

UCLA-UCI Center for Eliminating Cardiometabolic Disparities in Multi-Ethnic Populations (UC END-DISPARITIES) Pilot Project Award 2022

Applications are being accepted for one-year to two-year Pilot-Project Awards of up to 40,000 per year (up to \$80,000 over 2 years) for the project period commencing 7/1/2022

Who Should Apply: Applications are being accepted from promising investigators, including those from under-represented backgrounds proposing pilot research projects that focus on improving the health of communities and contributing to the science of eliminating cardiometabolic disparities. Priority will be given to early- and mid-career investigators and post-doctoral researchers.

Applicants are required to have a faculty, research, or post-doctoral position at UCLA, UCI, or at another academic institution/organization in Los Angeles or Orange County at the time of application and throughout the funding period. Researchers from the UCLA CTSI and UCI ICTS affiliated sites, e.g., CDU, and the UCLA CTSI and UCI ICTS ecosystem, such as Los Angeles County DHS, VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, and Children's Hospital of Orange County are also encouraged to apply. If applicants do not have a UCLA or UCI academic appointment, their projects must have a UCLA or UCI co-PI.

Funding Amount Available: Six or more (depending on budget) 1-year to 2-year pilot project awards are available: at least 4 awarded through UCLA and 2 awarded through UCI. The maximum funding available per pilot project is \$40,000 per year for 1-2 years (i.e., up to \$80,000 total over 2 years).

Focus of Pilot Projects: Priority will be given to pilot research projects that are: 1) consistent with the UC END-DISPARITIES theme of "engaging multiethnic populations in research and eliminating disparities in cardiometabolic conditions in communities across Los Angeles and Orange Counties." Areas of scientific focus may include co-occurring and prevalent risk factors and complications of the cardiometabolic diseases that disproportionately affect the multiethnic populations represented in Southern California, with an emphasis on hypertension, stroke, diabetes, and chronic kidney disease; and 2) address cardiometabolic disparities in the pursuit of health equity for vulnerable populations such as: i) preliminary research that will lead to multilevel interventions and mechanistic approaches to promote the prevention, treatment, and management of multiple chronic conditions; ii) measurement of, and data harmonization for, social determinants of health; iii) safety net interventions for medically underserved patients in real-world settings; and iv) projects that leverage or supplement the UC END-DISPARITIES Center's current R01-type research projects (see website). Ideally, pilot projects should demonstrate effective academic-community partnerships, and lead to the publication of at least one first-authored, peer-reviewed manuscript plus subsequent funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) or similar peer reviewed funding sources.

Note: We do **not** fund pilot projects focused on basic science or clinical research designed to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of medications, devices, diagnostic products, and treatment regimens intended for human use. Biomarkers and clinical surrogates that advance the understanding of disease mechanisms can be included as part of project outcomes. Implementation and/or translational science projects are encouraged.

Activities of the Investigator Development Core (IDC): One of the goals of the UC END-DISPARITIES IDC is to provide research training and mentoring to early-career investigators and post-doctoral fellows, including those from backgrounds under-represented in health-related sciences (see Notice of NIH's Interest in Diversity, <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-20-031.html>), so that they can advance their academic careers by conducting research that contributes to the reduction of cardiometabolic disparities. Pilot project recipients will become UC END-DISPARITIES investigators and will be supported by an Investigator Development Core (IDC) pilot project support team, comprised of their primary research mentor, relevant methods expert(s) as needed, a community partner, and administrative support staff. UC END-DISPARITIES pilot investigators are expected to attend: 2-4 IDC pilot project support team meetings per year to get feedback on their project, publications and/or grant applications; every other month Center meetings that include a methodological seminar and a works in progress session; and an annual UC END-DISPARITIES Center retreat. The UC END-DISPARITIES IDC also provides strong support and guidance to pilot project program graduates as they pursue subsequent funding.

