



The University of Illinois at Chicago

Occupational & Environmental Health & Safety
Education and Research Center (Illinois ERC)
School of Public Health
2121 West Taylor St. (M/C 922)
Chicago, IL 60612-7260

DATE: February 2, 2005

The Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety Education and Research Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago (Illinois ERC) is soliciting proposals for the next round of Pilot Project Research Training funds. The funds are intended for new occupational safety & health investigators in Fiscal Year 2005-2006. The availability and amount of funding for this initiative is contingent on the award provided by NIOSH.

The purpose of the awards is to:

- 1) Develop research expertise and capacity in ERC research trainees and new investigators;
- 2) Support new investigators in establishing new research areas; and,
- 3) Encourage established investigators from other fields to apply their expertise to NORA topics (See www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/).

The awards are intended to provide investigators with the resources needed to develop pilot information about a research hypothesis, with the expectation that investigators will subsequently develop fully formed extramural research applications on the basis of this pilot information.

Questions concerning the applications and funding may be addressed to:

Salvatore Cali, Project Coordinator

Illinois ERC

School of Public Health

2121 West Taylor St. (M/C 922)

Chicago, IL 60612-7260

Phone 312/996-5722

E-mail: scali@uic.edu (Inquiries by e-mail preferred).

DEADLINE AND COPIES REQUIRED

Illinois ERC requires ONE ORIGINAL, signed by the department head and principal investigator, PLUS 8 COPIES (of the entire application, proposal, and attachments) AND ONE ELECTRONIC COPY (of the application, budget, budget justification, & proposal narrative). Applications must be received on or before Monday, **April 1, 2005** at the address above. Late applications will not be accepted. Application forms may be **downloaded from the following web site:**

www.uic.edu/spha/glakes/
choose "Funding Opportunities."

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible: New occupational safety & health investigators; investigators from other disciplines who have recently begun targeting occupational safety & health topics; pre-doctoral students and post-doctoral trainees; new faculty, assistant professors, research scientists, academic professionals, or faculty associates are eligible for these awards.

Not eligible: Tenured faculty, RO1 investigators, and investigators with greater than 10 years of post-doctoral research experience are not eligible as principal investigators, unless this is a first-time application for research in occupational safety and health.

TYPES AND CATEGORIES OF SUPPORT

Three to six awards ranging from \$6,000 to a maximum of \$16,000 are available for **one year of funding**. A total of approximately \$61,000 is expected to be available for the year. Second year funding may be available for research showing merit, depending on availability of funds. The awards are contingent on NIOSH funding.

FORMAT OF APPLICATION

The application and budget forms attached to these instructions must be completed. In addition, a maximum of ten pages of text for the full research proposal must be attached to the application forms. No more than ten pages of proposal narrative will be accepted. The narrative should be organized as follows:

Introduction/background

Objectives

Methods

Expected outcomes/contribution to field/significance

Anticipated difficulties and approaches to overcoming them

Budget (A generic budget calculation spreadsheet is available on this web site)

Budget justification

Timeline

Curriculum Vitae of the Principle Investigators and other relevant documentation may also be attached to the application as appendices. Incomplete applications or applications including more than ten pages of proposal narrative will be returned without review. A letter of support from a senior-level faculty project advisor will strengthen most applications.

RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

If the proposed project involves research on human subjects, the applicant must comply with the Department of Health and Human Services Regulations (45 CFR Part 46) regarding the protection of human research participants. Assurance must be provided to demonstrate that the project will be subject to initial and continuing reviews by an appropriate institutional review board. Please see Illinois ERC's Research Policy at:

www.uic.edu/spha/glakes/
choose "Funding Opportunities."

It is strongly recommended that applicants familiarize themselves with the policy statement and with the human subjects review process at their sponsoring organization. Funds cannot be released until we receive documentation of human subjects review or exemption. Previous awards under this program have been delayed because grantees did not begin their human subjects review application promptly.

OTHER SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Research funded by Illinois ERC must also meet DHHS and NIH requirements regarding inclusion of women, minorities, and children, and use of animal subjects, and use of funds for lobbying activities. Please see Illinois ERC's Research Policy at:

www.uic.edu/spha/glakes/
choose "Funding Opportunities."

BUDGET GUIDELINES

Request the minimum amount of funds that will allow you to conduct the research. Justify each item clearly. Indirect costs will be allowed to a maximum of 8% of each item. A maximum of \$500 of this funding may be requested for equipment costs, with matching funds required for equipment costing more than \$500. Equipment costing more than \$2,000 will not be funded in whole or in part, due to the limited funds available under this program. Applications that include matching funds should detail those funds on the application budget worksheet. Be sure to include personnel fringe benefits and indirect costs as part of the budget. Check with your employer's business office to confirm fringe rates; indirect costs are capped at 8% for these awards. It is not necessary to add tuition remission charges to the budget for research assistants at UIC for these awards.

All fund awards must be utilized in full by June 30, 2006, the end of the fiscal year. There is no mechanism to extend the award beyond June 30, 2006.

REVIEW PROCESS

Proposals will be reviewed by a subcommittee of occupational safety and health professionals. The full committee includes representatives from Industrial Hygiene, Occupational Health Nursing, Occupational Medicine, and Agricultural Safety and Health. The subcommittee reviewing individual proposals in detail will include representatives most appropriate to the proposal.

REVIEW CRITERIA

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the structure of the proposal applications:

1. Significance: The extent to which the project, if successfully carried out, will make an original, important and/or novel contribution to the relevant field.
2. Approach: The extent to which the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses are properly developed, well integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project.

3. Feasibility: The likelihood that the proposed work can be accomplished by the investigators, given their documented experience and expertise, past progress, preliminary data, requested and available resources, institutional commitment (if appropriate), and documented access to other research or technologies.
4. External Funding Plan: A description of how the results will be leveraged into external applications, a time-line for proposal grant submission to external funding agency (specify), and a plan for expanding the work as a line of research.

The following questions may be helpful in addressing the criteria described above.

- a. Will the information be relevant to the field, represent novel research or have apparent applications?
- b. Will results allow the investigator to be more competitive in generating other research funding?
- c. Is the rationale easily understood, ideas easy to follow?
- d. Are the hypothesis, objectives and experimental approach concise and logical?
- e. Is the time frame realistic for the one-year objectives of the investigator?

Preference will be given to proposal applications that address a NORA priority area and include one or more of the following:

1. Research capacity building in trainees and new investigators;
2. Regional occupational safety & health needs;
3. Participation of multiple stakeholders, including employers, employees, labor unions, professional trade associations, private non-for-profit organizations, and academia;
4. Workplace intervention and intervention effectiveness;
5. Scientific merit; and,
6. Multi-disciplinary approaches.

Preference will be given to proposals from the following states in the Illinois Center's region: Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Missouri.

Previous year award recipients may apply for continuation funding by indicating previous award, explaining current project progress, and indicating the purpose of the additional funding. However, priority will be given to new applicants.

ADMINISTRATION OF AWARDS

The amount of funding will be noted in an award letter or e-mail. UIC will establish award accounts for UIC recipients and subcontracts for non-UIC recipients. Accounts will be managed by award recipients and/or their business offices. Recipients will be required to provide periodic reporting of research progress and expenditures. Prior written approval must be obtained from the Research Committee before modifications are made to the budget or research focus. Allowable expenditures must be incurred only within the project period. Award decisions will be announced by July 1, 2005 or earlier.

Please note that progress reports may be requested periodically after projects are awarded, and post-project completion reports on publications, presentations, and other project outcomes will be requested semi-annually.