

**The City College of New York RCMI Center for  
Basic and Behavioral Health Disparities Research**

**CALL FOR RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSALS**

***(Proposals will be folded into the RCMI U54 Competing Renewal Application)***

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: May 15, 2019**

**Letter of intent due March 29<sup>th</sup>**

**Funding for Project is expected to begin: July 1, 2020** *(predicated on the successful renewal of the parent U54. The parent U54 grant will be submitted to NIMHD in Dec 2019 in response to NIH/NIMHD RFA-18-012).*

**This is a call soliciting R21 type and RO1 type research project proposals. Each proposal must have a PI from CCNY in either the basic or behavioral research areas or co-PIs on collaborative research projects spanning both areas.**

The City College of New York (CCNY) Center for Basic and Behavioral Health Disparities Research invites you to submit applications for funding consideration. Selected proposals will be included in the next competitive renewal application of the parent U54 grant which will be submitted in December 2019. **Earliest start date for selected projects is July 1, 2020 and is predicated on the successful renewal of the parent U54.**

We are currently seeking translational research projects. For the purpose of this RFA, we are following the Institute of Translational Health Sciences' conceptualization of translational research, which posits 5 stages (T0-T4) along the translational continuum (for more information please visit:

<https://www.iths.org/about/translational>). Your application is limited to **12 pages** total and must include:

- ☐ A descriptive title of proposed research,
- ☐ Specific aims (1page)
- ☐ A description of the research design and methods for achieving the stated goals (11 pages)
- ☐ Name of the Principal Investigator(s)
  - **Projects** may request up to \$225,000/year in direct costs for up to 5 years for RO1 type proposals or \$125,000/year in direct costs for 2-3 years for R21 proposals. A total of \$675,000/year for a total of 5 years will be allotted for research projects from the budget of the parent U54 RCMI Center budget.

**The letter of intent is due by March 29<sup>th</sup> and should include the project title,**

**PIs' names, and the specific aims of the project. Please email letter of intent to:** CCNY RCMI Program Administrator, Leo Spsychala [lspsychala@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:lspsychala@ccny.cuny.edu) and CC mpezzano@ccny.cuny.edu

## **ELIGIBILITY**

- ☐ Investigators at any career stage are welcome to apply
- ☐ Projects could be in translational basic science or behavioral science, however, behavioral projects must address health disparities as defined by NIH/NIMHD.

### **Overview of NIMHD Priorities**

#### **NIMHD Interest in Diversity**

The NIMHD supports research, training, health information dissemination, and other programs with respect to minority health and health disparities. This funding opportunity seeks to facilitate the development of research capacity in diverse institutions and research education of students/faculty to pursue basic biomedical, behavioral, and/or clinical research, particularly on diseases that disproportionately impact racial/ethnic minorities and other health disparity populations.

Many populations in America, whether defined by race, ethnicity, immigrant status, disability, sex, gender, or geography, experience higher rates of certain diseases and more deaths and suffering from them compared with the general population. While the diversity of the American population is one of the Nation's greatest assets, one of its greatest challenges is reducing the profound disparity in health status of its racial and ethnic minority, rural, low-income, and other underserved populations.

The examination of biological factors is fundamental in understanding the development and progression of diseases and has traditionally been the focus of research on minority health and health disparities. The NIMHD has been a leader in increasing the scientific community's focus on non-biological factors such as socioeconomic, politics, discrimination, culture, and environment in relation to health disparities. NIMHD invests in research and fosters collaborations and partnerships to promote and support evidence-based science to inform practice and policy. Its programs and initiatives provide a leading edge in enhancing the scientific knowledge base and designing interventions to improve health outcomes to reduce and ultimately lead to the elimination of health disparities. Through the NIMHD's leadership, over the past decade, health disparities has become a recognized scientific field of study, which has evolved from documenting and investigating differences in health status and risk factors among affected populations, to addressing health disparities using traditional and non-traditional research approaches.

#### **Health Disparity Populations**

NIH-designated U.S. health disparity populations include Blacks/African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, American Indians/Alaska Natives, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, socioeconomically disadvantaged populations, underserved rural populations, and sexual and gender minorities.

