The Center for Environmental Health and Susceptibility (CEHS) announces the availability of funding for Interdisciplinary Pilot Projects based on specifications shown below. The CEHS will award at least two interdisciplinary grants of $50,000 each.

This RFA is aimed at supporting exploration of innovative ideas from interdisciplinary research teams interested in the complex interactions between the environment and the pathogenesis of human disease. The main purpose of this RFA is to promote collaborations between basic, population and clinical scientists in investigations addressing the CEHS’ theme: “translating interdisciplinary research on environmental health threats to improve public health in North Carolina.” The CEHS has three Translational Research Focus areas: Environmental Cancer, Cardiopulmonary Disease, and Developmental Disease. It is expected that these projects will generate preliminary data that will lead to new grant proposals, especially R01s and Program Projects. Funding for these awards is made possible by support from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS): P30ES010126.

GUIDELINES:

The proposals will compete for funding through an external review process. Applicants should submit a 5-page application, following an abbreviated NIH 2590 format: specific aims, background and significance, previous studies, research plan, human subjects, vertebrate animals, collaborators, and references. The majority of the proposal should be devoted to the research plan, whereas specific aims, background, significance, and previous studies should be limited. **THE TEXT WILL BE LIMITED TO FIVE SINGLE-SPACED PAGES**, using Arial 11-point font, and one-inch margins. The application cover page, 180-word abstract, budget and budget justification pages, and references are not included in the five-page limit.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the CEHS Facility Cores (information about the CEHS Facility Cores is available on the CEHS Website: [http://sph.unc.edu/cehs](http://sph.unc.edu/cehs)). The applicant whose proposed research involves the use of a CEHS Facility Core should include a letter of support from the corresponding Facility Core Director, indicating that the Core is aware of, and willing to work with the investigator on the proposed project. Likewise, proposals submitted in collaboration with the Community Outreach and Engagement Core (COEC) should include a letter of support from the COEC Director.

For a proposal to be relevant to this RFA, it must involve interdisciplinary collaboration between population, basic and/or clinical scientists (at least two); address topics leading to a better understanding of the complex interactions between the environment and the pathogenesis of human disease; and propose use of at least two CEHS Facility Cores.

Applicants should submit electronically one single file (MS Word or pdf, as an email attachment) containing:

(a) complete application as indicated above, including cover page (use attached form), 180-word abstract, five-page proposal, references;
(b) budget and budget justification, using the current NIH format pages PHS 2590 (attached form must be used); and

(c) statement signed by the Facility Core Director that any Facility Core whose services are listed will collaborate with the proposed pilot project.

Once the selection process is completed and the awards are announced, the lead investigators for those selected applications must obtain: (1) IRB and/or IACUC authorization, if pertinent, and (2) statistical consultation from the CEHS Biostatistics and Bioinformatics Facility Core (BBFC): contact Dr. Amy Herring amy_herring@unc.edu; a letter or email from the Biostatistics and Bioinformatics Facility Core is needed before funds are released. Researchers are encouraged to consult with the BBFC before grant submission and should contact Dr. Herring before March 1, 2017 if consultation is desired. The BBFC maintains a walk-in clinic on Mondays from 12:30-2:30 in Rosenau 254 for additional consultations (appointments not required). Project ID numbers will not be released until the IRB or IACUC, if relevant, are received and documentation is on file regarding statistical consultation with the BBFC.

**Funding and Allowable Items**

At least two projects of $50,000 each (direct costs) will be funded for a one-year period. Funds will not be permitted for faculty salaries, stipends, travel or overhead. Funding will be permitted for personnel, supplies and equipment. For personnel, the appropriate cost for fringe benefits should be included (23.093% for social security and retirement of permanent staff; 7.65% for social security of temporary employees). Health insurance for permanent staff and Graduate Research Assistants (GRA) should also be included (check health insurance rate with business office of corresponding department). If a GRA is hired, the PI should decide if the tuition award cost will be included in the budget (and is consistent with the PI’s departmental guidelines).

**Budget and Budget Justification**

The budget and budget justification should be detailed, and should follow the format of the current NIH Budget and Budget Justification pages (see attached forms PHS 2590). If the proposal is funded and its budget approved, any subsequent changes must be requested in writing, with sufficient justification for the change. The information will be submitted to the Office of Sponsored Research; however, the CEHS CANNOT guarantee that the change request will be honored. Changes should not be requested during the last 60 days of the budget period.

**Process and Criteria for Review of Proposals**

Each Proposal will be evaluated by at least two reviewers, based on the following criteria:

[1] Scientific merit, innovation, significance and feasibility;

[2] Likelihood to evolve into a successful funded application;

[3] Interdisciplinary collaborations;

[4] Relevance to environmental health; and


The CEHS Internal Advisory Committee will make the final decision regarding funding.

**DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS: MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2017 (5:00 PM).**

Send applications to: Jorge Izquierdo, PhD, CEHS Administrator: Jorge_Izquierdo@unc.edu