

Technical Assistance Webinar for RFA-MD-17-005, “*NIMHD Specialized Centers of Excellence on Minority Health and Health Disparities (U54)*”

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Webinar starts at 3:00 PM EST



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Webinar Tips

Participants will be in Listening Mode and will not be able to ask questions verbally.

Participants may ask questions using the chat feature. Questions will be answered during the Q&A session at the end of the webinar as time permits.

These slides and a recording of today's webinar will be available on the NIMHD website: <http://www.nimhd.nih.gov/>.

This is the link to the NIMHD Framework:
<https://www.nimhd.nih.gov/about/overview/research-framework.html>



Agenda

- I. RFA background and objectives
- II. Application information
- III. Peer review of applications
- IV. Timeline for submission, review, and selection of cooperative agreements
- V. Selected FAQs and participant questions



Part I:

RFA Background and Objectives



Background

Established by Minority Health and Health Disparities Research and Education Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-525)

- Center grants to facilitate minority health and health disparities research education and training.
- Eligibility limited to academic institutions with a track record in enrolling, training, graduating students from health disparity populations.



Background

Changes from previous COE FOAs:

- Mechanism change from P20/P60 to U54
- Centers focused around a theme
- Training activities more specifically focused on post-doctoral/early career faculty career stage
- Paper to electronic submission



Objective of FOA

To support Centers of Excellence to conduct transdisciplinary, multi-level research and to provide research opportunities for post-doctoral fellows, junior faculty, and other early stage investigators to engage in this type of research.



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Part II:

Application Information



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Center Eligibility (1/2)

Domestic Institution of Higher Education

- Had a significant number of members of health disparity populations enrolled as students in the institution.
- Current NIH-designated health disparity populations:
 - Blacks or African Americans
 - American Indians/Alaska Natives
 - Asians
 - Hispanics/Latinos
 - Native Hawaiians/ other Pacific Islanders
 - Socioeconomically disadvantaged populations
 - Underserved rural populations
 - Sexual and gender minorities
- Note: Health disparity populations not equivalent to groups underrepresented in the biomedical workforce



Center Eligibility (2/2)

Domestic Institution of Higher Education

- Been effective in assisting students from health disparity populations to complete a program of study or training and receive the advanced degree(s) offered.
- Made significant efforts to recruit and enroll health disparity population students into and graduate from the institution.
- Made significant recruitment efforts to increase the number of members of health disparity populations serving in full-time faculty or administrative positions at the institutions.



Center Thematic Focus (1/3)

Each center should have a unifying thematic focus:

- Expectation that center activities can have a direct and demonstrable impact on addressing minority health and health disparities in that focus area.
- All center activities, including research projects, pilot projects, and community dissemination activities, should be designed to contribute to this impact.



Center Thematic Focus (2/3)

Required thematic focus attribute:

- Must revolve around one or more NIH-designated health disparity populations.
 - May include multiple health disparity populations, a single health disparity population, or a subgroup within a health disparity population.

Potential thematic focus attributes:

- Specific disease areas that disproportionately affect disparity populations and contribute substantially to health outcomes
- Prevention topics that cut across health conditions and populations
- Life course groups that incorporate selected components from above



Center Thematic Focus (3/3)

Potential thematic focus attributes (cont):

- Understanding the etiology and mechanisms of diseases and health conditions in health disparity populations
- Evaluating intervention approaches to improve minority health or reduce health disparities
- Developing methodological approaches or addressing measurement issues



