HEALTH
Research Institute

Helping Everyone Achieve a LifeTime of Health

HRI REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

HEALTH Research Institute

The HEALTH Research Institute was established at the University of Houston (UH) on September 1, 2016. The HEALTH Research Institute consists of Fellows, Mentees, and Affiliates representing six colleges (College of Education; College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences; Cullen College of Engineering; Graduate College of Social Work; Law Center; and the College of Medicine). The HEALTH Research Institute was created to address the health challenges faced by our communities by leveraging transdisciplinary team science to provide innovative, empirically-grounded, culturally-informed and community-embedded solutions. Ultimately, our goal is to become a model for advancing transdisciplinary health science through strong partnerships with communities, organizations, and other key stakeholders.

PILOT RESEARCH PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The purpose of the pilot research program is to strategically seed feasibility and proof of concept studies that will lead to the development of novel findings that address one or more health challenges faced by our local, state, or national communities.

This request for pilot project applications is intended to expand the HEALTH Research Institute in the area of basic biomedical science. Basic biomedical science provides a transformative platform to discover novel pathological and pathophysiological mechanisms that could be rapidly translated into population-specific targets of prevention and treatment. Examples of research studies within the scope of this funding opportunity include those focused on, but not restricted to:

- Understanding disease processes/mechanisms that can lead to the development of new diagnostic procedures, therapeutic interventions, and preventative strategies that can subsequently be tested for efficacy in clinical studies;
- The elucidation of molecular to physiological scale processes that alter normal biological and behavioral processes and contribute to early morbidity and mortality;
- Use and application of systems biology, synthetic biology, and bioengineering methods to understand abnormalities in cellular processes that contribute to increased disease risk, to elucidate signaling pathways that affect stem cell differentiation, and that ultimately lead to therapeutic improvements in diseases of public health consequence.
- Application of various imaging modalities, data science platforms, microfluidic and materials-based detection methodologies for the identification, quantification, and discovery of novel biomarkers for disease diagnosis and prognostic monitoring.

Examples of research studies that are not within the scope of this funding opportunity include, but are not restricted to, studies focused on:

- Psychosocial factors that affect infectious and chronic diseases;
- Social determinants of health;
- Dissemination and implementation of evidence-based interventions; or
- Research on symptom management and quality of life in patients.

Through this request for applications, we seek to strategically broaden our relationship with faculty in the Cullen College of Engineering, College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, College of Pharmacy, College of Optometry, and other basic biomedical science professions. Award recipients are expected to affiliate formally with the HEALTH Research Institute as a Fellow or Mentee. *Preference will be given to proposals that include faculty from more than one college, and applications must be responsive to this basic biomedical science funding priority*. Collaboration with a HEALTH Research Institute member is encouraged to foster transdisciplinary science.

It is expected that data from funded pilot projects will be used to support strong HEALTH Research Institute grant applications for extramural funding. Applicants will provide a plan and timeline for a submission within 6-months after the completion of the pilot study. These applications should represent a substantial return on investment (e.g., NIH R01 or equivalent), with planned submission through the HEALTH Research Institute. Applications supporting HEALTH Research Institute staff, when possible, are encouraged.

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION

The application to this program must be prepared following the requirements outlined below and submitted as a single PDF file via email to hri@uh.edu by the PI's affiliated pre-award research administrator in the College or the Division of Research. The signatures of all applicable department chairs and college deans must be provided.

FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

All documents should be prepared on the US Letter size paper (8.5" x 11") with 1-inch margins on all sides, Ariel or Georgia font size of at least 11 pt., and single-spaced. A font size of at least 8 pt. must be used for the captions to graphics and tables.

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Principal Investigators must be a tenured or tenure earning faculty member of the University of Houston. All submissions must be made by sending a single PDF file to the HEALTH Research Institute: hri@uh.edu.

