

## CALL FOR 2021-2022 PILOT & FEASIBILITY PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

The UNC Nutrition Obesity Research Center (NORC) is one of 11 research centers in the country funded by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (P30DK056350). It is specifically designed to provide support and expertise to scientists studying the role of nutrition and obesity in public health.

**I. PURPOSE.** The primary objective of this call for applications is to support the development of innovative research in nutrition and/or obesity at UNC-Chapel Hill.

**II. PROJECT CRITERIA.** UNC NORC Pilot & Feasibility (P&F) Program projects may be biomedical, epidemiological, or clinical. They may include laboratory or non-laboratory research projects that focus either on human nutrition, animal work that could be translated to human nutrition, or basic research related to nutrition or obesity. Human nutrition or human obesity projects may focus on inpatient or outpatient studies or on epidemiological or community-based research that is social or behavioral in nature. To support their P&F projects, investigators are *strongly encouraged* to use one or more of the services offered by the four UNC NORC cores found here: <https://sph.unc.edu/norc/cores/>. We welcome applications intended to generate pilot data that will address reviewers' comments from recently scored grants.

Applications will be considered for all areas of nutrition and/or obesity research with an emphasis on the following interdisciplinary approaches to solving problems in nutrition/obesity research:

- Basic Science and Fundamentals of Nutrition and Metabolism
- Nutrition and Chronic Diseases in Populations
- Precision Nutrition: Metabolic Responses, Metabolic Variation, and Requirements for Nutrients
- Understanding and Changing Diet- and Obesity-Related Behavior

**III. FUNDING.** The UNC NORC will award **up to two grants of \$39,000 in direct costs each**. The award must be spent within one year of the project's start date. The project's start date must be within three months of notice of award. Funds will be awarded and made available as early as September 2021. Awardees may apply for a no cost extension to carry forward funds past the project end date. P&F funding is not intended to extend projects for which it would be appropriate to submit an NIH grant application. Funds are not intended to support or supplement ongoing research projects. All expenses must conform to the general policies of UNC-CH and the UNC NORC. Institutional Review Board (IRB) and/or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval is required before funds will be released. 75% of funds will be released upon completion of IRB and/or IACUC approvals; the remaining 25% of funds will be released after completion of a six-month progress report. The awardee will be expected to meet with their UNC mentor and the UNC NORC P&F Program Co-Directors at months 3, 6, and 9 (at a minimum).

**IV. ELIGIBILITY.** Faculty members or senior postdoctoral scholars at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill who fall into one of the following three categories are eligible to apply:

1. Applicants must be new investigators without current or past NIH research support (R01, P01 or R24) as a PD/PI. Current or past K01 awards are acceptable. OR
2. Applicants must be established, funded investigators with no previous work in nutritional sciences and/or obesity and who wish to test the applicability of their expertise to a nutritional science and/or obesity-related problem. OR
3. Applicants must be established investigators in nutrition/obesity research who propose testing innovative ideas that represent a clear departure from their ongoing research interests.

**V. CAREER DEVELOPMENT & ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.** In addition to pilot funding, the UNC NORC will provide:

- Biostatistical support through to ensure the rigor and reproducibility of the proposed P&F project
- Grant writing training through one-on-one mentoring and workshops
- Mentoring from experts in the awardee's research area to provide guidance for the funded project, and to enhance and expand the awardee's networking opportunities
- Career development training through mentoring and training opportunities
- Opportunities for peer mentoring, including professional development workshops

**VI. PRE-PROPOSALS.** Interested applicants must first submit a pre-proposal application and [an NIH biosketch](#) by **5:00 PM on Wednesday, July 7, 2021**. Submit your biosketch as a PDF and complete [the online pre-proposal application here](#). Applicants are encouraged to identify a mentor at UNC in advance of preparing the pre-proposal application. The UNC NORC Internal Advisory Committee will evaluate the pre-proposal applications and notify applicants no later than Monday, July 19. **Selected investigators will be invited to submit a full proposal for final consideration by 5:00 PM on Monday, August 30, 2021.**

**P&F FUNDS MAY BE USED FOR:**

- Animal maintenance
- Laboratory/research expenses
- Publication fees
- Research equipment (less than \$5,000)
- Research supplies and materials
- Technical/research staff support
- Other expenses deemed necessary to successfully execute the proposed project (other than those below)

**P&F FUNDS MAY NOT BE USED FOR:**

- Computer purchases
- Domestic or foreign travel
- Dues/membership fees
- General office supplies and equipment
- Indirect costs
- Laboratory space rental
- PI salary support
- Professional education/training
- Research equipment over \$5,000
- Secretarial/administrative salary support
- Tuition

**VII. CONTACT.** For questions about the application process, please contact [Dr. John Easterbrook](#), Managing Director of the UNC NORC. For science-related questions, please contact [Dr. Raz Shaikh](#) or [Dr. Susan Smith](#), Co-Directors of the UNC NORC P&F Program. Learn more about the UNC NORC P&F Program at <https://go.unc.edu/norcipilot>.