long-term goal of reducing HIV incidence;
- Potential for the applicant's career development for publications and subsequent NIH grant applications for HIV research;
- NIH review guidelines for Significance, Innovation, Approach, and Environment (but note that environment for this call refers to the research setting/partner, not the applicant's institutional home); https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/review/rev_prep/scoring.htm
- Demonstration of collaboration and mentoring plan between mentor(s) and mentee.
- Demonstration of successful partnerships with community-based organizations for research that will be conducted in community-based settings as evidenced by publications, presentations, and professional activities in the biosketch, or potential to establish successful partnerships through the proposed pilot research.

9. Requirements of Funded Applicants

1. Funded applicants must submit for IRB approval submission within one month after date of award decision. IRB approval must be obtained within three months. IRB approval is a requirement needed for NIMH review and approval before the research may occur.
2. Funded investigators from institutions other than UCLA will be required to complete additional funding administrative paperwork.
3. Funded investigators must submit copies of human subject protection training certificates if their study involves human subjects as well as submit the PHS 398 targeted/planned enrollment table.
4. Funded investigators must present their proposed work, progress, and final outcomes at the annual CHIPTS Next Generation Conference and at one CHIPTS Community Advisory Board meeting annually.
5. Progress reports will be due on April 1, 2024, and September 30, 2024.
6. A final report will be due on May 5, 2025, which includes **a brief scientific summary (including a completed cumulative enrollment form), a final financial report, abstract of work completed, publications submitted and planned, and grant applications submitted and planned relevant to the seed grant.**
7. Annual updates on outcomes from the pilot grant (e.g., presentations, publications, grant applications submitted and funded; and study enrollment updates, as applicable) will be requested annually with a response required by September 30th of each year.
8. All publications or presentations resulting from this award (in whole or part) should acknowledge CHIPTS as the funding source and cite the - **NIMH Grant # P30MH58107.**
9. **Funded investigators must respond to annual requests for updates on publications and grant applications, for the duration of funding of CHIPTS.** This is critical to CHIPTS accountabilities to NIH. CHIPTS recognizes that pilot grants often continue to produce publications, grant proposals, and other activities with project partners for many years after data collection is completed.
10. **Funded investigators must provide regular updates on study progress (e.g., status of IRB submission, enrollment, data analysis, study challenges, etc.) to CHIPTS Development Core.** This is to provide opportunities for CHIPTS to offer any assistance and technical support to the funded investigators, if needed.
11. Funded investigators will be requested to serve as reviewers for future pilot program applications.

QUESTIONS REGARDING FUNDING OPPORTUNITY:

Norweeta Milburn, PhD,
Director of Development Core

Center for HIV Identification, Prevention, and Treatment Services (CHIPTS)

E-mail: nmilburn@mednet.ucla.edu

Dallas Swendeman, PhD, MPH

Co-Director of Development Core

Center for HIV Identification, Prevention, and Treatment Services (CHIPTS)

E-mail: dswendeman@mednet.ucla.edu

SUBMIT FINAL APPLICATION TO:

Damilola Jolayemi

Administrative Analyst

Center for HIV Identification, Prevention, and Treatment Services (CHIPTS)

E-mail: OJolayemi@mednet.ucla.edu