

ANNOUNCEMENT AND REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

The Johns Hopkins Center for Health Disparities Solutions

One Year Pilot Project Awards, 2023

The Johns Hopkins Center for Health Disparities Solutions (HCHDS): is dedicated to eliminating disparities in health and health care. The Center conducts multidisciplinary basic and translational research with the goals of advancing knowledge on the causes of health disparities and developing programs and policy interventions to eliminate disparities. The HCHDS was established in October 2002 and is funded by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) at the National Institutes of Health. The thematic focus of the Center is “exploring and addressing the impact of place-based determinants in health disparities among African Americans.”

Description of the Pilot Project Program: The overall goal of the HCHDS Investigator Development Core (IDC) is to create a more diverse biomedical and public health workforce by building the capacity of a cadre of new investigators who are committed to a research portfolio focused on health disparities and minority health research at JHU. The IDC of the HCHDS is soliciting proposals for pilot projects that have potential to advance the scientific understanding of place-based determinants as it relates to health disparities and minority health. Place-based is defined broadly as the physical/built environment, sociocultural environment, policy/regulatory environment, and the healthcare system.

The Pilot Project Program will support projects related to place-based determinants of health disparities and minority health. In particular, the IDC will fund pilot projects that are relevant to the HCHDS thematic focus and promote the research careers of Early Stage Investigators (ESI) who are interested in place-based disparities research. Proposals from ESI with no previous work in place-based determinants of health disparities or minority health will be considered if the projects are intended to establish the ESI credentials as potential place-based researchers. Pilot projects can be preclinical/laboratory, observational, intervention, and community-engaged research studies, but should use a multi-level, multi-domain approach consistent with the [NIMHD Research Framework](#) (which explains the domains of interest). **Proposals must explicitly describe how the proposed research aligns with the NIMHD Research Framework.** Dissemination of the research findings is encouraged and should be described.

Eligibility: Applicants must be a post-doctoral fellow, junior faculty (Assistant Professor, Assistant Scientist, Research Associate or equivalent), or other ESI as defined by NIH at the Johns Hopkins University (Homewood campus, Carey School of Business, Applied Physics Laboratory) or JHMI campus (Bloomberg School of Public Health, School of Nursing or School of Medicine). Applicants from historically underrepresented groups are especially encouraged to apply.

Funds Availability and Use: Funds up to \$50,000 (direct costs only) are available for three one-year pilot projects beginning April 1, 2023. These funds **may** be used for salary support and research expenses including supplies, project personnel such as a technician or research assistant, data collection, data entry, laboratory analysis, study incentives, statistical software packages, costs associated with publishing articles or policy briefs, association fees, investigator travel to present their results at professional meetings or to policymakers, and printing or photocopying. For community-engaged research, funds can be used to provide honorariums to community partners. These funds **may not** be used for, tuition, or stipend, university overhead, clinical patient care, the purchase of computer hardware, or food.

Review Process: Each application will be reviewed by at least two experienced investigators with relevant expertise to evaluate the proposal. Reviewers outside of JHU may be asked to review some of the proposals. The reviewers will use a scoring rubric similar to NIH. In addition, the reviewers will evaluate potential contribution in addressing place-based determinants as it relates to health disparities, and consistency with the NIMHD Research Framework. Applications will be ranked according to the scores to determine the pilot projects to be awarded. The applications selected for funding, along with the regulatory approvals from IRB and/or Institutional Animal Care and Animal Use Committee (IACUC), will be submitted to NIMHD for funding approval.

Application Guidelines: Applicants should submit a single-spaced proposal that consists of the traditional NIH proposal components including title page, abstract, specific aim, research plan (a statement of relevance to the HCHDS thematic focus and the NIMHD framework), list of references, PHS 398 forms: budget forms and justification, PHS human subjects' protection section and forms (if needed), biosketches, list of current funding sources for the investigator, and a letter of support from Department Chair. The specific aims and the research plan should not exceed 4 pages. Please refer to the Submission Guidelines for further details. Projects that have postdoctoral trainees as the PI must designate a faculty mentor as the PI for budgetary responsibilities and submit a letter of support from the faculty mentor. Proposals with multiple PIs will not be accepted. Full documented approval from the IRB is required at the time of submission of the pilot application in congruence with current NIH procedures. In addition, to documentation of IRB approval, the completion of CITI and Conflict of Interest trainings by all applicants and key project staff are required at the time of submission.

Application Deadline: All applications must be submitted electronically to HCHDS@jhu.edu by **5:00 p.m. ET on January 15, 2023**. The full proposal must be submitted both as a single PDF file and a single Word file. Please direct scientific and administrative questions to Roland J. Thorpe, Jr., Ph.D. at rthorpe@jhu.edu.

Funding Decision and Post-Award Expectations: Applicants who are selected for funding will be notified by February 28, 2023. Applicants who accept these awards will then be asked for additional information for submission to NIMHD, e.g., planned enrollment table. **Projects cannot begin until approval has been received by the NIMHD, which may take 30-60 days.** Awardees will be required to provide timely updates to the IDC leadership throughout the award year, attend HCHDS professional and career development activities, attend HCHDS annual retreat and present their findings, present their research to the Community Engagement and Dissemination Core, and provide a written report within 30 days of the end of the budget period.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

1. Title page: please include Title of project; PI; department and/or school; address; phone number; email address, list of collaborating investigators, budget; starting and ending dates for project.
2. Unstructured Abstract (250 words maximum)
3. Public Health Significance (no more than 3 sentences)
4. Budget and justification (maximum \$50K direct costs)
5. Investigator (PI, mentor, and collaborating investigators, affiliation, role in project, amount of time to be devoted to this project)
6. Biographical sketch of investigators ([updated NIH format](#))
7. Specific Aims page (not to exceed 1 page)
8. Revised applications should include a one-page introduction addressing prior critiques.
9. Research Plan (not to exceed 3 pages for sections a-d, ½ page for sections e and f)
 - a. Significance of the research to place based health disparities or minority health, and explicit statement regarding how the proposed research aligns with the NIMHD Research Framework
 - b. Innovation
 - c. Preliminary information if applicable (should demonstrate ability to perform the research)
 - d. Research design and methods: describe subject selection, data collection, research procedures/measures, analysis plan, timetable for completion, and dissemination plan, including how the findings will be shared with the community or population that is the subject of the project.
 - e. Potential benefit to the field: The extent to which the project, if successfully carried out, would make an original and important contribution to reduce health disparities and how these findings would benefit the community or population that is included in the research.
 - i. *Note to basic science applicants: If a molecular pathway has not been established to be relevant to health disparities, then the primary point of the study should be to test this relevance*
 - f. Feasibility of the project being completed within the 12-month award period.
 - g. Literature citations (limit 20)
 - h. Protection of human subjects (describe plans for obtaining informed consent and procedures for informing and protecting subjects to be enrolled in the study if applicable)
10. Letter of commitment from faculty mentor or community collaborators (if applicable)
11. Supporting Documents: (i.e., IRB approval, CITI certificates, Conflict of Interest, etc. for key staff)

Please follow PHS 398 guidelines for budget, Biographical sketch, and human subjects information.

Please submit one PDF version and one Word version that contains all components of the application in the order as presented above via e-mail attachment to HCHDS@jhu.edu by 5:00 p.m. ET, January 15, 2023. Please direct scientific and administrative questions to Roland J. Thorpe, Jr., PhD at rthorpe@jhu.edu.