

**Arkansas Center for Health Disparities (ARCHD)  
CYCLE 5 Pilot Research Program  
PILOT FUNDING APPLICATION  
Applications relevant to COVID-19 are encouraged**

A. General Information

1. Program Overview
2. Eligibility
3. Program Priorities
4. Expected Outcomes

B. Application Guidelines

1. Mandatory Applicant Workshops
2. Letters of Intent
3. Completed Applications
4. Budget Instructions
5. Research Strategy
6. Submission Instructions
7. UAMS Institutional Review Board Approval
8. OSPAN Assistance Timeline

C. Review Criteria

For further information, contact:

[ARCHD@uams.edu](mailto:ARCHD@uams.edu)

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## A. GENERAL INFORMATION

### A.1. Program Overview

The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health (COPH) established the Arkansas Center for Health Disparities (ARCHD) in the Fall of 2007 with funding from NIH's National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD). The Center's current mission is to develop multidisciplinary, multi-level research that reduces chronic disease risk factors for which there are significant health disparities among socially disadvantaged populations and communities with a goal of improving health and quality of life and ultimately eliminating health disparities. Center priority areas focus on diseases that disproportionately impact health disparities in populations in Arkansas.

#### Pilot Research Program

ARCHD aims to advance the science of disparities research by supporting pilot/feasibility studies ranging from descriptive research to clinical trials. The Center has allocated funds to support three one-year pilot research grants with direct cost funding of \$50,000 for each project. It is expected that funded pilot grants will lead to successful NIH applications for projects to address health disparities.

PIs will also be provided mentorship, career development guidance, and funds for professional development and research dissemination. Specifically, ARCHD pilot project PIs will be provided with funds to attend either the NIMHD annual conference, a National Research Mentoring Network (NRMN) annual conference or sponsored workshop, or another health disparities focused conference.

### A.2 Eligibility

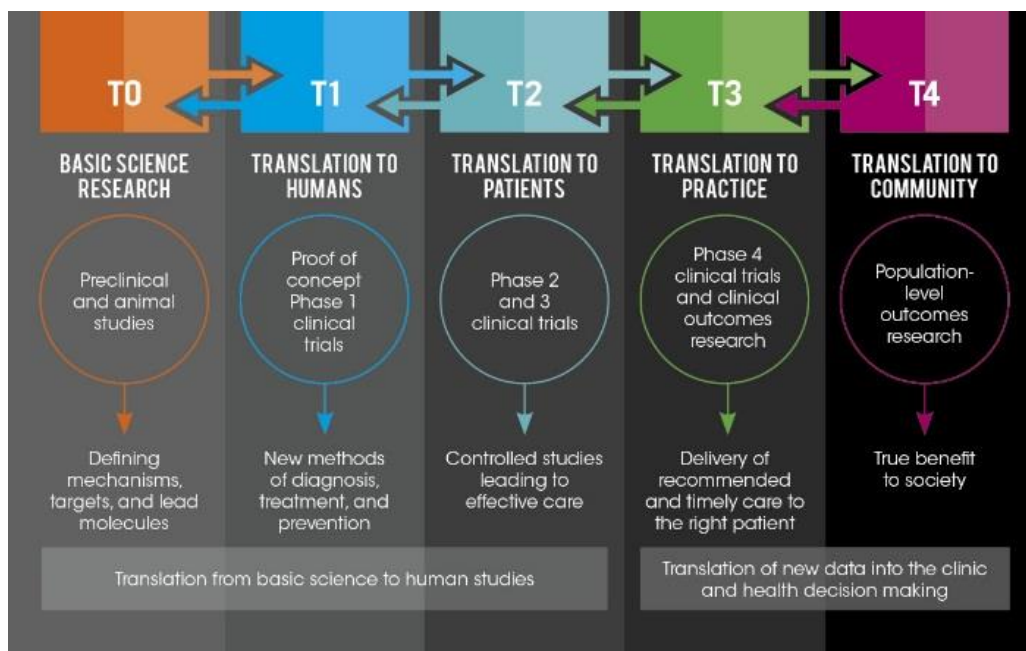
#### Principal Investigator (PI) Eligibility

Applicant PI eligibility criteria include (1) post-doctoral or primary faculty appointment in the UAMS COPH; (2) within 10 years of completing the terminal research degree, medical residency or equivalent (unless granted an extension by NIH per NIH guidelines); and (3) meet all other NIH requirements for Early Stage Investigators (ESIs). NIH defines an ESI as, "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". More details are available at <https://grants.nih.gov/policy/early-investigators/index.htm>. ESIs from racial/ethnic minority populations, socioeconomically disadvantaged populations, underserved rural populations, and sexual and gender minority populations are particularly encouraged to apply.

