

SPH Seed Funding Program



Academic Year 2016-17



JUNE 2017 COMPETITION

SPH Office of Research Services

REVISED 6/5/2017

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OVERVIEW INFORMATION

The School of Public Health (SPH) is pleased to announce another round of competitions for the 2016-17 academic year as part of a seed funding initiative to support research.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Applications are due **Friday, June 9, 2017 (5:00PM CST)**.

ELIGIBILITY

Awards are available to faculty and other researchers with 40% or more effort in the current academic year (teaching, clinical, and research) dedicated to the School of Public Health. Applicants must have a primary university appointment in the School of Public Health.

GOALS

Awards will be judged according to their **likelihood of leading to external (e.g. NIH) funding**. Priority will be given to projects proposed by junior investigators.

TYPES OF PROJECTS

Applications in all areas will be accepted, but investigators must indicate the project's relationship to the SPH's strategic initiatives. Resubmission applications will be accepted.

AVAILABLE FUNDING

We anticipate a total of \$60,000 in available funds. There is no maximum allowable per application, but investigators are encouraged to consider the program's goal to award as many applications as possible. Matching funds or tangible support from relevant Division(s) is strongly encouraged. Budget requests may include any items necessary to strengthen an important area for the research enterprise, including salary support for investigators. **No indirect costs are allowed.**

FREQUENCY

One seed funding competition will be held each academic year. **This announcement opens a second call for proposals for AY 2016-17.**

REVIEWS AND FUNDING DISBURSEMENT

Application reviews are expected to occur in June 2017. Each application will be reviewed by two individuals, with at least one from the SPH Committee on Research. Summary statements will be issued after peer review. Following a notice of award, funds will be disbursed once proper IRB approvals are obtained to begin project activities July 15, 2017.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND FORMS

Download application **forms, instructions** and **SPH's strategic initiatives** from: <http://publichealth.uic.edu/research/seedfunding/>

PROGRESS REPORTING: Successful awardees will be required to provide a progress report and to submit a subsequent external grant proposal through SPH. A grant proposal will be accepted in lieu of a progress report.

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SPH SEED FUNDING PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Program Description

Deadline: June 9, 2017 at 5:00 PM (CST)

Email a complete application as one PDF file to Robin Sylvester rбуell2@uic.edu by the deadline. Include the name of the principal investigator(s) and “SPH Seed Funding Application” in the subject line of the email.

Eligibility

- **P.I. Eligibility:** School of Public Health faculty and research investigators with 40% or more effort in the current academic year (teaching, clinical, and research) dedicated to the School of Public Health. Applicants must have a primary university appointment in the School of Public Health. Junior investigators are strongly encouraged to apply. Eligibility must be verified by the PI’s academic home unit upon submission.
- **Project Eligibility:** Applications are expected to generate pilot data/preliminary evidence to support external grant applications. Priority will be given to junior investigators, and projects should be consistent with strategic initiatives of SPH.

Award Types and Amounts

Seed grants will be awarded for up to 12-months. No maximum amount is stipulated, but only \$60,000 total is available for this initiative and the goal is to fund as many projects as possible. Activities such as conducting preliminary research to inform study design, demonstrate feasibility of research protocols, pilot test novel methodologies, explore translational research methods in public health (all fields), or initiate new interdisciplinary research are encouraged.

Examples of funding uses include:

- New software
- Salaries for PI and research assistant
- Subject payments and recruitment costs
- Fees for development of intervention materials
- Lab fees for assays
- Staff transportation costs for the research project
- Data acquisition costs

Application Materials

Application forms and materials for the AY 2016-17 competition are available on the SPH Seed Funding website <http://publichealth.uic.edu/research/seedfunding/>.

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Applications

Application Format

Please adhere to the following guidelines:

- **Title:** Limited to 200 characters.
- **File format:** Submit all sections and forms as a single PDF document.
- **Headers and Footers:** Include a header on each page with the PI's last name and first initial. Consecutively number pages throughout the application in the footer. Applicants may use the PHS 398 continuation page.
- **Spacing and Margins:** Single spacing with margins no less than 0.5 inches on all sides.
- **Font:** 11-point Arial font (Figures, charts, tables, and footnotes, may use a smaller font size, but this type must be readily legible).
- **Table of Contents:** A table of contents is required. Download the table of contents template from the SPH Seed Funding website. Proposal documents must follow the order in the table of contents template.

