



Request for Applications:
Projects on Obesity- and Health Disparities- Related Pilot Feasibility Studies
(RFA-OHDRC-22-001)

The Obesity Health Disparities Research Center (OHDRRC) led by the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) in partnership with Jackson State University (JSU), University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC), and Louisiana State University (LSU), invites applications for **pilot feasibility studies to support new research initiatives in any area related to obesity and health disparities. Pilot funding will be up to \$50,000 for 1-year. Funding is conditional on available funding from the NIMHD.** Pilot feasibility funding is intended to provide initial project support for new investigators, allow exploration of possible innovative new directions for established investigators in obesity research that represent a significant departure from ongoing funded research, and stimulate investigators from other areas to use their expertise for obesity and health disparities research.

Investigators who meet one of the following criteria are eligible to apply:

- NIH-defined New and Early Stage Investigators at the time of funding without current or past NIH research project support, or
- Senior investigators who are new to obesity and/or health disparities research.

Eligible applicants must have a faculty appointment at the UAB, JSU, LSU, or UMMC. All applicants must identify a senior faculty member who has a strong record of NIH funding as a PI in the area related to the proposed research and who will agree to provide guidance through the duration of the proposed study. Investigators are encouraged to contact the Investigator Development Core leaders to determine their eligibility and appropriateness of their project:

Isabel Scarinci, PhD, MPH

scarinci@uab.edu

205-975-7177

Stephen Barnes, PhD

sbarnes@uab.edu

205-934-7117

The pilot feasibility studies **must address health disparities and obesity**. The complex relationship between health disparities and obesity can be addressed at any domain of influence (biological, behavioral, physical/built environment, and health care systems) and within any level of influence (individual, interpersonal, community, and societal) as outlined in the [NIMHD Research Framework](#). Any NIH-designated [health disparity](#) can be addressed with sufficient documentation that such disparity exists. "NIH-designated U.S. health disparity populations include Blacks/African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, American Indians/Alaska Natives, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, socioeconomically disadvantaged populations, underserved rural populations, and sexual and gender minorities." Priority will be given to applicants that demonstrate close relevance to the OHDRRC's focus, OHDRRC core facility usage (information at the end of this document), and likelihood of future R01 (or equivalent) funding.

Interested faculty should submit a Letter of Intent in a single PDF file that includes the following:

1. 1-page Letter of Intent including the project title, names of the PI and mentor;
2. Abstract (<500 words) highlighting background & significance, hypothesis, specific aims, experimental design, and procedures of the project including relevant statistical analyses;
3. PI's NIH biographical sketch

Faculty who have previously submitted a five-page application are eligible to resubmit a letter of intent. If selected they will be asked to include an additional 1-page response to previous reviews to the application.

Please submit electronically in a **single PDF file** to Kaitlyn Waugaman, kjwaugaman@uabmc.edu by **Friday, May 20, 2022 at 11:59 p.m.** The review committee will review all submissions and select the most competitive for development of a five-page application plus supporting materials for a final round of selection. Specific instructions will be provided to those selected by May 23, 2022. The full application will be due **Saturday, June 25, 2021 by 11:59 p.m.**



The UAB OHDRRC is supported by three shared core resources, representing distinct units with complementary physical and personnel resources that operate in an interactive pattern. The cores are available to support OHDRRC Pilot Feasibility Study recipients seeking the services of experts and/or access to services which are not available within their academic units or which can be provided in a higher quality and more cost-efficient manner. The cores are:

The Common Data Elements and Shared Resource (CDEMR)

The CDEMR provides statistical consultation on study design, research proposal development, and manuscript submission; provides statistical analyses for OHDRRC projects including statistical genetics, and interfaces with other research cores on the UAB campus; participates in teaching and training activities of the OHDRRC; and develops methodologies for novel experimental designs for members in the field and statistical analyses as needed. The CDEMR provides research tools, including validated scales and instruments that can be used to either directly measure or describe biological, psychological, sociocultural, environmental, geographic, and temporal variations in obesity-related health disparities.

The Academic Community Engagement and Dissemination Core (ACED)

The ACED works to strengthen and expand existing partnerships & coalitions, establishing statewide capacity for expansion of an integrated set of initiatives for obesity reduction through healthy eating and physical activity. Additionally, the core conducts targeted dissemination of research-based, obesity-related health disparities information using mass and targeted diffusion via communication channels and established stakeholder groups.

The Investigator Development Core (IDC)

GOALS: (1) to identify and fund one-year proposals for innovative research in the field of obesity-related health disparities across the life course; (2) to increase the critical mass of independent investigators in obesity-related health disparities research by providing formal mentoring and career enhancement opportunities for early stage investigators; and (3) to evaluate the progress of individual pilot projects and the cumulative success of the OHDRRC pilot program.

Key Dates

LOI Due: Friday, May 20, 2021

Announcement of those selected to submit full applications: May 23, 2022

Application Due: Saturday, June 25, 2022

Announcement of Recipients: July 18, 2022

Projected Start Date (estimated): August 1, 2022

For administrative questions, contact:

Kaitlyn Waugaman, MPH, RDN, LDN

Program Manager, OHDRRC

412-508-5498

kjwaugaman@uabmc.edu