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### **A.3. Priorities for this Pilot Program**

1. Research proposals must focus on one or more NIH-designated health disparities population, which 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. Proposals may address the intersection of race/ethnicity with other indicators of disparities or disadvantage (poverty, low income, low educational attainment, rural populations, disability, sexual identity, age, nativity).
2. Priority will be given to proposals identified by reviewers as having the highest likelihood of leading to future NIH funding. The PI must provide detailed information on how the pilot will lead to R-series (R03, R21, R15, R01) or equivalent funding.
3. Proposals are expected to incorporate a multi-domain, multilevel perspective and that address the intersection of domains of influence (biological, behavioral, physical environment, sociocultural environment, healthcare system) and levels of influence (individual, interpersonal, community, societal) through the use of the NIMHD Minority Health and Health Disparities Research Framework. Relevant information is available about the NIMHD Framework at <https://www.nimhd.nih.gov/about/overview/research-framework.html>
4. Proposals are expected to incorporate community-engaged research. More information about community-engaged research can be found in the following article <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2901283/>
5. Finally, priority will be given to T1-T4 translational research as illustrated in the figure below. T0 research must clearly explain the applicability of the proposed research to reducing health disparities in the community/population of interest.



From the UAMS Translational Research Institute: <http://tri.uams.edu/about-tri-2/what-is-translational-research/> (National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) [ncats.nih.gov](http://ncats.nih.gov))

#### **A.4. Expected Outcomes**

Following the award, pilot researchers are expected to:

- a. Fully participate in ARCHD Investigator Development Core career development activities.
- b. Participate in the annual Community Campus Partnership Conference.
- c. Provide information for Center progress reports as requested.
- d. Present project findings at local and national conferences.
- e. Publish pilot project findings in peer-reviewed journal(s).
- f. Credit the Center and the funding agency as instructed in all publications and presentations resulting from funded studies.
- g. Upon completion of pilot studies, submit applications to external funding mechanisms (R03, R21, R15, R01 or equivalent) to build on the pilot work for support of a larger study
- h. Comply with other requirements outlined in the Responsibilities of ARCHD (Arkansas Center for Health Disparities) Pilot Study Grantee Requirements).

## **B. APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

### **B.1. Mandatory Applicant Workshops**

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Applicant PIs must attend a mandatory informational workshop that will be delivered via Zoom. PIs who submit a letter of intent will be contacted for their availability and an announcement will be sent out when the workshop dates have been confirmed. Email [ARCHD@uams.edu](mailto:ARCHD@uams.edu) for details.

Following each workshop there will be a 30-minute Zoom presentation by the UAMS Office of Sponsored Programs Administrative Network (OSPAN) on budget and application formatting. This presentation is also mandatory.

## **B.2. Letters of Intent.**

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis between July 1, 2020 and October 15, 2020. Applicants are required to submit a brief letter of intent at least six weeks prior to submission of their completed application. An electronic form is attached and letters may be returned via email. Letters must include the proposed title, contact information for the pilot project principal investigator and the primary and secondary mentors, brief description of the overall research objective, description of relevance to health disparities research, description of how funds will be used, at least three potential reviewers, a list of UAMS faculty who will probably be involved in the proposed project, and proposed start and end dates. Please use the template provided at the end of this document. Submit the completed letter of intent as an email attachment in PDF format to [ARCHD@uams.edu](mailto:ARCHD@uams.edu). If you do not receive notification that your letter has been received by the end of the next workday, please contact Linda Luster, ARCHD Project Manager at [LusterLindaD@uams.edu](mailto:LusterLindaD@uams.edu).