NIMHD Research Framework

NIMHD Minority Health and Health Disparities Research Framework				
Health Disparity Populations: Race/Ethnicity, Low SES, Rural, Sexual/Gender Minority				
Other Fundamental Characteristics: Sex/Gender, Disability, Geographic Region				
Domains of Influence	Levels of Influence			
	Individual	Interpersonal	Community	Societal
Biological	Biological Vulnerability and Mechanisms	Caregiver-Child Interaction Family Microbiome	Community Illness Exposure Herd Immunity	Sanitation Immunization Pathogen Exposure
Behavioral	Health Behaviors Coping Strategies	Family Functioning School/Work Functioning	Community Functioning	Policies and Laws
Physical/Built Environment	Personal Environment	Household Environment School/Work Environment	Community Environment Community Resources	Societal Structure
Sociocultural Environment	Sociodemographics Limited English Cultural Identity Response to Discrimination	Social Networks Family/Peer Norms Interpersonal Discrimination	Community Norms Local Structural Discrimination	Societal Norms Societal Structural Discrimination
Healthcare System	Insurance Coverage Health Literacy Treatment Preferences	Patient-Clinician Relationship Medical Decision-Making	Availability of Health Services Safety Net Services	Quality of Care HealthCare Policies
Health Outcomes	Individual Health	Family/Organizational Health	Community Health	Population Health



NIMHD Research Framework

- The thematic focus should address the intersection of domains of influence and levels of influence in the Framework in some way
- Research activities are expected to embrace a multi-domain, multi-level perspective.
- The thematic focus should map onto the Framework, but the Framework is not intended to substitute for theoretical or conceptual models that underlie proposed research activities.



Center Cores and Components (1/6)

Administrative Core

- Provides overall project oversight and evaluation
- Develops a standard set of common data elements and measures to be used across research and pilot projects, as appropriate
- Provides career enhancement activities for investigators at the applicant institution, including post-doctoral fellows and junior investigators
- Core directed by the PD(s)/PI(s) of the Center



Center Cores and Components (2/6)

Investigator Development Core

- Develop pilot project program for post-doctoral fellows, junior faculty, and other early stage investigators to generate preliminary data in the thematic focus area for subsequent submission of grant applications.
- Solicit and select pilot projects, provide necessary guidance for the development of pilot projects as well as to support awardees to ensure successful completion of projects



Center Cores and Components (3/6)

Investigator Development Core

- Annual funding for the pilot project program should be a minimum of \$150,000 with at least three new pilot projects awarded each year.
- Pilot projects expected to use a multi-level, multi-domain approach.
- Recruitment of early career investigators from groups underrepresented in the biomedical research workforce encouraged.



Center Cores and Components (4/6)

Community Engagement and Dissemination Core

- Facilitates equitable collaborative and sustainable relationships with community and other stakeholders.
- Coordinate dissemination activities with community members, partner organizations, and relevant service organizations or policymakers, as well as the scientific community.
 - Includes strategic planning about how to translate findings into sustainable community and system-level changes at the local level and beyond.



Center Cores and Components (5/6)

Research Projects

- 1-3 research projects relevant to the thematic focus of the COE
- Projects may vary in scale and scope, with all projects together comprising no more than \$500,000 annual direct costs.
- May be observational or intervention studies and expected to use a transdisciplinary, multi-level, multi-domain perspective.



Center Cores and Components (6/6)

Research Projects

- Expected to engage collaborators from relevant organizations and stakeholders as appropriate
- Projects may be full-scale projects or more exploratory/developmental projects. All projects must have fully developed and specified research plans at the time of application.
- There should be synergy between the research projects such that there is added value to conducting them as interrelated rather than independent projects.



Part III: Peer Review of Applications



Core Values of Peer Review

- Conflict of Interest
- Confidentiality
- Review Criteria
- Expertise
- Balanced Representation



Preparations for Peer Review

FOA-Specific Characteristics

- Program goals
- Specific to this FOA queries
- Special Criteria (e.g. Milestones)
- Mechanism-specific characteristics

