



Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS

Yale University School of Public Health

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA): **PILOT PROJECTS IN HIV/AIDS PREVENTION RESEARCH**

The Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS (CIRA) seeks proposals for innovative pilot projects in HIV/AIDS prevention research. Proposed projects should contribute to the development of one of two CIRA research priority areas:

1) CIRA plans to conduct a multilevel HIV intervention research project focusing on Connecticut's three urban centers: Hartford, New Haven, and Bridgeport. Multilevel research entails interdisciplinary, multifaceted and linked investigations of individuals, households, neighborhoods, community social networks, society, institutions, or health and other systems. The ultimate goal is to have a significant impact on the epidemic by reducing new HIV infections and improving the care and outcomes of those infected. We welcome proposals that would contribute to the development of this multilevel project, including, but not limited to, the following topics: opt-out testing in hospitals, community health centers, correctional settings, or alternative community sites; novel approaches to identifying undiagnosed HIV infections; linkage of newly-diagnosed cases to care; prevention among positives; social network approaches to prevention; acute HIV infection; and methods to measure outcomes and demonstrate impact of a multilevel intervention project. Proposals within these topic areas might entail research interventions that are focused on entire communities, clinic based, targeted to individuals or groups, or designed to change policies, protocols, regulations or laws to foster HIV prevention outcomes.

2) CIRA continues to expand its international research portfolio, with affiliated scientists engaged in a variety of HIV prevention research projects in multiple countries. Among our many international projects, we are currently placing particular emphasis on strengthening and diversifying HIV research in Pretoria, South Africa and St. Petersburg, Russia. We welcome proposals that contribute to building research collaborations to address the HIV epidemic in these settings. These proposals should have a U.S. and a South African or Russian co-Principal Investigator. CIRA can facilitate linking of co-Principal Investigators. See the CIRA website (<http://cira.med.yale.edu/>) to learn about our current work in Pretoria and St. Petersburg.

We expect that each pilot project will provide preliminary results for an investigator-initiated grant application to an external funding agency. Only proposals that are likely to develop into larger, externally-funded studies will be awarded pilot funds.

We will consider applications to support the collection of new data, as well as applications to analyze data from lapsed R01, R03, R21, or other externally-funded projects, with the aim of generating results that could advance the research priorities listed above.

We do not fund research on the basic biology of HIV or research to develop new HIV treatments. We will consider a proposal to supplement a study that is already funded by another source only if the proposed project is an add-on sub-project to the funded project and is distinct and self-contained.

CIRA plans to fund up to two projects under this RFA with a maximum award for individual projects of \$25,000. Funding will be provided for one year, with the possibility of a no-cost extension.

APPLICATION PROCESS: Applicants should first submit a one page concept paper. Applicants who have submitted promising concept papers that are consistent with CIRA priorities will be invited to submit full applications.

CIRA MENTORSHIP: Applicants invited to write full applications will participate in a mentoring program to help them write proposals. This will continue for eventual awardees to help start up and conduct their study, analyze results, write manuscripts, consider external funding options, apply for external funding, resubmit external funding applications if necessary, and ultimately secure funds. We will support applicants/awardees in the following ways:

- Applicants who have been invited to submit full applications will be linked with an appropriate CIRA Core and will receive a Core consultation to help them develop their concept paper into a full application;
- Pilot Project awardees will continue to be mentored by a Core, with each awardee assigned a Core Sponsor who will serve as a liaison between the applicant, the mentoring Core, and the Development Core.
- Once or twice per year each awardee will receive a consultation from the mentoring Core at which he or she will present a progress report and will receive feedback. These consultations will continue through the entire process from study startup to securing external funds.
- Awardees will be expected to participate in the appropriate CIRA working group: the Connecticut multi level HIV intervention working group, or Pretoria or St. Petersburg research development group for international projects.