## **B.3. Completed Applications.**

Completed applications must contain the components listed below and follow provided formatting instructions (Arial font, 11 point, 0.5-inch margins, continuous page numbering on fully assembled application package) and maximum page/word limits. *PIs are required to follow NIH instructions and use appropriate NIH forms.* NIH guidelines provided in the SF424 (R&R) – Version E <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-e/general-forms-e.pdf> and the NIH career development instructions <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-e/career-forms-e.pdf> should guide the content of the required components. **Please number all pages sequentially.**

1. Cover page (template will be provided)
2. NIH face page (*signature of authorized official not required at time of internal submission*) (1 page) – form to be completed by OSPAN personnel
3. NIH biosketch from primary mentor (*UAMS-based*) (5 pages)
4. NIH biosketch from secondary mentor (*must have a primary appointment outside of PI's COPH department and expertise in at least one ARCHD priority area*) (5 pages)
5. NIH biosketch from any other key personnel (5 pages)
6. NIH biosketch for the Principal Investigator (5 pages)
7. Budget Form (PHS 398-fp4) and budget justification (see note below)
8. Project Summary (300 words)

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9. Specific Aims (1 page)
10. Research Strategy (6 pages as detailed below)
11. Bibliography and References Cited (*American Medical Association Manual of Style 10th Edition*).
12. Resources (1 page)
13. Protection of Human Subjects (3 pages)
14. NIH Inclusion Enrollment Report
15. Inclusion of Women, Minorities, and Children (1 page)
16. Vertebrate Animals, if applicable (3 pages)
17. Select Agent, if applicable (1 page)
18. Authentication of Key Biological and/or Chemical Resources
19. Appendix, if applicable (*as needed, following NIH guidelines*)
20. Letter of endorsement from primary mentor (*UAMS-based*)
21. Letter of endorsement from secondary mentor (*must have a primary appointment outside of PI's COPH department and expertise in at least one ARCHD priority area*)
22. Screen shot of the PI's NIH-designated investigator status provided in the PI's eRA Commons Profile available at the NIH eRA commons website ([https://era.nih.gov/reg\\_accounts/register\\_commons.cfm](https://era.nih.gov/reg_accounts/register_commons.cfm))
23. Mentorship Plan and 5-year career goals including future grant submissions and career development activities (1 page)
24. Dissemination Plan including peer-review publications, scientific conferences (including the ARCHD funded trip), and community dissemination (300 words)

#### **B.4. Budget instructions**

Each selected project will receive a one-year award of \$50,000 in direct costs. The **budget and budget justification** of each approved application will be reviewed for appropriateness. Alterations in the budget may be recommended. The \$50,000 award is for direct costs only. These direct costs may include but are not limited to research related activities (e.g., collection of data, data analysis, etc.), additional project-related travel, and salary support for the PI, other faculty members, and/or study personnel. Again, salary support for faculty, staff, and students is allowed and personnel roles should be explained in the budget justification.

#### **B.5. Research Strategy**

The **Research Strategy** must not exceed 6 pages total and should include: Background and Significance, Innovation, Preliminary Studies (if available, but not required), Research Design and Methods, timeline, and a description of how the pilot study will lead to R-series (R03, R21, R15, R01) or equivalent application.

#### **B.6. Submission Instructions**

Completed applications are **due between July 1, 2020 and October 15, 2020**. Actual start dates will depend on timing of receipt of project approvals from NIH. Proposals should be prepared with OSPAN, but should **not** be routed through the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) at this time. **Completed applications must be emailed to ARCHD@uams.edu.** Electronic applications should be formatted

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as a single PDF document with pages numbered sequentially. If you do not receive notification that the electronic copy of your proposal has been received by the end of the next business day, please contact Linda Luster, ARCHD Project Manager at [LusterLindaD@uams.edu](mailto:LusterLindaD@uams.edu)

## B.7. IRB Approval

PLEASE NOTE:

UAMS Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval will be needed prior to release of funding for pilot studies to begin. Awards will not be made until all appropriate forms and institutional assurances have been provided (e.g., human subjects). All pilot funding activities require NIH approval. Verification of Human Subjects approval must be received before study funds will be released. See <http://irb.uams.edu/>.

## B.8. OSPAN Assistance Timeline

ARCHD requires that PIs contact OSPAN for assistance with budgets and application formatting. The timeline for OSPAN review is below. Please note that the UAMS editing group [SciCom, formerly OGSP] maintains a completely separate schedule, and they would need to be contacted directly as soon as possible if a PI wants to be added to their schedule for technical/scientific review.

