Request For Application (RFA)
CHER CHICAGO PILOT PROJECT PROGRAM, 2020- 2021

OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE
The Center for Health Equity Research Chicago (CHER Chicago), based at the University of Illinois Cancer Center and the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health, and in collaboration with The University of Chicago Medicine, has the vision to pursue health equity through the elimination of structural violence.

Structural violence refers to the multiple ways in which social, economic, and political systems expose particular populations to risks and vulnerabilities leading to increased morbidity and mortality. Those systems include income inequality, racism, homophobia, and other means of social exclusion leading to vulnerabilities, such as poverty, stress, trauma, crime, incarceration, lack of access to care, healthy food, and physical activity. CHER Chicago aims to eliminate the effects of structural violence on health inequalities among racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities. For this cycle of RFA, we are particularly interested in receiving proposals concerning gun violence, interpersonal violence, and policing. We highly encourage collaboration with East Campus to propose health outcomes in this years application.

CHER Chicago strives to advance health equity research through the development and refinement of theoretical frameworks of structural violence and health equity; and by promoting multi-level, multi-disciplinary research on the social, economic, psychosocial, behavioral, and biophysical processes linking structural violence and health equity. CHER Chicago strengthens health equity scholars and research activities that expand our understanding of structural and systemic inequality and discrimination.

Previously not funded and new submissions are encouraged, contingent on eligibility. For this round, these types of projects are highly encouraged: Projects focused on aging populations i.e., those 50 years of age and above, and LGBTQIA+ populations. One to two funded projects will involve these populations. For the purposes of this RFA, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer persons are those who identify as such (i.e., not MSM, MSWM or other behavior-based designations). Further, we are seeking proposals that consider health beyond a framework of sexual health or sexual risk behaviors. We welcome proposals that consider the context of health equity – e.g., not narrowly focused on HIV sexual risk.

PROJECT INVESTIGATOR ELIGIBILITY
Projects must fall in at least one of the following areas:

− Secondary data analyses,
− Feasibility trial studies,
− Build on existing protocols with an exploratory aim
PROJECT INVESTIGATOR ELIGIBILITY

In consultation with leadership from the Community Engagement and Dissemination (CEDC) and Administrative Cores (AC), Investigator Development Core (IDC) personnel has developed this program to solicit and select pilot projects, provide necessary guidance for the development of pilot projects, and support awardees to ensure successful completion of projects to publication and dissemination of results and submission of subsequent grant applications. All proposed pilot projects must illustrate collaboration with a community partner regarding research, recruitment, dissemination, and other partnership opportunities.

Proposed research projects must have high potential for leading to external funding through the NIH K-series, R03, R21, R01 mechanisms or foundation support. Proposed projects should also provide training opportunities for minority and/or underrepresented minority students and/or fellows.

The pilot project mechanism provides opportunities for early stage investigators to generate secondary data analyses, feasibility trial studies, or build upon existing protocols with an exploratory aim in the thematic focus area of CHER Chicago, which is structural violence, that can support subsequent development and submission of grant applications for larger studies.

Projects must also involve a partner organization that is a community-based organization or other type of partner, including, but not limited to federal or local government agencies, school districts, and healthcare providers. The individual or representative of the partner organization must be named as a Co-Investigator. If a University of Chicago early-stage investigator wants to apply, they must have a Co-Principal Investigator (Contact PI) from UIC. Also, preference will be given to proposals that advance the work of current projects, focus on reducing structural violence, use secondary data analyses, and/or have feasibility trial studies that build upon existing protocols with an exploratory aim.

CHER Chicago recognizes a unique and compelling need to promote diversity in the biomedical, behavioral, clinical and social sciences workforce. Thus, we highly encourage application of individuals from currently underrepresented in the biomedical, clinical, behavioral, and social sciences.

If you would like to learn more about current funded project abstracts (e.g. pediatric obesity, colorectal cancer racial disparities, and Southeast Asian migrant stress) or would like assistance in meeting our active community partners, please contact Daisy Cintron, Center Director for the CHER Chicago at dcintron@uic.edu.
**Individual Eligibility**
We are only funding early-stage investigators (e.g. Assistant Professor level/has never held R01 level funding) with appointments at UIC:

- A Program Director / Principal Investigator (PD/PI) who has completed their terminal research degree or end of post-graduate clinical training, whichever date is later, within the past 10 years and who has not previously competed successfully as PD/PI for a substantial NIH independent research award.

Any existing federal awards must not restrict funds from CHER Chicago, sponsored by the NIMHD.

The contact Project Director/Principal Investigator must be a UIC faculty member with at least a 0.10 FTE appointment at UIC at the time of the application and for the duration of the project period.

**AWARD AVAILABILITY**
Three one-year grants are available to fund pilot projects part of the Pilot Project Program. $50,000 is available per grant. Estimated funding period is 7/1/2020-06/30/2021.

