



April 28, 2021

Re: Call for Proposals for NC OSHERC Pilot Project Awards for 2021-2022

Dear Colleagues:

The North Carolina Occupational Safety and Health Education and Research Center (NC OSHERC) announces the availability of for pilot research projects. The goal of the pilot project program is to provide funding for investigators to conduct short-term projects to better understand occupational exposures and related safety and health issues. These projects may be new or creative characterization studies, those that are designed as research translation projects (i.e., research to practice), or those that are testing out a new method or approach to scientific inquiry. The NC OSHERC pilot grants are seed money. In all cases, the project will address an important area of research in occupational safety and health in one of the NORA sectors listed at: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/sector.html> or related to Total Worker Health (TWH) found at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/totalworkerhealth/default.html>. Project proposals may also include the current COVID-19 pandemic, as long as they align with a NORA and/or TWH sector. It is important to visit the NIOSH website that discusses the NORA sector and the Total Worker Health approaches. It is expected that ALL pilot projects will generate preliminary data that will lead to new grant proposals, especially proposals to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). All successful applications will clearly articulate specific plans for extramural funding applications. Funding for NC OSHERC pilot grants is made possible by support from NIOSH: T42OH00 8673.

Examples of pilot/small projects could include such areas as:

1. Provide initial support for a translational/research to practice project (e.g., testing ergonomics intervention at the worksite).
2. Allow exploration of possible innovative new directions in OSH sciences within program areas.
3. Stimulate investigators from other fields to apply their expertise to OSH issues (e.g., behavioral applications).
4. Develop new mechanisms for external or multi-ERC collaborative partnerships to address emerging occupational safety and health concerns.
5. Develop constructs for what works in integration of health protection/health promotion.
6. Support for trainee research projects.

The NC OSHERC Pilot Projects Program accepts application for a maximum of \$10,000 inclusive of all costs (direct and indirect cost), depending on the number of awards made, unless additional funding becomes available. Indirect costs are limited to 8% and must be included within the total award for the pilot project. Funding will be awarded to a faculty member or other young investigator, or to a current student with a faculty mentor. Preference will be given to the latter, and for proposals from the Southeastern region of the U.S. Competitive applications will be relevant to the NC OSHERC's mission, clearly addressing a topic that leads to a better understanding of the occupational exposures and related safety and health issues. Applicants should also discuss a plan for future application for National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health funding.

We see this as an opportunity to extend projects you already have underway or develop new ideas for research that can be accomplished within our budgetary parameters. The deadline date for receipt of the proposal from you is **June 1, 2021** and should include:

- Application Cover Page
- Abstract (max 250 words)

- Research Plan; maximum 2-page, single-spaced proposal (Times 11-point font, and half-inch margins) describing the pilot project concept that details:
 - Specific Aims
 - Approach (i.e., the work required to achieve this within the context of the goal of the pilot project program as stated above)
 - Relevance, Innovation, and Impact
 - Next steps in future funding
- References
- Timeline
- Budget and Budget Justification (i.e., estimated but detailed total budget, inclusive of direct/indirect costs, not to exceed the total amount available for this award as described above).
- A short description of the student and/or faculty member's existing works (max. 1 page)
- NIH Biosketch for lead/faculty investigator (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>); and CV for student investigator (if applicable).

Prior to the awarding of any funds, IRB or IACUC approval must be obtained for projects including human subjects or vertebrate animals, respectively, after which the project will be reviewed for final approval by the Center director. **Funds awarded must be spent within the current award budget period, or by June 30, 2022. Semi-annual reports** of not more than two pages in length are required of funded pilot projects. **A final report** must be submitted no later than 90 days following the award budget period, or by September 30, 2022. Awardees are also requested to present their findings/results at the joint Southeastern States Occupational Network/Southeast Regional Research Symposium in February 2023. Travel assistance is provided to awardees to attend the conference.

Please send all pilot project proposals as an email attachment to Julie Myers at jimmyers@unc.edu. Proposals will then be distributed to reviewers. If this is not feasible, please send by fax or hard copy to the address below, so it is received by the deadline date. All proposals, electronic, mailed, or faxed, must be **received** by the due date of **June 1, 2021**.

Pilot projects will be reviewed by a panel comprised of individuals with expertise in the field of occupational safety and health and include at least one member of the NC OSHERC Executive Committee. All review panel members will be ineligible to compete in this pilot project application process. Review criteria include:

- scientific merit,
- relevance to the goal/objectives of NC OSHERC, and NIOSH NORA and Total Worker Health,
- creativity related to and innovativeness of the project,
- feasibility to conduct the research,
- likelihood of leading to future work and research funding (developing an R01-like project),
- relevance to goals/objectives of the student's academic program.

We hope you will be eager to participate in this new endeavor and look forward to receiving your proposal by the due date specified.

Sincerely,



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cc: NC OSHERC Executive Committee