Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA):
CHIP-Psychiatry Dual-PI Seed Grants for Collaborative Research in Mental Health and Health Behavior FY16
Issued September 10, 2015

A. KEY DATES
- September 10, 2015  FOA posted; earliest submission date
- Friday, February 5, 2016  Letters of Intent (required) due by 11:59 PM EST
- Friday, February 19, 2016  Applicants notified of LOI approval decision
- Friday, March 25, 2016  CHIP Affiliate Application due by 11:59 PM EST
- Friday, April 8, 2016  Full proposals due by 11:59 PM EST
- June 2016  Applicants notified of award decision
- Sep. 1, 2016 – August 31, 2018  Award period
- February 28, 2019  Deadline for resulting dual-PI external grant submission

B. PURPOSE
The Center for Health, Intervention, and Prevention (CHIP) at UConn Storrs and the Department of Psychiatry at UConn Health invite proposals for new research initiatives at the intersection of mental health and health behavior, undertaken jointly by two investigators: one appointed at the Storrs or regional campuses who is a CHIP affiliate, and one appointed in the Psychiatry department at UConn Health. The ultimate goal of the CHIP-Psychiatry Dual-PI Seed Grants for Collaborative Research in Mental Health and Health Behavior is to support interdisciplinary pilot research that will lead to strong future dual-PI external grant applications to be submitted through CHIP and UConn Health.

C. FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND REQUIREMENTS
A total of $50,000 is available to award in this seed grant competition. All grant funds must be expended within two years of the award date. Unexpended funds will revert to CHIP and the Department of Psychiatry.

Seed grant funds may only be used for direct costs of carrying out approved projects, such as:
  a. Personnel who are essential for conducting the research project, such as graduate research assistants and student labor. Individuals who are not on the regular state payroll (i.e., consultants and other off-campus assistance) may be hired to perform special research-related tasks as needed.
  b. Resources that require fee-for-services within UConn or UConn Health.
  c. Participant incentives for recruitment or study participation.
  d. Travel that is necessary to conduct the research; NOT travel to present the results of the research, or travel to explore future funding opportunities.
e. Equipment necessary for conducting the research (“equipment” is defined as an article of tangible, nonexpendable, personal property that costs $5,000 or more).

f. Project supplies, including drugs and services.

g. Other specifically authorized expenses as may be essential to carrying out the project.

**Seed grant funds may not be used for the following:**

a. Principal Investigator’s, Co-Investigator’s, or any faculty member’s salary.

b. Living expenses.

c. Service/maintenance contracts on equipment.

d. Laboratory renovations or other infrastructure renovations.

e. Institutional memberships in professional organizations.

f. Travel to professional meetings to present the results of the research, or any conference attendance.

g. Indirect costs, including clerical and administrative personnel salaries.

h. Costs associated with the publication of results of the research, such as purchase of reprints. Page charges are allowable costs.

i. Investigator training costs, including tuition.

**D. PROJECT AND INVESTIGATOR ELIGIBILITY**

1. Proposals must be novel and must take an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to the study of mental health and health behavior. Both PIs in the dual-PI teams are expected to make appropriate and significant contributions to the proposed research, and to perform new research that could not be achieved without the collaboration and seed grant funding.

2. Two PIs are required and must meet the following eligibility requirements:

   a. The “Psychiatry PI” must have an eligible faculty appointment in the Department of Psychiatry at UConn Health, and be eligible to submit grants through UConn Health. The Psychiatry PI is not required to be a CHIP Affiliate.

   b. The “Storrs PI” must have an eligible faculty appointment at the UConn Storrs or regional campuses (excluding UConn Health), and must be eligible to submit grants through UConn Storrs. The Storrs PI is required to be an approved CHIP Affiliate by the time of final proposal submission. The CHIP Affiliation application form and instructions are available at [http://www.chip.uconn.edu/chip-business-office/affiliate-application/](http://www.chip.uconn.edu/chip-business-office/affiliate-application/). Please allow at least two weeks for approval.

   c. Eligible faculty appointments are: tenured or tenure-track faculty; in-residence research faculty; clinical faculty; other research faculty; research scientists/scholars; and adjunct faculty. Eligible faculty are not restricted to junior faculty.

   d. Ineligible faculty appointments are: post-doctoral fellows; lecturers; research assistants and research associates; visiting titles; and extension titles.

   e. Graduate students are not eligible.

   f. Seed grant proposals must be predominantly the work of the PIs and for the benefit of the PIs’ research programs. Proposals written primarily by graduate students or others in the PIs’ names are not allowed.
3. Only two PIs are allowed on Dual-PI seed grants. A third member may serve as a Co-I or significant contributor but not PI.

4. The proposed research must be consistent with the research missions of both CHIP and Psychiatry:
   a. “CHIP will undertake research to create new scientific knowledge, theoretical frameworks, and methodological advances in the areas of health behavior, health behavior change, health intervention, and prevention. This work will focus on understanding the dynamics of health behavior and related systems, the science of health behavior change, and the science and practice of developing, implementing, evaluating, and disseminating effective interventions.”
   b. “Research in the Department of Psychiatry is wide-ranging in scope and approach, and it aims to advance knowledge that will improve the lives of people with mental illness and substance use disorders.”

