

## **CALDAR Call for Proposals – Pilot Study Support Program for Emerging Investigators in Longitudinal Substance Abuse Research**

The Pilot Study Support Program of the UCLA Center for Advancing Longitudinal Drug Abuse Research (CALDAR) aims to support new and innovative science in the field of longitudinal substance abuse research and to promote the career development of emerging investigators in this field. The program will provide up to \$20,000 to as many as three investigators to conduct short-term (one year) pilot studies in CALDAR's priority areas of research.

### **Priority areas of research**

Established in 2005 through funding by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and directed by Yih-Ing Hser, PhD, CALDAR supports the development and application of rigorous scientific approaches for advancing longitudinal research on drug abuse and its interplay with HIV infection, drug treatment, and other service systems. Currently, CALDAR is focused on increasing understanding of recovery from substance abuse by offering unique opportunities to empirically investigate patterns and stages of recovery in relation to diverse definitions, factors that facilitate recovery, and potential elements and processes to establish a system of continuing care or addiction management. More information about CALDAR is available at [www.caldar.org](http://www.caldar.org).

Of particular interest to the CALDAR Pilot Study Support Program are innovative studies that are multi-disciplinary (e.g., research on genetics, neuroimaging, or HIV and their interplay with substance use behaviors) and that involve new conceptual developments in and applications of quantitative methods in longitudinal drug abuse research, or that focus on empirical examination of issues in recovery.

### **Requirements and Restrictions**

Each award will range from \$5,000 to a maximum of \$20,000 (including direct and indirect costs). The award period will cover 12 months, beginning September 1, 2012 and ending August 31, 2013. Funds can be used to pay for study-related activities (e.g., equipment, supplies, travel or conference attendance, research assistance) but cannot be used to support the salary of the awardee. If applicable within the funding period, applicants are encouraged to include costs for travel to the biennial CALDAR Summer Institute. Awardees are encouraged to request that their institution reduce or waive indirect costs.

Awardees must obtain all regulatory approvals for study activities prior to the disbursement of funds. Each awardee will be assigned to at least one senior CALDAR researcher as their primary contact person.

### **Expectations**

Pilot studies are expected to:

- (1) lead to larger projects that will be appropriate for independent funding from a government agency or private foundation, and
- (2) result in at least one peer-reviewed publication to be submitted within six months of the end of the project funding period.

Awardees will be required to confer with their CALDAR contact person quarterly, to submit a mid-year progress report, and to provide a brief status report (upon request) to fulfill the NIH reporting requirement for inclusion in the CALDAR progress report.

### Eligibility requirements

- Applicant must hold a doctoral or other advanced degree and meet at least one of these definitions of an emerging investigator:
  - Early stage investigators: Must have completed within 10 years of the application date the final research degree or discipline-specific training required to become a researcher (i.e., individuals within 10 years of completing either their terminal research degree or their medical residency may be eligible to apply). Individual must also meet the New Investigator criteria, noted below.
  - New investigators: Individual cannot have been a principal investigator on a major NIH grant or been awarded a significant NIH independent research award (e.g., not competed successfully for awards other than R00, R03, R15, R21, R34, R36, R41, R43, R55, R56, SC2, SC3, F awards, or K awards).
  - Researchers new to longitudinal substance abuse research: Individual may have had a major NIH grant, but not in the area of longitudinal substance abuse. These investigators are transitioning to a new area and are trying to develop substance use research projects.
- Applicant must be affiliated with a research institution/organization (as defined by NIH) and must submit a letter from their institution confirming their eligibility to receive funds at that institution/organization. Awardees are encouraged to request that their institution reduce or waive indirect costs.
- Applicants do not need to be affiliated with UCLA to apply.
- Minority researchers and researchers focused on health disparities are encouraged to apply.
- Individuals may submit only one application per announcement. There is no limit to the number of applications that may be submitted from an institution/organization.
- Prior applicants whose pilot proposals were not selected for funding may reapply.

### Review criteria

Proposals will be reviewed by the CALDAR Executive Committee and its advisors. Each proposal will be evaluated based upon these criteria:

- Significance – e.g., does the project address an important problem or critical barrier to progress in the field?
- Investigator – e.g., if applicant is an early stage or new investigator, does he or she have appropriate experience and training? Is there evidence of productivity and/or potential to become an independent investigator in the area of longitudinal substance abuse research?
- Innovation – e.g., does the proposal utilize novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions?
- Approach – e.g., are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Are study limitations acknowledged and addressed?

The review committee will also consider whether the proposed budget and timeline are appropriate for the scope and pilot nature of the project and whether human subjects issues are likely to pose problems for study implementation.

## Application requirements

### Letter of intent (no more than 1 page)

- Descriptive title of proposed research
- Brief summary of proposed research
- Suggested senior CALDAR researcher to serve as primary contact person for proposed research (refer to the CALDAR website for CALDAR research staff: <http://www.caldar.org/>)
- Name, address, telephone number, and email of the Principal Investigator
- Name of participating institution/organization
- Description of how the Principal Investigator meets the eligibility requirements

The review committee will evaluate letters of intent according to the *Review criteria*. Letters of intent will be responded to in the order received, and selected applicants will be invited to submit a full application.

### Application

- Cover page (include PI name, proposal title, application date, and table of contents)
- Abstract (no more than 1 page)
- Body of application (no more than 5 pages) should cover these topics:
  - a. Relevance to CALDAR: Statement on how the proposed study fits with at least one of the CALDAR priority areas of research
  - b. Specific aims
  - c. Evidence of innovativeness
  - d. Suitability of applicant and topic for CALDAR Pilot Study Program (as described in *Eligibility requirements* and *Priority areas of research* sections above)
  - e. How the pilot study will lead to independent funding and peer-reviewed publication
  - f. Approach: Include study design, number of subjects, data sources, analytic plan, study limitations and timeline
  - g. Any potential human subjects research issues
- Budget (use the NIH budget form for the PHS 398), including direct and indirect costs
- Budget justification
- Biographical sketch of investigator (use the NIH form for biographical sketches)
- Resources (use the NIH resources page)
- List of current and pending research support
- Letter from institution confirming eligibility to receive funds and verifying whether indirect costs will be reduced or waived
- Assurance from applicant that if funds are awarded, the investigator will comply with all UCLA and NIH policies regarding the conduct of research

## Key dates

- January 31, 2012 – Deadline for prospective applicants to submit a letter of intent
- April 6, 2012 – Deadline for invited applicants to submit an application
- June 11, 2012 – Award notification
- August 15, 2012 – Last date for awardees to provide proof of regulatory approvals

- August 31, 2012 – Anticipated date for funds to be disbursed to awardees
- September 1, 2012 – Anticipated start date for pilot studies
- August 31, 2013 – Anticipated end date for pilot studies

### **Application procedures**

All materials should be formatted in 11 point Arial font with 1 inch page margins.

Materials may be submitted prior to the key dates noted above.

Submit materials by email (preferred) or mail to:

Ariana Metchik  
UCLA Integrated Substance Abuse Programs  
11075 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 200  
Los Angeles, CA 90025  
Email: [arianam@ucla.edu](mailto:arianam@ucla.edu)  
Tel: (310) 263-3606

Applicants will receive emailed confirmation of receipt of materials from Ariana Metchik.

Please email your inquiries or requests for additional information to Ariana Metchik.