- **Please note: all timeframes are based on weekdays/standard business hours**
- **4-5 weeks prior to application submission:** Draft budget plans to OSPAN for development (recommend allowing 5 weeks if planning subawards to other institutions)
- **3 weeks prior to application submission:** Budget and budget justification submitted to COPH Finance office and PI's department chair for review/approval
- **2 weeks prior to application submission:** Fully completed draft of proposal due to OSPAN, including final approved budget
- **1 week prior to application submission:** Review comments returned by OSPAN
- **2-4 days prior to application submission:** OSPAN assembly and PI approval of final application package

## C. REVIEW CRITERIA

The ARCHD Review Committee will use the following criteria to assess each application. These are provided so applicants will understand items of importance to reviewers.

### 1. Significance

- a. Does this study address problems associated with health disparities? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge related to health disparities be advanced?
- b. Is the study consistent with the aims of the center and does it have relevance to the Center's goals?
- c. What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts or methods that drive health disparities research?

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- d. What is the scientific premise of the study? The premise concerns the quality and strength of existing research used to form the basis for the proposed research question; describes general strengths and weaknesses of prior research being cited as crucial to support the application

## **2. Innovation**

- a. Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches or methods?
- b. Are the aims original and innovative?
- c. Does the project challenge existing standards or develop new methodologies or technologies?

## **3. Approach**

- a. Are the conceptual framework, design (including composition of the study population), methods and analyses adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project?
- b. Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics/approaches to address these potential problems?
- c. Is the research design clearly articulated and appropriate for the objectives and hypotheses?
- d. Are data collection, management and analysis methods detailed and adequately justified?
- e. Are inclusion and exclusion criteria specified and justified? Are recruitment methods adequate? Is the proposed sample size justified by a power analysis if applicable? Will enough subjects be recruited to achieve the study's objectives?
- f. Is the study feasible to accomplish within the stated time frame (one year) and with requested resources?
- g. Is the design rigorous to assure robust and unbiased results?

## **4. Environment**

- a. Do the mentors have appropriate expertise to guide the PI in accomplishing the proposed research and are they sufficiently invested in the project?
- b. Does the proposed research team have adequate expertise to successfully carry out a project that will lead to future funding in this area?
- c. Is the mentorship plan adequate to ensure the PI's success?
- d. Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success?
- e. Does the proposed study employ useful collaborative arrangements as appropriate?
- f. Is there evidence of departmental support?

## **5. Applicant**

- a. Does the principal investigator (or co-investigators) explicitly demonstrate a clear commitment to the study of health disparities?
- b. Do the applicant's training, experience and accomplishments indicate the



applicant is likely to accomplish the project's objectives?

- c. Is there evidence of interdisciplinary and community collaboration?
- d. Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the principal investigator and other researchers?

#### **6. Budget and Resources**

- a. Is the budget appropriate and well justified?

#### **7. Potential for Future Funding**

- a. How likely is it that the project, if funded, will produce data that could form an important part of an R-series (R03, R21, R15, R01) or equivalent application for support?

#### **8. Subjects**

- a. Does the study include an appropriate human subjects plan?
- b. Are appropriate measures taken for the protection of human subjects?
- c. Are minorities and both genders (if appropriate) represented in the study sample?
- d. Have IRB requirements been considered in the development of the research plan?

## **ATTACHMENT**

**Arkansas Center for Health Disparities (ARCHD)**

**Cycle 5 Pilot Research Program**

**LETTER OF INTENT FORM**

**Due date: At least six weeks prior to submission of completed application**

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### **1. Descriptive project title:**

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- 2. Principal Investigator:**
  - a. CPH Department:**
  - b. Phone number:**
  - c. Email:**
  - d. eRA Commons User Name:**
  
- 3. Proposed Primary Mentor:**
  - a. UAMS College and Department:**
  - b. Phone number:**
  - c. Email:**
  
- 4. Proposed Secondary Mentor:**
  - a. UAMS College and Department:**
  - b. Phone number:**
  - c. Email:**
  
- 5. Brief description of proposed project (250-word limit)**
  
- 6. Relevance to health disparities research (250-word limit)**
  
- 7. Brief description of how funds will be used (250-word limit)**
  
- 8. A list of at least three potential UAMS-based reviewers who are not affiliated with the proposed project but who have at least some expertise relevant to the proposed project**
  
- 9. A list of UAMS faculty who will probably be involved in the proposed project (e.g., mentors, co-investigators, contributors, etc)**
  
- 10. Proposed dates and timeline for the project:**
  - a. Estimated start date:**
  - b. Estimated end date:**