California HIV/AIDS Research Program
University of California, Office of the President
Instructions for Submission of a Letter of Intent for the Collaborative Policy Research Center Award

For a summary of the CHRP Collaborative Policy Research Center Award, eligibility, funding caps, review criteria and other information, see our Call for Applications. If you have any questions, see the Call for Applications for appropriate contact information.

Submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI) is required to apply for this award. You will have access to the application web pages when the LOI is approved in proposalCENTRAL, at which time you will receive a notification e-mail.

Letters of Intent must be submitted **before 12:00 noon** Pacific Time**, October 11, 2011**. There is no grace period. You will not be able to submit an LOI after the deadline. To ensure that you submit the LOI before the deadline, *review these instructions in their entirety along with the corresponding web pages as soon as possible*. Note that the LOI document (LOI Section 6, below), must be uploaded in Portable Document Format (PDF). The web-based system does not perform PDF conversions. At the end of this document, you will find a few warnings and tips that address the most common issues that applicants experience.

INTERNET SUBMISSION:
The Letter of Intent must be submitted at proposalCENTRAL. If you are a first time user, you must first register to use the system. DO NOT register if you have used proposalCENTRAL in the past. NOTE: In the registration process, one of the pages, "4) Personal Data for Applications", includes fields for Applicants to provide several types of private personal information that are neither required nor requested by the California HIV/AIDS Research Program. There are no required entries on this page; therefore, we suggest that you skip this particular page during the registration process.

For technical assistance, contact proposalCENTRAL at 1-800-875-2562 from 5:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Pacific Time, Monday through Friday, or by e-mail at pcsupport@altum.com. For other inquiries, use the contact information in the Call for Applications.

To begin the LOI process (**LOI Sections 1 and 2**):
1. Go to proposalCENTRAL.
2. Log in to the system.
3. Click on the "Grant Opportunities" tab (far right, gray).
4. If the list is not already filtered to show CHRP opportunities, use the drop down menu to select "California HIV/AIDS Research Program" and click on "Filter List by Grantmaker".
5. Find the row for Collaborative Policy Research Center and click on "Apply Now" on the far right.
6. On the title page (LOI Section 1), enter the title (60 characters or fewer including spaces). Note: this and other parts of the application can be edited later.
7. Select the Priority Area 'Health Policy" using the radio button.
8. Click on "Save". This creates a record of your LOI in the system that can be accessed in later visits for additional work or editing under the "Manage Proposals" tab (far left tab on the main screen, blue).
9. Click on LOI Section 2, "Download Templates and Instructions" in the gray sidebar on the left.
10. Click on "Download" on the row for Letter of Intent to obtain the required template for preparation of the Letter of Intent.
11. Save this document to your computer, and prepare the letter of intent document offline, according to the instructions (below).
12. You can continue to enter information in LOI Sections 3, 4 and 5, or you can log off and resume work during a later session. After the completion of LOI Section 1, the remaining sections requiring the entry of information can be completed in any order in any number of visits. Please note the tips and warnings below, however, when determining a timeline for the completion of the LOI process.

NOTE: *Once you have created an LOI record in step 8 (above), DO NOT restart the LOI process on future visits. Instead, go to the LOI record under the "Manage Proposals" tab (far left on the main page, blue). Click on "Edit" to continue the LOI process.*

Section Explanations:

LOI Section 3: This section allows you to provide access to anyone who you may wish to participate in your LOI submission. Click on "Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal" in the gray toolbar on the left hand margin. The designation of "View" allows others to read any aspect of your LOI submission without the ability to make any changes. The designation of "Edit" allows changes to be made, but does not allow the LOI to be submitted. The designation of the "Administrator" role provides all the same rights as the applicant, including submission of the LOI. In some institutions, submissions are generally made by the contracts and grants office. This feature of proposalCENTRAL allows for this by providing "Administrator" access to an appropriate contracts and grants official. *NOTE: to provide others with access, those persons must first be a registered proposalCENTRAL user.*

LOI Section 4: The partnering institutions will need to designate a Principal Investigator from one of the institutions as the "Applicant". Click on "Applicant" in the gray sidebar on the left. Check the applicant information. If necessary, update the applicant information by clicking on "Edit Professional Profile". Information for the co-principal investigator is entered in LOI Section 6.

LOI Section 5: Click on "Applicant Institution" in the gray sidebar on the left. Check the information, and click on "Change Institution" if necessary to search for the institution in the database. For help in completing this section, be sure to read the "Technical Tips and Warnings" section at the end of this document. NOTE: **It is strongly recommended that you work on this section well in advance of the deadline** to ensure that difficulties with this section do not prevent a submission before the deadline.