Application Details

Applications must include the following components to be considered for funding:

Cover Page
Table of Contents
Abstract
Public Health Significance Statement
Introduction to Resubmission Application, if applicable (1 page)
Specific Aims (1 Page)
Research Strategy (6 Pages)
Bibliography and References Cited
Human Subjects
Plan for Extramural Funding
Resources
Biographical Sketches
Detailed Budget and Budget Justification

- **Cover Page:** Download and complete the SPH Seed Funding Program Grant Application Cover Page. Investigator and department/unit head signatures are required.
- **Table of Contents:** Download and complete the table of contents template. Compile documents in the order listed.
- **Abstract:** Maximum of 30 lines with 0.5 inch margins and Arial 11 point font.
- **Public Health Significance Statement:** Provide a brief statement of the project's public health relevance and indicate its relationship to the SPH strategic initiatives (maximum of 3 sentences).

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- **Introduction to Resubmission** (1 page limit): For resubmission proposals only. An Introduction must be included that summarizes the substantial additions, deletions and changes to the application. The Introduction must also include a response to the issues and criticism raised in by the previous reviewers.
- **Specific Aims** (1 page limit): State concisely the goals of the proposed research and summarize the expected outcome(s), including the impact that the results of the proposed research will exert on the research field(s) involved.
- **Research Strategy** (6 page limit) that includes letters a-d (please refer to Application Format section for formatting requirements).
 - a) Background and Significance:** Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses. Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad fields. Describe how the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field will be changed if the proposed aims are achieved. Provide a brief statement about the expected outputs and short/long term outcomes of the proposed research.
 - b) Innovation:** Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms. Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or intervention(s) to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation or intervention(s). Explain any refinements, improvements, or new applications of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or interventions.
 - c) Approach:** Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project, including how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted. Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve the aims.
 - d) Preliminary Studies:** Discuss preliminary studies, data, and/or experience pertinent to this application. If applicable, preliminary studies may also be included as a subsection of sections a-c.
- **Bibliography and References Cited:** List of citations.
- **Human Subjects:** For applications that use human subjects or animals, include a section on human subjects protection and inclusion of women, minorities, and children. IRB approval must be obtained before funds are released but are not required to submit an application. **Prior to funding, a copy of all applicable Institutional Biohazard, Animal Care and Institutional Review Board (IRB) approvals must be forwarded to Julie Kong in the Office of Research Services at jkong@uic.edu.**
- **Plan for Extramural Funding:** Indicate the long-term research objective and provide a detailed plan for submission of competitive application(s) to external funding agencies (priority will be given to applications planned for DHHS funding). Program announcements and other pertinent DHHS initiatives should be included. If known, applicants should specify the institute and program officer for the planned submission.

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- **Resources:** Describe the resources and working arrangements required to implement the project. A distinction must be made between those resources that are already in place and those resources that must be added to advance the project.
- **Biographical Sketches (NIH format):** Limit to key personnel. Each biosketch should include a personal statement outlining the individual's expertise, roles and responsibilities on the study (5 page limit). Download the current NIH biosketch template and sample from <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>.
- **Budget and Budget Justification:** Each application requires an appropriate budget with detailed budget justification for a 12-month period. Budget requests may include support for data collection, data analysis or other justified items (included enhancing laboratory science capacity) as necessary to strengthen an important area for the research enterprise. Budget may also include salary support with adequate justification for investigators and research staff. **Matching funds or tangible support from relevant Division(s) is encouraged.**

Download and complete the Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period from the SPH Seed Funding website. Provide a narrative budget justification describing all costs. If matching funds are included in the budget, describe the source of funds and amount in the budget justification. Enter the amount of matching funds on the detailed budget form and cover page.

Allowable/Unallowable Costs

- Summer salary is not allowed for faculty with 9 month appointments.
 - Research assistant support and student stipends/fringes are eligible expenses.
 - Tuition remission is not an eligible expense.
 - Indirect costs are excluded.
 - Conference travel for the purpose of professional meetings is not allowed. Travel for research-related activities is allowed.
- **Appendices:** Should be limited to measurement instruments, surveys, and letters describing pledged resources. Do not use the Appendix to circumvent page limits.

Submission Process

CORRECTED

Submit proposals by email to Robin Sylvester rbuell2@uic.edu by **June 19, 2017 June 9, 2017 at 5:00PM CST**. All documents must be compiled in a single PDF file, and the subject line of the email must include the name of the PI, "SPH Seed Funding Application."

How to Make One PDF from Your Documents

1. Produce each of your files (cover page, research plan, biosketch, budget, etc.) in Microsoft Word.
2. Convert each file to a PDF document by using one of the following methods:
 - a. Select File>Save As Adobe PDF.

