

GHRI Pilot Award RFA 2026

Purpose: The UAB CFAR Global Health Reciprocal Innovation (GHRI) Scientific Working Group (SWG) in conjunction with the Mary Heersink Institute for Global Health is pleased to announce a second round of funding for the GHRI Pilot Award. The CFAR GHRI SWG aims to promote bidirectional or reciprocal innovations in global health research and practice, with a focus on HIV or HIV-associated conditions. GHRI can be defined as bidirectional, iterative exchange of technologies, methodologies, interventions, and/or processes between low and middle-income countries (LMICs) and high-income countries (HICs) to address **shared** health challenges. There is also recognition that there are common lived experiences between communities within the U.S. and in LMICs, which creates opportunity for collaboration to improve health globally.

While traditional HIV global health programs or projects often took best practices from HICs to LMICs, GHRI promotes the sequential or simultaneous translation of evidence-supported innovations from LMICs to HICs or vice-versa, and the use of balanced and fair partnerships to ensure appropriate adaptation for new settings. This approach can reduce otherwise missed opportunities for LMIC innovations to spread, including those that can help close health gaps globally and within both HIC and LMIC settings.

The UAB CFAR GHRI SWG aims to improve health and well-being through collaborative development, testing, and dissemination of these innovations across different geographical areas.

To be responsive to this RFA, reciprocal innovation projects may include: taking an “innovation” from an LMIC setting to translate to a HIC setting using appropriate adaptation methods; taking an innovation in a HIC setting and translating to an LMIC setting using appropriate adaptation methods, underscoring shared health challenges; taking an innovation in an LMIC and translating to a different LMIC setting; or a project that simultaneously conducts work to develop and test an innovation in both HIC and LMIC settings. Please see our website for projects funded in our last cycle [here](#).

This award is meant to support teams of investigators, working across geographical areas, to gather preliminary data or conduct feasibility studies with the goal of next submitting a larger grant or award to an external funding agency.

Proposal Requirements:

- Principle investigator (PI) or lead mentor must be faculty at UAB OR at a LMIC institution
- Includes at least one UAB faculty member on the team
- Includes at least one LMIC faculty or postdoctoral trainee on the team

- Includes more than one country in the study team and/or in the conduct of the research
- Must focus on HIV prevention, treatment, or an HIV-associated condition (please contact the SWG as needed to check if the proposal focus is within our scope)
- Must have a defined plan for how the pilot will build a foundation for a larger research/program in the future

Encouraged:

- Activities that build and support new partnerships or new directions with existing partnerships
- Activities that will result in peer-reviewed publications
- Activities that will result in a larger collaborative funding proposal/project in the future
- Activities that bring innovations to low resource communities in Alabama
- Multiple PI (MPI) applications are strongly encouraged with investigators from LMIC institutions
- Co-sponsorship by other UAB centers or institutes or departments is welcome and encouraged

Examples of Previously Funded Projects:

- Reciprocal Innovation to adapt an HIV prevention AI-based serious game among youth from Eswatini to Alabama
- Sisters in Motion: A pilot evaluation of a community-based lifestyle program for Black women with HIV and cardiometabolic risk in Zambia and Alabama

Overview of RFA:

Funding amount: \$50,000/year (up to \$100,000 in total if the project is funded for 2 years)

Funding duration: 2 years

Number of awards: 1-2

Timeline:

- RFA release: 15th July 2026
 - Informational sessions:
 - Session 1: August 10, 2026, from 6-7am Central Time
 - Register [here](#).
 - Session 2: August 12, 2026, from 9-10am Central Time
 - Register [here](#).
- Letter of intent (LOI) due: 2nd September 2026, 11:59pm Central Time
- Notification of invitations for full proposal: 16th September 2026
- Full application due: 4th November 2026, 11:59pm Central Time

- Notification of awards: 16th December 2026
- Earliest funding start: 1st January 2027

Application Submission Portal:

Combine all components into one pdf and upload on the UAB CFAR website [here](#).

Application Instructions:

Letter of Intent (LOI): LOI should be focused and limited to one page and include: 1) title, 2) name, e-mail, and affiliation of contact PI, 3) brief description of proposed project, 4) project responsiveness to this RFA, and 5) plans for future funding. Please also include Biosketches of all key personnel.

Full application: Invited applicants who proceed to this second stage will be asked to submit a full proposal that will include the following:

- Cover page: Limit to one page. Must include title of project, contact PI's name, title, institution, phone number and e-mail address; names, titles, and institutional affiliations of any co-investigators; budget amount requested; and duration of award.
- Specific Aims page: Limit to 1 page, Arial font size 11, 0.5 inch margins.
- Research Strategy: Limit to 4 pages, Arial font size 11, 0.5 inch margins. Include timeline and milestones for each year of project.
- Biosketches: Include for all key personnel (link to NIH criteria and forms for non-fellowship biosketch; does not count towards above page limits). Personal statements should be adapted to describe defined role.
- Letter of support: An institutional letter of support from the director or department chair of each single or multiple PI must be included affirming support for the proposal.
- Budget and budget justification.

Application Criteria:

Please note the below application review criteria, noting that applicants are strongly encouraged to address these criteria in the Research Strategy section of their application:

- 1) Significance: Describe how your proposed work has significance in the context of GHRI, including the importance of the problem to be addressed for health in LMIC and/or HIC settings
- 2) Innovation: Describe the innovative components of the proposal
- 3) Investigator(s): Demonstrate that the investigator(s) have background, training, and expertise, as appropriate for their career stage, to conduct the proposed work.

- 4) Approach: Summarize methods, activities, data collection and analysis plans, timeline, as well as any preliminary findings
- 5) Environment: Describe the institutional resources available at both the LMIC and HIC institutions to ensure successful execution of the proposed work.
- 6) Impact and future directions: Describe the impact of achieving your project goals and how these achievements will translate to future, larger projects or funding proposals.

Additional Details:

GHRI toolkit. Please reference the UAB CFAR GHRI SWG's website for a toolkit regarding conceptualization for and operationalization of GHRI [here](#).

Human subjects approval. Institutional Review Board approvals, if applicable, must be obtained at the contact PI's institution prior to receipt of full funding (paying for submission costs including IRB fees in LMICs is allowed), but are not required at the time of submitting the application. Prior to initiation of activities involving human subjects, IRB approval from all participating sites and human subjects training certification for all key personnel will be required. For more information about human subjects approval, see: <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/index.html> and <https://www.uab.edu/research/home/irb>.

Award details. Maximum award is \$50,000 per year. Indirect costs are generally not covered but direct costs that are essential for the success of the project (e.g., IRB review, communication, direct staffing costs, study room rentals, etc.), should be included in the budget as line items. Salary support for faculty is limited to no more than 15% for the contact PI, unless special permission is granted. Salary support for mentors is not allowable. Awards are one to two years in length, with the second year of funding contingent upon successful milestones being met for the first year of the funding and expending at least 75% of the year 1 funds before additional funding is provided.

For questions, please contact:

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