Dear Colleagues,

The Hopkins Center for Health Disparities Solutions is seeking proposals from new and early career investigators including postdoctoral fellows for new pilot projects to be initiated in 2018. These should be pilot project proposals that focus on place based disparities.

A description of the Center’s pilot program and the application procedures is included in the attached call for proposals. Please feel free to circulate this call for proposals to other potentially interested individuals. The deadline for submission is Friday, December 15, 2017 at 5:00 PM.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes,

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ANNOUNCEMENT AND REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

The Johns Hopkins Center for Health Disparities Solutions

Pilot Project Awards, 2018

The Johns Hopkins Center for Health Disparities Solutions (HCHDS) is dedicated to the elimination of disparities in health and health care. The Center conducts multidisciplinary basic and translational research with the goals of advancing knowledge on the causes of health disparities, and developing program and policy interventions to eliminate disparities. The HCHDS was established in October 2002 by a grant from the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities of the National Institutes of Health. HCHDS has been thrice renewed as a Center of Excellence for Health Disparities by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities.

Description of the Pilot Project Program: The overall goal of the HCHDS Investigator Development Core (IDC) is to create a more diverse biomedical and public health workforce by building the capacity of a cadre of new investigators who are committed to a research portfolio focused on health disparities and minority health research at JHU. The IDC of the HCHDS is soliciting proposals for pilot projects that have potential to advance the scientific understanding of place-based determinants as it relates to health disparities and minority health.

The Pilot Project Program will support new and early stage investigators (ESI) with projects related to place-based determinants of health disparities and minority health. In particular, the IDC will fund pilot projects that are relevant to the HCHDS thematic focus, and promote the research careers of ESI who are interested in place-based disparities research. Proposals from ESI with no previous work in place-based determinants of health disparities or minority health will be considered if the projects are intended to establish the ESI credentials as a potential place-based researchers. Pilot projects can be observational or intervention studies but should use a multi-level, multi-domain approach consistent with the NIMHD research framework (which explains the domains of interest). These projects should be developed in the thematic focus area of HCHDS, “exploring and addressing the impact of place-based determinants in health disparities among African Americans”.

Eligibility: Applicants must be a post-doctoral fellow, junior faculty (Assistant Scientist, Assistant Professor or equivalent), or other ESI as defined by NIH at the Johns Hopkins University (Homewood campus, Carey School of Business, Applied Physics Laboratory, or JHMI campus: Bloomberg School of Public Health, School of Nursing or School of Medicine). Applicants from historically underrepresented groups are especially encouraged to apply.

Funds Availability and Use: Funds up to $50,000 (direct costs only) are available for three one-year pilot projects beginning February 1, 2018 and three one-year pilot projects beginning May 1, 2018. These funds may be used for research expenses including: supplies, project personnel excluding university-based faculty members, data collection, data entry, laboratory analysis, study incentives,
statistical software packages, costs associated with publishing articles or policy briefs, investigator travel to present their results at national meetings or to key policymakers, and printing or photocopying. These funds may not be used for salary support for any member of the team, tuition, or stipend, university overhead, clinical patient care, the purchase of computer hardware, or food. Prior to the release of funds, investigators must demonstrate IRB approval of the proposed project.

**Review Process:** Each application will be reviewed by at least two experienced investigators with relevant expertise to evaluate the proposal. Reviewers outside of JHU may be asked to review some of the proposals. The reviewers will use the NIH scoring rubric. In addition, the reviewers will evaluate potential contribution in addressing place-based health disparities, and consistency with the NIMHD framework. Applications will be ranked according to the scores to determine the pilot projects to be awarded. The selected applications, along with the regulatory approvals from IRB or IACUC, will be submitted to NIMHD for funding approval. Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to address discrepancies and resubmit their application for the next cohort, indicating how the revised application addresses the limitations identified from the prior review.

**Application Guidelines:** Applicants should submit a single-spaced proposal that consists of the traditional NIH proposal components including title page, abstract, specific aim, research plan (a statement of relevance to the HCHDS thematic focus and the NIMHD framework), list of references, PHS 398 budget forms and budget justification, human subjects’ protection section, biosketches, list of current funding sources for the investigator, and a letter of support from Department Chair. The specific aim page and the research plan should not exceed 4 pages. Please refer to the Submission Guidelines for further detail. Projects that have postdoctoral trainees as the PI must designate a faculty mentor as the PI for budgetary responsibilities; a letter of support from the faculty mentor will be required. Approval from the IRB is not required at the time of submission of the pilot application in congruence with current NIH procedures; however, documentation of IRB approval, and the completion of CITI and Conflict of Interest trainings by all applicants and key project staff prior, is required prior to release of the funds.

**Application Deadline:** Submit applications electronically to HCHDS@jhu.edu by 5:00 p.m., December 15, 2017. Please direct scientific and administrative questions to Dr. Roland J. Thorpe, Jr. at rthorpe@jhu.edu

**Funding Decision and Post-Award Expectations:** Applicants who are selected for funding will be notified by January 19, 2018. Applicants who accept these awards will then be asked for additional information for submission to NIMHD, e.g., planned enrollment table, IRB application, by March 16, 2018. Awardees will be required to provide timely updates to the IDC leadership throughout the award year, attend HCHDS professional and career development activities, present their findings at a HCHDS-sponsored symposium at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and must provide a written report within 30 days of the end of the budget period.
PROPOSAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

1. Title page: please include Title of project; PI; department and/or school; address; phone number; email address, list of collaborating investigators, budget; starting and ending dates for project.

2. Abstract (250 words maximum)

3. Budget and justification (maximum $50K direct costs)

4. Investigators (PI, mentor, and collaborating investigators, affiliation, role in project, amount of time to be devoted to this project)

5. Biographical sketch of investigators (NIH format)

6. Specific Aims page

7. Research Plan (not to exceed page 3 pages for sections a-d)
   a. Significance of the research to place based health disparities or minority health
   b. Innovation
   c. Preliminary information if applicable (should demonstrate ability to perform the research)
   d. Research design and methods: describe subject selection, data collection, research procedures/measures, analysis plan, timetable for completion
   e. Literature citations (limit 20)
   f. Protection of human subjects (describe plans for obtaining informed consent and procedures for informing and protecting subjects to be enrolled in the study if applicable)

Please follow PHS 398 guidelines for budget, Biographical sketch, and human subjects information. If you have any questions, please contact IDC Director, Roland J. Thorpe, Jr., at rthorpe@jhu.edu.

Please submit a PDF version of the application in the order as presented above via e-mail attachment to HCHDS@juh.edu.

Applications are due by 5pm, on designated date within this RFP.