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- b. Select File>Print and select PDF (on Macs this is on the left lower corner of the print dialog box; on PCs while in the print dialog box select the type of printer).
 - c. Scan and save as PDF (for documents with signatures, such as the cover page and letters of support).
3. Save all PDF files to a central location.
4. Open Adobe Acrobat software. Assemble the PDFs into one document by selecting File>Create>Combine Files into a single PDF. Select Add Files and select the saved PDF documents. Prior to combining files, re-order the documents in the dialogue window and select Combine Files. After the combined document is created, save the file with a new file name.

Peer Review

Review Process

Two individuals will evaluate each proposal, a primary and secondary reviewer. At least one of the two reviewers will be a member of the SPH Committee on Research. Reviewers will complete the standard NIH critique template (see below), and investigators will receive a written summary statement within one month of the completion of reviews. The Committee on Research will meet to discuss the top 50% of the applications based on Impact Scores, and determine which applications will be recommended to the Senior Associate Dean and Dean for final funding decisions.

Review and Selection Criteria

Each project will be scored according to the NIH scoring system and its **likelihood of maximizing independent research grant funding in the future**. Reviewers will consider each of the five review criteria below in the determination of scientific and technical merit, and give a separate score for each. An application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have major scientific impact. For example, a project that by its nature is not innovative may be essential to advance a field.

- **Overall Impact.** Reviewers will provide an overall impact/priority score to reflect their assessment of the likelihood for the project to exert a sustained, powerful influence on the research field(s) involved, in consideration of the following five scored review criteria, and additional review criteria (as applicable for the project proposed). In addition, impact scores will reflect the project's likelihood of leading to independent research funding if successful.
- **Significance.** Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved? How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field?
- **Investigator(s).** Are the PIs, collaborators, and other researchers well suited to the project? If Early Stage Investigators or New Investigators, or in the early stages of independent careers, do they have appropriate experience and training? If established, have they demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced

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their field(s)? If the project is collaborative or multi-PD/PI, do the investigators have complementary and integrated expertise; are their leadership approach, governance and organizational structure appropriate for the project?

- **Innovation.** Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions? Are the concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions novel to one field of research or novel in a broad sense? Is a refinement, improvement, or new application of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions proposed?
- **Approach.** Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Are potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented? If the project is in the early stages of development, will the strategy establish feasibility and will particularly risky aspects be managed? If the project involves clinical research, are the plans for 1) protection of human subjects from research risks, and 2) inclusion of minorities and members of both sexes/genders, as well as the inclusion of children, justified in terms of the scientific goals and research strategy proposed?
- **Environment.** Will the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Are the institutional support, equipment and other physical resources available to the investigators adequate for the project proposed? Will the project benefit from unique features of the scientific environment, subject populations, or collaborative arrangements?
- **Protections for Human Subjects.** For research that involves human subjects but does not involve one of the six categories of research that are exempt under 45 CFR Part 46, the committee will evaluate the justification for involvement of human subjects and the proposed protections from research risk relating to their participation according to the following five review criteria: 1) risk to subjects, 2) adequacy of protection against risks, 3) potential benefits to the subjects and others, 4) importance of the knowledge to be gained, and 5) data and safety monitoring for clinical trials.

Awards

Award Decisions

Funding decisions for the June 9, 2017 deadline are expected in June of 2017. Funds will be disbursed after all required approvals (IRB) are obtained to begin project activities July 15, 2017.

Prior to Awarding Funds

The following documents must be submitted to Julie Kong (jckong@uic.edu) prior to the start date for awarded projects.

- IRB Approvals/Clearances or IACUC Approval.
- A brief bio, project abstract and photo to be posted on the UIC SPH research website.

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Post Award Requirements

- Awardees will be required to submit 12-month progress reports to the Office of Research Services.
- At the conclusion of the award, a written final progress and expenditure report must be submitted. The final progress report may take the form of an external grant proposal.
- Federal grant proposals resulting from SPH seed funding must receive pre-peer review from the SPH prior to submission.
- The awardee will be required to provide information about publications, collaborations, and future grants related to the pilot project.
- The School of Public Health must be acknowledged in all publications derived from this award.
- The award must be administered in the School of Public Health.

Grant Conditions

Grantees are expected to disseminate their findings.

Contacts

Scientific/Research Contact:

Geri Donenberg, PhD
Associate Dean of Research
gerid@uic.edu

Grants Management Contact(s):

Julie C. Kong, M.Ed, RD, LDN, CRA
Director, Research Services
Phone: 312-413-8508
jkong@uic.edu

Robin Buell Sylvester, MUPP, CRA
Assistant Director, Pre-Awards Sponsored Projects
Phone: 312-996-9327
rbuell2@uic.edu