5. Examples of eligible topics of study include, but are not limited to:
   - Assessment of mental disorders as mediators or moderators of health behavior change (e.g., the effects of depression on health behavior outcomes in cancer, HIV, etc);
   - Health behavior interventions for mental illnesses and substance use disorders (e.g., behavioral interventions for alcohol/substance use, caregiver interventions for dementia, mindfulness meditation for depression).

6. Proposed studies must be primarily clinical or translational in nature, and must be conducted primarily using human subjects or existing data from human subjects; proposals that are primarily basic science or preclinical studies are not eligible.

7. The PIs must commit in good faith to use the seed grant funds to obtain pilot data to support an external grant proposal that will be submitted through either CHIP or UConn Health, with a substantial subcontract to the other entity, by February 28, 2019.

8. If either PI already has a dual-PI seed grant from a previous fiscal year (e.g. 2015 CHIP-CT Children’s seed grant or 2015 CHIP-Psychiatry seed grant), s/he must close out that award prior to the start of the award period for the 2016 CHIP-Psychiatry seed grant.

9. Each PI can only have one dual-PI submission under review at a time. If the proposal does not receive funding, the PI may apply to the next dual-PI seed grant competition.

E. APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

Note: Neither CHIP nor Psychiatry staff will assist applicants with development of the budget or budget justification, or with writing the seed grant LOI or proposal.

Stage 1: Letter of Intent

1. All applicants must submit an online Letter of Intent (LOI) form, available at http://www.chip.uconn.edu/chip-business-office/seed-grants-and-awards/, by the above specified due date/time. Each dual-PI team should submit only one LOI. A budget is not required at the time of LOI submission. LOIs do not require routing through grants offices at UConn Health or UConn Storrs.

2. LOIs will be reviewed by relevant CHIP and Psychiatry staff to determine the eligibility of the proposed research and applicant team.
3. Applicants must receive written approval of their LOIs prior to submitting a full proposal.

**Stage 2: Full Proposal**

1. Full proposals must be submitted online at [http://www.chip.uconn.edu/chip-business-office/seed-grants-and-awards/](http://www.chip.uconn.edu/chip-business-office/seed-grants-and-awards/) by the above specified due date/time. The application form is modeled after a National Institutes of Health (NIH) R21 grant proposal and will require, at a minimum, an abstract, roles and functions of project personnel, detailed budget and budget justification, biosketches for both PIs, a research plan, references, a human subjects section, and information on other support for the project. Each dual-PI team should submit only one full proposal, with separate budgets for the Storrs PI and the UConn Health PI. Late and/or incomplete submissions will not be accepted, so please plan accordingly and allow plenty of time to prepare your proposal.

2. Full proposals will undergo a rigorous review process based on the National Institutes of Health grant review process, with reviewers from CHIP and Psychiatry. One or more external reviewers may be consulted as well. Individuals who are Senior/Key Personnel or Other Significant Contributors on a seed grant proposal will be excluded from participation in the review process.

3. Each dual-PI team will be notified via email whether or not their proposal has been awarded funding.

**F. REVIEW CRITERIA**

Priority for funding will be based on the following review criteria, in no particular order:

- Scientific merit of the research plan.
- Extent to which the project is novel or innovative, especially a proposal testing a new methodology, new theory, or new area in need of pilot data.
- Relevance of the study to the research missions of CHIP and the Department of Psychiatry.
- Importance of the research question to external funders.
- Feasibility of plans to submit a subsequent dual-PI proposal to external funders no later than February 28, 2019.
- Appropriate and significant scientific contributions by each of the two PIs to complete the aims of the study.
- Composition of the research team (preference will be given to teams with a greater number of disciplines represented).

**G. AWARDEE REQUIREMENTS**

If awarded, the PIs are not required to route their proposal through their Sponsored Programs Services (SPS).

The awarded PIs are responsible for obtaining all required approvals for the research from their relevant IRB(s). Please visit [http://research.uconn.edu/irb/](http://research.uconn.edu/irb/) for more information on IRB approval for research conducted at the UConn-Storrs Campus, the five regional campuses, the School of Law and the School of Social Work. For more information on IRB approval for research conducted at UConn Health, please visit [http://hspo.uchc.edu/irb/index.html](http://hspo.uchc.edu/irb/index.html).
Awardees will be required to submit progress reports every 6 months and a final report at the conclusion of the project or award period. Changes to the project’s objective, PIs, and budget will require prior approval from relevant CHIP and Department of Psychiatry staff.

Detailed awardee instructions/requirements will be distributed to seed grant winners when they are notified of the award decisions. All awardee requirements described above are subject to change in accordance with updated institutional procedures (e.g., routing requirements).

H. CONTACT

For questions not addressed in this FOA, or at http://www.chip.uconn.edu/chip-business-office/seed-grants-and-awards/, please contact CHIP’s Program Coordinator, Megan Zhou, at megan.zhou@chip.uconn.edu.