Proposal Components:

- HEALTH Research Institute Cover Page
- Specific aims (1 pg max)
- Statement of relevance to the HEALTH Research Institute (250 words)
- Significance and innovation of the proposed research (1 pg. max)
- Research plan/approach (2 pg. max)
- References (no limit)
- Statement of relevance to specific external funding opportunities and timeline for application submission through the HEALTH Research Institute (500 words)
- Request for HEALTH Research Institute resources (250 words; see: https://hri.uh.edu/sites/default/files/2019-06/hri-resources-overview.pdf)
- Planned enrollment table (use NIH format; as applicable)
- Project budget (use UH budget template; http://www.uh.edu/research/resources/dor-forms/proposal-processing-forms/)
- Project budget justification
- NIH or NSF formatted biosketches of key personnel

Incomplete applications will not be accepted for review.

BUDGET GUIDELINES

The project period must not exceed one year and all expenditures must be made within the project period. The earliest project start date is 9/1/2019. The maximum allowable budget for all pilot projects is **$30,000.** Up to 5 meritorious proposals will be funded in this call for applications. Please note that pilot funding will not be released prior to a completed congruency review. Failure to receive the appropriate institutional approvals by 12/1/2019 will result in the forfeiture of this award.

Allowable Budget Costs:

- Computational services
- Consulting fees
- Data collection fees, instruments, surveys, and supplies
- Laboratory fees and supplies (disposables)
- Participant payments
- Animals and/or biological materials
- Essential travel required to execute the project (e.g., mileage, parking, metro)
- Research staff or students
- Software (with sufficient justification)
- Electronics (i.e. computers, laptops, tablets, etc.) *may be allowable* with prior approval from the Institute Director/s, but must be relinquished to the HEALTH Research Institute at the end of the funding period

Unallowable Budget Costs:

- Equipment
- Faculty salary support
- Food and beverages
- Indirect Cost (IDC) Recovery
- Maintenance fees
- Nonessential travel
- Office supplies
- Publication costs

PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA AND REVIEW PROCESS

The deadline for submitting the request for pilot proposals is July 1, 2019. All proposals must be submitted a single PDF file to the HEALTH Research Institute: hri@uh.edu. The NIH scoring criteria will be used to evaluate significance, innovation, approach, research team, and potential to secure future external funding. The review panel will consist of HEALTH Research Institute Fellows and Community Advisory Board members. Reviewers with any conflicts of interest will be handled using NIH study section practices. All completed applications will receive a summary statement and impact scores. Award notifications will be sent to the recipients by August 15, 2019.

The proposals should be clear, concise, and explicit about the benefits of the activities to be undertaken. Proposals should be written to be understandable to reviewers who are from a range of disciplinary fields.

Each proposal must supply convincing evidence that the following criteria have been met or will be met:

1. The proposed activities must be scientifically rigorous and have a clear benefit to the University and society.
2. A feasible project timeline that includes the submission of a grant application through the HEALTH Research Institute within 6-months after the completion of the pilot study.
3. The PI and investigative team must demonstrate a track record to support a competitive extramural grant application by virtue of an established publication record and prior funding in the areas being proposed.

CONGRUENCY REVIEW

Congruency review by the Research Integrity and Oversight office is required for all research submitted to this program. The review must be conducted within three months of the award announcement or the funds will be forfeited. Congruency review includes human subjects, animal usage, biological materials (rDNA, human samples, microorganisms, etc.), and radiation (radioactive materials, lasers, and x-rays). All projects involving human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the **Institutional Review Board (IRB)** before the grant cost center will be established. All projects involving the use of animals in research must be reviewed and approved by the **Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)** before the grant cost center will be established. All projects involving biological materials must be reviewed

and approved by the **Biological Safety Manager and the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)** before the grant cost center will be established. All projects involving radiation must be reviewed and approved by the **Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) & Laser Safety Officer (LSO)** and authorized by the **Radiation Safety Committee (RSC)** before the grant cost center will be established.

HEALTH Research Institute CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact Dixie Sasu at hri@uh.edu with any questions related to this RFA or directed to the Institute Directors (Drs. Ezemenari M. Obasi & Lorraine R. Reitzel).