

## **GUIDELINES FOR UAB SPARKMAN PILOT FUNDING APPLICATIONS**

The mission of the Sparkman Center for Global Health (Sparkman Center) at UAB is to develop sustainable approaches to advance global health equity and social justice through support for cutting-edge interdisciplinary education, research, global health practice, and community engagement in collaboration with international and domestic partners. We organize our programs collaboratively with academic institutions, international agencies, and health ministries within host countries. Additionally, the Sparkman Center works to enhance the capacity of the UAB community to engage, prepare, and support current and future health professionals in a global health agenda.

The Sparkman Center will provide funding for internal grant applications that propose research projects, public health practice, and global health & development projects that support the Sparkman Center's mission of promoting health in less developed countries. All projects should have a strong research or evaluation component. Only those applications aligned with the Sparkman Center mission will be considered for funding through this mechanism. [Read our full vision, mission, and shared values here.](#) We anticipate funding 2-3 applications of up to \$20,000 each.

### **Eligibility Criteria:**

UAB faculty and fellows with advanced degrees (MD, PhD, DrPH, etc.) are eligible. The integration of early stage faculty with other UAB researchers and community partners/stakeholders is key and required to advance all pilot projects within the context of a team building approach. Preference will be given to those who have never had an R01 in global health field of study or who are new to global health research. Established investigators with an R01 in global health are eligible to apply if they are exploring a new direction. All projects should have clear next steps in terms of future opportunities.

### **Timeline:**

- RFA Released: **December 1, 2021**
- Deadline for 2-page Concept: **February 1, 2022**
- Full Application Applicants Announced: **Mar 1, 2022**
- Deadline for Full Applications: **May 1, 2022**
- Awards Announced by: **May 31, 2022**
- Funding Starts: **June 1, 2022**

## Concept Proposals

To apply for Sparkman Center funding please submit a Concept Proposal as a single PDF to Anna Helova at [ahelova@uab.edu](mailto:ahelova@uab.edu)

**Concept Proposal Application Packet is available at:**

<https://www.uab.edu/sparkmancenter/funding/pilot-grant-funding>

The Concept Proposal includes (in this order in a single Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) file):

1. Face page
2. Concept Research Plan (Maximum 2 pages for a-c below).
  - a. Project Description: Outline the specific aims, hypotheses, brief preliminary data (if any), and brief research/evaluation design. As the criteria for funding are primarily based upon the scientific impact, investigator, significance, approach, and innovation, concepts should address these topic areas.
  - b. Combined Significance and Innovation Section: Briefly explain the importance/significance of the proposed project in the context of global health research that is promoted by agencies engaged in global health research. Describe the innovative nature of the proposal and how the proposed research will support the mission of the Sparkman Center and advance the field. Note the specific funding sources and mechanisms to be targeted with the results from this study, as well as the timeline for follow-on submissions.
  - c. Eligibility/Team Building Component (no more than one-half page): The integration of junior faculty with other UAB researchers at various levels is required by the Sparkman Center to advance all pilot projects within the context of a team building approach. Requests for pilot funding from single investigators working alone will not be funded with Sparkman Center pilot project funds. The PI of the study should adhere to the eligibility requirements stated above. Co-investigators should include senior, junior, or early stage investigators constituting research teams. Involvement of community stakeholders in the global setting is also encouraged.

Investigators should clearly state how their proposed research will impact the UAB research environment, improve the UAB research infrastructure (e.g. facilitating access to methods, improved knowledge, enhanced ability to apply for common funding), and thereby facilitate future global health research by other UAB investigators.

3. Biographical Sketches (Include one for each investigator): All applicants and collaborators should submit NIH biographical sketches (5-page limit) with personal statements adapted to describe defined roles on the project. Use the NIH biographical sketch form approved for use on/after January 25, 2022. The form, instructions, and a sample biographical sketches are available at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>

**Researchers whose concept proposals are selected for the full proposal competition phase will be notified by email.**

## Full Applications

Full Proposals will be submitted electronically in one Adobe PDF file to Anna Helova at [ahelova@uab.edu](mailto:ahelova@uab.edu). The full proposal will be on the modified forms used commonly for NIH grant applications (PHS 398 forms) and should follow a modified NIH investigator initiated grant application (R01) format.

