

Request for Applications for Pilot Project Awards for Research at the Intersection of Substance Use and Pain

Due Date: Friday April 1, 2019, 5:00 pm

The University of Florida Center for Research to Investigate Substance use and Pain (UF-CRISP) is seeking proposals for pilot projects to conduct innovative research on interactions between substance use and pain that is directed toward submission of extramural grant applications.

Rationale: Chronic pain represents the most prevalent and costly health condition in the developed world, with approximately 100 million individuals afflicted in the US alone. Pharmacological efforts to manage pain have produced alarming increases in substance misuse, overdose, and death, particularly in the case of opioids. Despite their enormous societal impact and frequent comorbidity, knowledge regarding the reciprocal interactions between chronic pain and substance use remains surprisingly limited. Many UF investigators are conducting extramurally-funded research on substance use or pain, but there has been considerably less focus on the intersection of the two. Given that pain can be a primary precipitating factor in initiation and escalation of substance use, it is of vital importance to understand how these two factors interact at all levels of analysis, from molecular biology to clinical care. To begin to address these challenges, UF-CRISP, with the support of the UF Moonshot Initiative, will support pilot projects to conduct innovative and collaborative research at the intersection of pain and substance use that will facilitate submission of competitive, extramurally-funded grant applications.

Eligibility: Any UF investigator whose status allows him/her to submit extramurally-funded grant applications is eligible to serve as the PI on a pilot project. There are no restrictions for co-investigators.

Instructions for submission:

- Proposals that address research in any area of pain or substance use will be considered; *however, priority will be given to proposals that:*
 - Integrate pain and substance use.
 - Emphasize the clinical/translational potential of the proposed research.
 - Involve investigators from multiple UF Colleges and/or Departments.
- Proposals should include the following sections, formatted according to NIH style, with page limits in parentheses:
 - A cover sheet listing the project title, PI, and all co-investigators
 - Investigator biosketches (5 pages)
 - Project summary/abstract (30 lines)
 - Specific Aims (1 page)
 - Proposal (3 pages, including “significance”, “innovation” and “approach”, as well as a timeline with specific 6- and 12-month milestones to be met). References are not included in this page limit.
 - Budget and budget justification (1 page each)
 - Plans for future funding (half a page, including specific granting agencies and funding mechanisms)
- The maximum budget request is \$100,000, although budgets of \$50,000 are strongly encouraged. Budgets should be well-justified and budgetary considerations will be a factor in funding decisions. Awards are for a maximum of 12 months. For awarded projects, half of the funds will be released initially, with the second half of the funds released contingent upon satisfying 6-month milestones explicitly written into the proposal. Funds can be used for any project expenses, including but not limited to: supplies, consumables, patient/subject costs, salary support for research staff (but not for faculty salaries). Funds must be used during the 12-month period following their release, and only for costs associated with the proposed project. Indirect costs are not allowed, and there will be no extensions past the 12 month award period.
- Inquiries regarding alignment of proposed projects with program goals are strongly encouraged. These and other questions regarding submissions should be sent to: Dr. Barry Setlow (setlow@ufl.edu)
- Completed proposals should be submitted as a single PDF document containing all of the information described above before 5pm on April 1, 2019 to Victoria Taylor at victoria.taylor@cop.ufl.edu.

Review process:

Proposals will be reviewed by at least two reviewers selected for their expertise in the proposal subject area. The reviewers will provide written, NIH-style reviews and scores. Review criteria will include “significance”, “innovation”, “investigator”, and “approach” as well as “likelihood that the project will lead to extramural funding”. These reviews and scores, as well as the proposals themselves, will be submitted to a “council” consisting of the members of the UF-CRISP external advisory committee, who will make recommendations for funding. Funding decisions are expected to be announced on or around May 1, 2019.

Terms of Award:

1. Awardees are required to provide a report to UF-CRISP at the 6-month timepoint, with details of progress and milestones met. Release of the second half of the funds is contingent upon meeting these 6-month milestones. Note that because of this short timeframe, it will be important to rapidly obtain any necessary IRB, IACUC, and/or other approvals to enable the project to progress rapidly and meet the milestones. No funds will be released until such approvals (if necessary) are obtained.
2. Awardees are required to submit a final report within 1 month of the end of the funding period that describes project accomplishments and plans for extramural funding.
3. Awardees will be expected to participate in UF-CRISP activities, including seminars, a half-day local retreat, and a multi-day regional conference focused on pain-substance use interactions.
4. Awardees will be expected to acknowledge both UF-CRISP and the UF Moonshot Initiative in any presentations or publications arising from this funding (the latter as follows: *This project is part of the University of Florida’s “Creating the Healthiest Generation” Moonshot Initiative, which is supported by the UF Office of the Provost, UF Office of Research, UF Health, UF College of Medicine, and the UF Clinical and Translational Science Institute.*).
5. The goal of this pilot project program is to enable submission of proposals to extramural funding agencies. To this end, awardees are expected to submit one or more proposals (e.g., R01 applications to NIH or other funding agencies) within 18 months of initiation of a pilot project award. Information about proposal submissions arising from pilot project funding should be provided to UF-CRISP.