The CCNY- RCMI Center for Basic and Behavioral Health Disparities Research is funded under the NIH/NIMHD RCMI U54 mechanism, which is designed to foster and support translational basic science research projects, as well as behavioral research projects addressing health disparities impacting the diverse communities we serve.

**Individuals from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups are encouraged to apply.**

We are requesting applications for scientifically sound translational Full RO1 and R21 type projects focused diseases that disproportionately impact underrepresented minority populations or behavioral research projects that address health disparities.

Proposals from any area of translational research will be considered. However, **priority areas** include: 1) translational research impacting minority health and or health disparities; 2) research projects that engage minority populations in research and in the translation of research advances into culturally competent, measurable and sustained improvements in health outcomes; 3) differences in tumor biology related to genetic variation across racial and ethnic groups and; 4) risk factors for diseases that disproportionately impact underrepresented minority populations, e.g., obesity, tobacco etc.

Note that Full Research Projects are expected to be well developed and supported by preliminary data and structured along the lines of an R01 for 5-year proposals or an R21 for 2-3 year proposals. All proposals will be evaluated by three outside reviewers with appropriate expertise in the proposed area of research.

Final proposal review and ranking will then be processed/reviewed by the Center's scientific advisory committees: The Internal Advisory Committee and the External Advisory Committee. The review process is expected to be completed by October 2019 and the reviews will be shared with the investigators. Submissions with scores in the fundable range will be given an opportunity to revise and resubmit.

Please note, the CCNY RCMI Center will be submitting a competitive renewal application for the RCMI U54 in Dec. 2019. Selected projects will be folded into the renewal application and will undergo another round of peer-review. The earliest start date for selected projects will be July 1, 2020 and is contingent upon the successful renewal of the parent U54.

**Evaluation Criteria**

**Traditional NIH criteria: Significance, Approach, Innovation, Feasibility of Methods, Investigative Team, Environment, Ethical Considerations, Rigor and Transparency, as well as Goodness of Fit with the goals of the CCNY-RCMI Center for Basic and Behavioral Health Disparities Research.**

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- ☐ Applications must further the Center objectives (i.e. Increased collaborative basic biomedical and/or behavioral research to improve minority health and/or reduce and eliminate health disparities; Engagement of a diverse group of scientists in biomedical research which includes but is not limited to participation of individuals from underrepresented backgrounds (i.e. racial and ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, or persons from disadvantaged backgrounds), women, early-stage and experienced investigators with a track record of funding, and investigators from various disciplines/departments and specialties.
- ☐ Collaborative applications must describe a true, working collaboration involving at

least one principal investigator from CCNY. Applications must provide a plan describing how they will carry out joint activities.

☐ **Additional Review criteria:**

☐ R21 Type Projects:

- Are the qualifications of the PI/PIs and quality of the institutional environment adequate?
- What are the merit and importance of the proposed project?
- What is the potential of the R21 Type Project to lead to a full project or an NIH or other funding agency competing application in 3 years or less?

☐ RO1 Type Research Projects:

- What is the relationship of the project to the objectives of the RCMI research center?
- What is the potential for a Center research project to evolve into an independently competitive and fundable project?

Please use the PHS 398 forms and instructions, which can be found at the following link: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html> (use only **MS Word** forms).

Please note that some of the guidelines are modified, but generally the application follows the standard PHS 398 application. Organize the Research Strategy section in the following subsections: Significance, Innovation, Preliminary Studies and Approach. The proposal format for projects should follow NIH application instructions (see details below).

Forward all questions to CCNY RCMI Program Administrator, Leo Spsychala  
[lspsychala@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:lspsychala@ccny.cuny.edu) or (P) 212.650.8494.

Your submission should be collated as follows:

- A) Using a PHS 398 continuation page form, create a separate *Title Page*. Indicate project title, PIs' name, any co-investigators, consultants, the department and institution.
- B) Using PHS 398 form page 2 to include the following information:  
Project Summary, Relevance, Project/Performance Sites, Senior/Key Personnel, Other Significant Contributors
- C) Research Grant Table of Contents
- D) Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period