**Full Application Packet is available at:** <https://www.uab.edu/sparkmancenter/funding/pilot-grant-funding>

For detailed instructions on how to fill out the forms see:

<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html> with the following modifications. The Research Plan (Specific Aims through Approach) is limited to 4 pages (Bibliography and References Cited sections do not count toward the page limit). No appendices are allowed. Do not submit Targeted/Planned Enrollment Tables. Applications must be in English. ***Please note that applications that do not adhere to the instructions will not be considered.***

The Full Proposal includes (in this order in a single Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) file):

1. Face page
2. Complete budget and justification (no page limit)
3. Research Plan (Maximum 4 pages for a-d below).
  - a. Specific Aims (suggested length ½ page)
  - b. Significance (suggested length 1 page)
  - c. Innovation (suggested length ½ page)
  - d. Approach (suggested length 2 pages)
4. Bibliography and References cited (as needed)
5. Description of the Research Environment (suggested length ½ page)
6. Protection of Human Subjects (if applicable; maximum 1 page)
7. Biographical Sketches (Include one for each investigator)
8. Letters of Support (letters of support from collaborators essential to the proposed project must accompany the application).

## Budget Development Guidelines and Restrictions

- Maximum direct costs are \$20,000. Indirect costs are not allowed. Awards are one year in length. One no-cost extension may be requested at the end of the first year budget period only.
- Salary support is limited to 10% for the PI, unless special permission is received.
- Budgeting for travel to project sites and conferences to present project research results is allowable (travel budget limited to no more than \$7,000).
- Costs associated with Institutional Review Board (IRB) review of human research protocols are not allowable as direct charges.
- All costs must conform to the NIH Grants Policy Statement (GPS) and applicable U.S. Office of Management and Budget OMB circulars for necessity and reasonability, allocability, conformance and consistency, as well as allowability. Please follow the link below to section 7.2 cost principles section of the [NIH Grants Policy Statement](#).

## Review Criteria

A Scientific Selection Committee (SSC) will review the applications. Criteria for selection are primarily based upon the scientific impact, investigative team, significance, approach, and innovation. Specifically, the project will be evaluated for its significance to global health goals and priority areas in less developed countries, and how well it is aligned with the strategic interests of the Sparkman Center. Applications must clearly describe a vision and the feasibility of the approach. Applications based on a high degree of innovation are preferred. Applications that do not include a clear description of how the proposed research will lead to the formation of a research team are deemed ineligible.

## Award Details

### Pre-Award Approvals

Funding will be awarded from the Sparkman Center Administrative Office. All questions regarding the awarding of funding should be directed to the contact listed in the notice of award. Prior to the awarding of funding, the following information must be provided, if applicable:

- Institutional Review Board approvals, if applicable, must be obtained prior to **receipt** of an award, but are not required to submit an application. Prior to receipt of an award 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: <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/> and <http://www.uab.edu/research/administration/offices/irb/Pages/Home.aspx>

### Post-Award Requirements

- Applicants chosen for funding will be expected to present the details of their study at a Sparkman Center Seminar and/or the UAB CCTS PDQ Committee for review of the study. This will provide an opportunity to identify additional synergies within UAB and the Sparkman Center, explore other means of support, and gather recommendations to enhance the study. Other presentations, including a 'research in progress talk' (midway) and at the end of the funding period may also be requested.
- Applicants will be requested to become UAB Sparkman Scholars with the potential to be matched with and mentor UAB students (Sparkman Fellows) working on global health projects.
- Awardees will be required to submit yearly progress reports\*\*. Awardees will be tracked after the award ends to monitor productivity (abstracts, publications, grants).
- Support from this mechanism must be acknowledged in all publications and presentations.
- If for any reason the awardee is unable to fulfill the requirements or adhere to the policies of the award, at the discretion of the funding mechanism leadership, the award may be revoked.

**\*\*All recipients of Sparkman Center funding are obliged to provide information, not limited to, progress reports or final performance reports, as requested by the Sparkman Center. Failure to provide such information in a prompt and timely manner may result in the immediate termination of the grant and will preclude the grantee from applying for future Sparkman Center funding opportunities.**

Questions or more information:

Anna Helova, UAB Sparkman Deputy Director; [ahelova@uab.edu](mailto:ahelova@uab.edu), phone: (205) 975-7770