Administrative Review of Applications

- RFA requirements
- Personnel
- Expertise



Reviewer Selection

Scientific Expertise

- As defined in FOA
- Collective content of the applications

Attention to Conflict of Interest

Diverse representation of opinion

- gender
- demographics
- geography



Review Process

- Pre-Meeting Written Opinions
- Overall Impact
- Resume



Special Features of RFA MD17-005

- No Late Applications
- Eligibility -Institutions of Higher Education, only 1 application per institution
- Required Components
 - Administrative Core, Investigator Development Core, Community Engagement and Dissemination Core, 1-3 Research Projects
- Overall section
 - Special Attachments – 1) accomplishments in meeting special eligibility criteria; 2) Attestation for special maintenance of effort
 - Letter of support from high level institutional official
- Review Criteria
 - Overall application and components
 - Individual criteria are defined with RFA-specific queries



Successful Applications

- **Begin early and Upload early**
- **Follow the instructions**
- Research Plan fits the guidelines
- Consistency throughout
- Right team for the right plan
- Impact can be anticipated



Videos on Peer Review Topics

The Center for Scientific Review has produced videos with an inside look at peer review for scientific and technical merit and with tips for preparing applications.

<http://www.csr.nih.gov/Video/Video.asp>



Part IV:

Timeline for Submission, Review, and Selection of Cooperative Agreements



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Timeline

- Letter of Intent Due Date: April 14, 2017
- Application Due Date: May 15, 2017
- Peer Review Meeting: July, 2017
- Council Review: August, 2017
- Earliest Start Date: September, 2017



Part V: Selected FAQs and Participant Questions

Send questions via webinar chat.



Selected FAQs: Eligibility

Question: Can NIMHD confirm that my institution is eligible to apply?

Answer: No. NIMHD staff can answer questions you have about the eligibility requirements, but it is the responsibility of the institution to determine if all eligibility criteria have been met.

Question: Can two eligible institutions apply as a joint center?

Answer: No. Collaborations with academic institutions and other organizations are encouraged. However, only one institution can serve as the applicant institution.



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Selected FAQs: Renewals

Question: Are renewals allowed even though the mechanism/activity code has changed from P20/P60 to U54?

Answer: Yes.

Question: If an institution had a COE in the past, does the application have to be a renewal or can it be a new submission?

Answer: In general, we expect institutions that had a previous COE to submit a renewal application if they did not submit an unsuccessful renewal application since the COE was last funded. Those who submitted an unsuccessful COE renewal application must submit a new application. If a previously funded institution is planning to submit a new application, it is strongly recommended that investigators consult with the scientific contact prior to submission.



Selected FAQs: Renewals

Question: Where does the Progress Report go for renewal applications?

Answer: The Progress Report should go into the Research Strategy of one or more components of the application. The Progress Report counts towards the page limit of the particular component.

The Progress Report should not be included in other sections of the application, including the Appendix or the Progress Report Publication List.



Selected FAQs: Cores and Components

Question: Are there different page limits depending on the scope of the research projects (e.g., R01 level vs. R21 level)?

Answer: No, the page limit for each research project is 12 pages. Remember, this is a page limit, not the number of pages required. Projects that are smaller in scope may not require as many pages as larger projects.

Question: Do all research projects have to be conducted simultaneously?

Answer: No, but all projects must be fully described in the application.



Selected FAQs: Cores and Components

Question: Should individual pilot projects be described in the application?

Answer: No. The application should describe the Pilot Project Program (soliciting, selecting, supporting, and monitoring pilot projects), not individual projects, which should be selected after the Center is awarded.

Question: Can salary support for post-docs be included in pilot projects? Other cores?

Answer: Salary support for post-docs is an allowable cost within any center component for those engaged as personnel on research projects or other center activities. Stipends and fellowships, which are associated with training programs, are not allowed in this RFA.



Selected FAQs: Cores and Components

Question: Should Steering Committee members be named in the application?

Answer: No. The planned roles and expertise of the Steering Committee should be described in the application, but names should not be included.

Question: Is the letter of intent mandatory? Is the letter of intent binding?

Answer: No and no. The purpose of the letter of intent (LOI) is to give NIMHD, particularly the review office, a sense of how many applications to expect and what kinds of expertise might be needed to review them. It is possible to submit an LOI and then not submit an application, and vice versa.



Participant Questions



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