CONCEPT PAPERS: The one page concept paper should describe the specific aims of the project and the methods that will be used to achieve them. It should also briefly explain why the project is innovative and significant, how it fits with CIRA's domestic or international priorities, and how it will lead to an investigator-initiated grant application to an external funding agency. Citations are not required. In addition to the one-page concept paper, please include a separate cover page with the project title; Principal Investigator (PI) name (and foreign collaborating investigator name and affiliation in the case of international projects), phone number, e-mail address, mailing address, department affiliation, and position; and names of all other key personnel on the project. **We encourage you to contact Jon Atherton (jon.atherton@yale.edu or 203-764 4338) for a pre-submission consultation about your concept paper.** The concept paper should be sent as a single PDF attachment via email to Jon Atherton by Thursday, **November 12, 2009**. Applicants will be notified by **Monday, November 23, 2009** whether or not they have been selected to submit a full application.

FULL APPLICATIONS: Full applications should include the following:

1. A cover letter, including project title; PI name (and foreign collaborating investigator for international projects), phone number, e-mail address, mailing address, department affiliation, and position; total cost of the project; and names of all other key personnel on the project. The letter must also describe the training undertaken in human subjects' protection by all critical personnel involved in the project.
2. Abstract (**maximum 300 words**).
3. Detailed budget (**not to exceed \$25,000 and one year**) and budget justification. Funds can be used to support research-related personnel, PI effort, routine research-related expenses,

research-related travel, and essential supplies. These funds may **NOT** be used to support: travel to conferences, routine office equipment such as computers, or indirect costs.

4. Project description (**maximum 7 pages**, not including reference list), consisting of five sections: a) specific aims (1 page); b) background and significance (2 pages); c) research design and methods (3 pages); d) a detailed work plan, including a project timeline (1/2 page); and e) a plan for using the research results to develop an extramural grant application (1/2 page). Numbers in parentheses represent the recommended page distribution.

5. A detailed description of plans for the inclusion and/or exclusion of minority groups or subgroups, children and women. In addition, where human subjects are indicated, successful applicants must receive protocol approval from the Yale School of Medicine HIC or the Yale Faculty of Arts and Sciences HSC before commencement of the project (a copy of the approval letter must be sent to CIRA before funding can be awarded). To further ensure high ethical standards, those invited to submit full applications are encouraged to consult CIRA's Law, Policy and Ethics Core before they submit their application. CIRA will provide further details about the requirements described in this section to applicants invited to submit a full application.

6. An appendix is neither required nor encouraged, and should not be used to circumvent the 7-page project description limit. The only items permitted in an appendix are questionnaires, other data collection instruments, and clinical protocols.

7. Please use Arial font size 11, with one-inch margins on all sides. Applications using smaller fonts will not be reviewed.

Priority for funding will be based on:

- the relevance of the project to CIRA's research priority areas
- the likelihood of the project developing into a larger, externally-funded study
- the timeliness and innovativeness of the project
- the scientific merit of the research plan
- the extent to which the project relates to communities of color
- the qualifications of the PI to conduct the research
- the extent to which the research is interdisciplinary
- an international project's feasibility in the host country setting (see Guidelines for International Pilot Project Proposals on CIRA website: <http://cira.med.yale.edu/opportunities/intlrfaguide.html>)

ELIGIBILITY: The program is open to all full-time faculty and postdoctoral fellows and associates at Yale, and their equivalents at The Institute for Community Research and the Center for Health, Intervention and Prevention. All investigators are eligible to apply, irrespective of their seniority or previous HIV research experience. In particular, we wish to encourage proposals from junior investigators, underrepresented race and ethnic minorities, and women. Investigators from medical centers at other universities or colleges, and community-based organizations in Connecticut are eligible to apply in collaboration with a PI based at Yale, The Institute for Community Research, or the Center for Health, Intervention and Prevention. It is our expectation that awardees will hold an appointment at one of these institutions for at least one year past the award date.

SUBMISSION OF FULL APPLICATIONS: Applications must be received via email to Jon Atherton (jon.atherton@yale.edu) **by 5:00 pm on Monday, January 18, 2010. Please contact Jon Atherton with any questions (as above or on 764-4338).**