- E) Budget for Entire Proposed Period of Support
- F) Biographical Sketch for all key personnel
- G) Specific Aims
- H) Research Strategy (this section is limited to 6 pages for Pilot project and 12 pages for Full Projects)
- I) Bibliography and References Cited/Progress Report Publication List
- J) Protection of Human Subjects
- K) Inclusion of Women and Minorities
- L) Planned Enrollment Report
- M) Inclusion of Children
- N) Vertebrate Animals
- O) Select Agent Research
- P) Multiple Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) Leadership Plan (MPI)
  - 1. Specify how this collaborative project will contribute to joint external funding and/or other collaborative projects.
  - 2. Explain how the collaboration will work: Which parts of the project will be carried out at CCNY or the partner institution and how will you coordinate your team?
  - 3. Describe how your project will incorporate CCNY students as trainees
- Q) Consortium/Contractual Arrangements (for any non-CCNY or non-MSK institutions)
- R) Letters of Support (e.g., Consultants)
- S) Appendix (follow newer guidelines: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-16-129.html>)
- T) **Career Development** section, if applicable: If one or both of the PIs is an ESI/NI, per the NIH definition, that individual(s) will also need to supply a Career Development plan under an additional section called **The Candidate**, and structured as follows:

**Career Development and Mentorship Plan (2-3 pages within “The Candidate” section of each plan plus other required administrative items).**

Include a Career Development and Mentorship Plan for each faculty investigator on the project who is considered an Early Stage Investigator per the NIH definition ([https://grants.nih.gov/policy/new\\_investigators/index.htm#definition](https://grants.nih.gov/policy/new_investigators/index.htm#definition))

**The plan description must follow the format similar to applications for Career Development Awards (e.g. K Awards), by providing the following information:**

**The Candidate (2-3 pages for items A-D):**

- A. Candidate's Background
- B. Career Goals and Objectives: Scientific Biography
- C. Career Development/Training Activities during Award Period
- D. Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research

**Formal/administrative Items Required for Each Career Development Plan (no page limitation):**

- ☐ Statements by Sponsor, Co-Sponsor(s), Consultant(s), Contributor(s); and Environment and Institutional Commitment to Candidate

**Please Note: Deadline for submission is Oct 5, 2019.** Please email your application and any questions to the CCNY RCMI Program Manager, Leo Spychala [lspsychala@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:lspsychala@ccny.cuny.edu) or (P) 212.650.8494. Please reach out to the Program Manager or any of the U54 PIs (Drs. Pezzano and Hubbard) with questions about whether potential projects fit the overall center activities.

## **FORMAT SPECIFICATIONS**

Follow font and format specifications. Otherwise, application processing may be delayed or the application may not be reviewed.

### **Font**

- ☐ Use an *Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, or Georgia* typeface, a black font color, and a font size of 11 points or larger. A symbol font may be used to insert Greek letters or special characters; the font size requirement still applies.
- ☐ Type density, including characters and spaces, must be no more than 15 characters per inch.
- ☐ Type may be no more than six lines per inch.
- ☐ Use black ink that can be clearly copied.
- ☐ Print must be clear and legible. Paper Size and Page Margins
- ☐ Use standard paper size (8 ½" x 11")
- ☐ Use at least one-half inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) for all pages, including continuation pages. No information should appear in the margins,

including the PD/PI's name and page numbers.

### **Page Formatting**

- ☐ Because a number of reviewers will be reviewing applications as electronic documents and not paper versions, applicants are strongly encouraged to use only a standard, single-column format for the text. Avoid using a two-column format since it can cause difficulties when reviewing the document electronically.
- ☐ The application must be single-sided and single-spaced.
- ☐ Consecutively number pages throughout the application. Do not use suffixes (e.g., 5a, 5b).
- ☐ Do not include additional pages between the face page and page 2.
- ☐ Do not include unnumbered pages.

### **Figures, Graphs, Diagrams, Charts, Tables, Figure Legends, and Footnotes**

- ☐ You may use a smaller type size (not less than 9) but it must be in a black font color, readily legible, and follow the font typeface requirement. Color can be used in figures; however, all text must be in a black font color, clear and legible.

### **Grantsmanship**

- ☐ Use English and avoid jargon.
- ☐ If terms are not universally known, spell out the term the first time it is used and note the appropriate abbreviation in parentheses. The abbreviation may be used thereafter. [Note: Please try to avoid excessive use of non-universal abbreviations; their usage often makes the reviewers' job more difficult by requiring them to search the text for meaning].

### **Photographs and Images**

- ☐ Photographs or other materials should be digital and readable.