Application Timeline:

- **December 7, 2021 at 1pm, December 13, 2021 at 10am, and January 3, 2022 at 11am**, Q and A session(s) regarding pilot project program and application process.
- **January 7, 2022, 12pm**, applicants must complete the online application form and upload a Letter of Intent (LOI) and required supporting documents on the UC END-DISPARITIES website – EndDisparities.mednet.ucla.edu. Not all submitted LOI will advance to the full proposal stage.
- **January 26, 2022**, candidates will be notified if they have been selected to submit a full proposal.
- **March 11, 2022**, selected candidates must submit the full proposal with supporting documents .
- **May 2, 2022**, candidates will be notified of funding decisions. Full proposals and supporting documents will be forwarded to NIH/NIMHD for final approval. The award will be disbursed after **July 1, 2022**.

Letter Of Intent: The LOI must be a Microsoft Word file formatted single-spaced in Arial 11-point font, with a minimum of one-half inch margins, on 8.5"x11" size paper. The application, LOI and supporting documents must include:

- Names of Principal Investigator, proposed research mentor (for early career and post-doctoral fellow applicants), and any community partner(s) or co-investigator(s) identified
- Project title, duration, and amount requested per year (maximum allowable is \$40,000/year, \$80,000 total)
- Specific aims and project plan (combined 2 page maximum) that include:
 - Scientific basis (rationale) for the proposed research and its relationship to other research in the field
 - Study Hypothesis/Research Question(s)
 - Significance: Explain how the project demonstrates an effort to address cardiometabolic disparities and why it is important. Include a specific statement about how the proposed pilot project is related to the UC END-DISPARITIES theme or goals (see Focus of Pilot Projects)
 - Research design and methods: Address the source of the study data (primary and/or secondary data sources) and provide a brief description of the study protocol, including community-engaged components (if relevant) and/or interventions (if any)
 - Evidence of feasibility: Briefly explain the project's aims and objectives to be met within the project timeframe and address readiness to complete the protocol
- Additional pilot project proposal information
 - References: Reference citations relevant to the proposed study may be included on a separate page
 - Mentor role: Statement about the involvement of the mentor and their role in the pilot project
- Bio-sketches for Principal Investigator and research mentor (in the new NIH format)

Full Proposal: The full proposal and supporting documents must include:

- Six-page research plan, including specific aims, significance, innovation, and approach (single-spaced, Arial 11-point font, with minimum one-half inch margins), plus reference citations and optional appendices
- Detailed budget, budget justification, and timeline that includes semi-annual milestones
- Institutional letter of support (from department chair or division chief) confirming candidate will have a faculty, research, or post-doctoral position, and adequate protected time to conduct the proposed project
- Abstract, lay summary, and other requested documents (at: EndDisparities.mednet.ucla.edu)

Application Review Process:

Pilot proposal application packets will be reviewed by a review group that includes UC END DISPARITIES investigator development core leadership and research methods experts from UCLA and UCI, and community partners of the UCLA CTSI, UCI ICTS, and UC END DISPARITIES Center. Review criteria include: significance and impact of the proposed research; extent to which project addresses UC END-DISPARITIES theme; qualifications of the PI and research team; innovation; scientific strength of the research design and approach; extent to which a community-engagement component is incorporated; project feasibility within the proposed time frame; likelihood of generating extramural funding.

Please email questions to ENDDISPARITIES@mednet.ucla.edu.

For more information about the **UC END DISPARITIES Center** visit EndDisparities.mednet.ucla.edu.

Creating a UCLA Logon:

The UCLA Awards portal requires a UCLA logon to access the application. If you do not have a UCLA logon, please follow the instructions below.

Creating a logon is a two-step process:

1. Creating a UCLA logon: <https://www.it.ucla.edu/iamucla/create-logon>
2. Activation Multifactor Authorization (MFA) for security purposes: <https://www.it.ucla.edu/iamucla/enroll-multifactor>

If you need help contact IT Email us at help@it.ucla.edu or call (310) **267-HELP** (4357).

Q&A sessions:

December 7, 2021 at 1pm - <https://ucla.zoom.us/j/92963557671>

December 13, 2021 at 10am - <https://ucla.zoom.us/j/92465098624>

January 3, 2022 at 11am - <https://ucla.zoom.us/j/99498883628>