**Budget restrictions.** A detailed project budget includes the amount requested. No indirect costs will be funded. Funds are to be allocated to project related expenses such a salary support (e.g., investigators, technicians, research assistants, coordinators, students, post-doctoral fellows) are allowed.

For questions related to site-specific budgets, please email dcintron@uic.edu. See budget template linked below.

**KEY DATES**

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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>September 27, 2019</td>
<td>Request for Application posted on Website</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 25, 2019</td>
<td>Request for Proposals Discussed at Townhall</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 1 – January 10, 2020</td>
<td>Custom Technical Assistance Workshops held virtually, throughout the community, via phone calls, and at the Cancer Center, and at the CHER Chicago Spring Symposium</td>
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<td>January 21st, 2020 at 11:59PM CDT</td>
<td>Deadline for receipt of proposals</td>
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<td>Mid-February 2020</td>
<td>Review Day by expert reviewers on structural violence and CHER Chicago Steering Committee selects three pilot projects to present to NIMHD;</td>
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<td>Mid-March 2020</td>
<td>Full IRB approval and funder forms received</td>
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<td>Mid-June 2020</td>
<td>Year 4 Pilot Project Awardees Announced and project teams notified of funding</td>
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<td>July 1, 2020</td>
<td>Pilot projects initiate</td>
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<td>June 30, 2021</td>
<td>Pilot Projects achieve stated aims and expend budget with community partners.</td>
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PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA

Applications will be reviewed by designated review committees where reviewers will assign a score on the overall application based on the following criteria:

- **Significance.** The project addresses important problems or critical barriers to progress in eliminating structural violence. The aims of the project advance scientific knowledge, technical capability, and have near-term impact.

- **Innovation/ Creativity.** The application utilizes novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.

- **Investigator(s).** The PIs, collaborators, and other key personnel have the necessary experience and expertise to accomplish the goals of the proposed research project. The investigators have complementary and integrated expertise.

- **Approach.** The overall strategy, methodology, and analyses is logical and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project.

- **Career Development.** There is a thoughtful, intentional, and reasonable plan for career development of early-stage investigator(s). Mentor(s) have been identified and the appropriate mechanisms are in place to achieve career development goals outlined.

- **Community Engagement and Dissemination.** The partner organization(s) and their respective roles and contributions are clearly articulated. Plans for dissemination activities targeted toward the relevant community/communities are clearly outlined. Plans must identify activities beyond solely traditional academic venues of professional conferences and peer-reviewed publications.

- **Potential to Generate Publishable Data.** There is high likelihood that the proposed project or program will generate publishable data leading to peer-reviewed publications, ideally in high-impact journals.

- **Potential for External Funding.** There is high likelihood that the proposed project or program leads to more competitive grant applications to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other types of federal and foundation funding.
PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The application must include all sections outlined below and follow templates below this document:

1. Cover page. The cover page includes the title of the project, names, institutions, and contact information of PIs, Co-PIs, all other co-investigators and collaborators, including community partner(s).

2. Abstract. The abstract description of the proposed research project must be in accessible language. Max: 250 words.

3. Research proposal. The proposal describes the research plan and include the following: 1) specific aims; 2) scientific significance and innovation; 3) preliminary/ existing studies and partnership development; 4) research design and methods, including a description of critical project activities that will be performed, and community partner site(s); 5) information on how the proposed project will lead to peer-reviewed funding; 6) plans for inclusion of minority and/or underrepresented students/trainees; 7) strategies for developing/maintaining an active collaboration with community partner investigators and disseminating research findings; 8) plans for career development and mentorship for less experienced/early-stage investigators/co-leaders; and 9) the added value that the proposed research brings to CHER Chicago. The above is limited to 6 pages, excluding figures, tables, #8 above regarding career development and mentorship plans, and references.

4. Bio sketches. Current NIH bio sketches are required for each participating Co-PI, including partner organization(s). Note that bio sketches should include all funding sources including seed funding, development awards, etc.

5. Budget and budget justification. The UIC team and the community partner organization will each complete a separate budget, totaling 2 budgets at the time of submission, or 3 budgets total if collaborating with The University of Chicago. The partner organization will be treated as a separate entity and will need to be established under an institutional subcontract. Each budget should also include a corresponding budget justification clearly stating why each expense is needed to complete the study aims. Please include the budget justification per site, including the partner organization.

For additional questions, please email cherchicago@uic.edu

APPLICATION DUE DATE AND SUBMISSION

Due by Tuesday, January 21, 2020 at 11:59 PM CST (Chicago-time) to cherchicago@uic.edu, CC: dcintron@uic.edu

Please use this document as a template: https://app.box.com/s/uamamg59zc0xtm95b080h0mgmh376tl5