LOI Section 6: Enter the information for the Co-Principal Investigator at the collaborating institution. **There can only be ONE co-principal investigator**. Do not enter key personnel, other contacts, or subcontractors.

LOI Section 7: The LOI narrative that will be uploaded here must be prepared offline using the template provided according to the following instructions. If you did not previously download the template (step 9, above), you can download the template here by clicking on "Download" next to Letter of Intent. To upload the completed LOI narrative, select "Letter of Intent" from the drop down menu called "Select Appropriate Attachment Type". Click on "Browse" to select the file from your computer, then click on "Upload Attachment". You must convert the LOI narrative to Portable Document Format before uploading it to proposalCENTRAL (i.e. with a filename ending in .pdf). proposalCENTRAL will not perform PDF conversions.

The LOI narrative must be no longer than **two** pages on the template downloaded from proposalCENTRAL. **The minimum font size is 11 point, and you must use 1/2 inch margins.** There is no required font style. **A formatted template is provided as a download in Sections 2 or 6**. **You must use this template**. **Do not** include institutional letterheads or signatures. Prepare the LOI narrative offline, i.e. save the template document to your computer before modifying it. The LOI should contain the following (signatures are not required):

(a) Center name.
(b) The names of the two collaborating co-principal investigators and their affiliations.
(c) If applicable, the name and affiliation of any subcontractor(s).
(d) A description of the HIV/AIDS longer-term policy research and rapid response policy research capabilities of the proposed Center.

LOI Section 8: Section 8 allows you to verify that your LOI was successfully uploaded to proposalCENTRAL, and tells you if there is any missing required information in the other sections (validation). If you have difficulty with the validation, first see the technical tips and warnings below.

NOTE: **Validating the LOI does NOT submit the LOI to CHRP.** You must proceed to LOI section 9. We **strongly encourage** you to validate well in advance of the due date and time (at least 24 to 48 hours) to ensure that you will have sufficient time to address any issues before the deadline.

LOI Section 9: Section 9 allows you to submit the LOI. Once you have submitted, you will receive an e-mail confirmation within a few minutes. You will have access to prepare a full application when you receive a separate, second e-mail indicating that your LOI has been approved by CHRP. Immediately upon receipt of the approval e-mail, access to the full application materials will be available under the Manage Proposals tab (far left on the main page, blue). All LOIs will be approved unless they are not responsive to the Call for Applications. NOTE: proposalCENTRAL is synchronized to U.S. Official Time. Watches and clocks on computers and office telephones are often not correct.

NOTE: When CHRP has approved the LOI, you will receive an automatic e-mail from proposalCENTRAL. You will then have access to the application web pages, templates and instructions for the preparation of the full application. At that time, go to proposalCENTRAL, log in, click on the Manage Proposals tab (blue, far left), go to the row corresponding to the LOI you submitted, and click on "Edit". Download the Application Instructions and Guidelines document and the templates, and review the application web pages. Carefully read the Application Instructions and Guidelines in their entirety before you begin.

Technical Tips and Warnings:

1. **LOI Section 5: Institution.**

   A. Some applicants have **difficulty finding their institution in the database**. Most California research institutions and universities are in the proposalCENTRAL database, in addition to other organizations, particularly those that have applied to CHRP or other UC programs previously. The search function is not a "smart" search function as is common with search engines. We suggest using simple search terms to avoid inadvertently excluding your institution from the search. For example, entering "Davis" to search for the University of California, Davis, effectively locates this institution. If you have difficulty retrieving the database entry for your institution, or another technical problem, contact proposalCENTRAL customer service using the contact information above.

   If your institution does not appear to be in the proposalCENTRAL database, we recommend contacting proposalCENTRAL to verify that this is the case before proceeding to have an appropriate official at your institution (generally in the Contracts and Grants office) enter a new Institution Profile (see Instructions) in proposalCENTRAL. **It is the responsibility of the applicant institution** to create, update, edit the institution's profile, or to delete extraneous profiles.

   B. For some institutions, there may be **multiple institution entries** in the database. To determine which entry is the correct one to use, you must contact the institution's Contracts and Grants office or equivalent. Most institutions prefer to have a single profile for that institution.

2. **LOI Section 8: Validate.**

   Some applicants find that the system does not validate the submission (Section 8) when the process is complete. Our experience is that most often **this is caused by navigation away from a page before the "save" is complete.** If you navigate away from a page before the "save" is complete, the information on that page will be lost. When a page is saved, the system does not show you the progress and report that the "save" is complete. A screen refresh occurs automatically when the save is complete, and that is visible by a screen blink. Saving your institution (Section 5), once you have located it in the database, takes a few more seconds than other pages. If you have difficulty validating your LOI submission, or any other technical problem, contact proposalCENTRAL customer service using the contact information above.