



**Innovative Models for
Identification, Testing and Linkage
Research Award**

2013 Call For Applications

The California HIV/AIDS Research Program at the University of California requests proposals for research to design and evaluate innovative approaches toward implementation of interventions, as described below, intended to improve health outcomes and curb the HIV epidemic in California. This call for applications focuses on evaluating innovative models for finding high-risk individuals who are unaware of their HIV status and for providing HIV testing and linkage to care and prevention services for those individuals.

Proposals must address the following:

1. Development and evaluation of **innovative** and **culturally competent** interventions to identify, test and link high-risk people of color to HIV care and prevention services, with a specific emphasis on African Americans and Latinos who are unaware of their HIV status.
2. The development of these innovative strategies must include formative research completed in the first year of the grant to guide the design and implementation of the full intervention.

The proposed research strategies must be applicable to the study populations, meet their social, cultural and linguistic needs, address barriers to accessing HIV prevention and treatment services, and include robust metrics for assessing cultural competency in evaluating the interventions tested.

The results of this research will advance the body of knowledge as it relates to identifying and overcoming social, cultural and structural barriers to accessing HIV services in the populations most highly impacted by HIV. In addition, identification and successful linkage of those unaware of their HIV status to appropriate, culturally competent HIV services (testing,

treatment as prevention, PrEP, PEP) is an essential part of an ongoing focused effort to significantly impact HIV incidence and prevalence in California.

Important Dates

- May 8th, 2013: Release of the Call for Applications
- May 21st, 2013: Prospective Applicant Webinar (10:30 am Pacific Time). See the [CHRP Website](#) for details.
- June 6th, 2013: Letters of Intent due before noon, Pacific Time.
- August 6, 2013: Applications due before noon, Pacific Time.
- Early December 2013: Funding Notification
- March 1, 2014: Award Start Date

Additional information is available in the *General Information* section later in this document. For more information about the California HIV/AIDS Research Program at the University of California, please visit the [Program Web Site](#).

Research Rationale and Framing

In light of recent research findings showing the effectiveness of early initiation of anti-retroviral therapy (ART) and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) in preventing HIV transmission, the prevention landscape has shifted toward comprehensive biomedical based prevention approaches, and has placed a central importance on identifying, testing and linkage to these interventions. The success of these new strategies in curbing the HIV epidemic depends in large part on innovative efforts to reach out to these disproportionately impacted populations, find those who are unaware of their status, offer culturally appropriate services including HIV testing and linkage to care and prevention services when appropriate.

Many of the key populations at risk may have limited access to health care, may not be comfortable interacting with the healthcare system, or may have other social, cultural, economic, and structural barriers to seeking testing, prevention and care services. In the U.S., approximately 20% of those infected with HIV are unaware of their status, and African American men who have sex with men (MSM) are the population most likely to be infected with HIV but least likely to know their status.

In California, it is estimated that nearly 30,000 people are unaware of their HIV status, and that they contribute to over half of all new transmissions of HIV in the state¹. Data from the

¹ California Department of Public Health, *Office of AIDS, California HIV/AIDS Epidemiological Profile, 2009 Update*, August 2012

California State Office of AIDS from 2009 also shows that HIV disproportionately impacts African Americans and Latinos. For example, the rate of newly diagnosed HIV infection in 2009 was about five times greater among African Americans than among Whites. In addition, Latinos constitute the largest racial/ethnic group newly diagnosed with HIV infection, and Latinos were more likely than all other race/ethnic groups to be “late-testers” (diagnosed with AIDS at the time of or within one year of their initial HIV diagnosis).

Purpose of Grants

These grants are intended to support research to develop and evaluate innovative and culturally competent interventions to identify high-risk people of color, with a specific emphasis on African Americans and Latinos who are unaware of their HIV status, and to improve access to and utilization of HIV testing, and, when appropriate, link to HIV care and prevention services. The research work plan should include a two-phased approach. The first phase, lasting about 12 months, should be dedicated to formative research that will guide the design and tailoring of the intervention to the target population. The formative phase should also include pilot testing of the new intervention. The second phase of the research workplan should describe the implementation and evaluation strategies for the proposed intervention.

The proposed research strategies must be applicable to the study populations and meet their social, cultural and linguistic needs, and include robust metrics for assessing cultural competency in evaluating the interventions tested.

These grants will **not** cover the cost of existing care and service efforts, but instead will help fund and evaluate innovative approaches (outreach, testing, triage, and linkage to and engagement with care and prevention).

Investigator Eligibility

The Principal Investigator must have Principal Investigator status at the institution named in the application, and must devote a minimum of 10% effort to this project.

The Principal Investigator must demonstrate extensive experience and cultural competency in designing and conducting research with the target study populations. The National Institutes of Health, Office of Minority Health defines "cultural and linguistic competence" as "...a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations. 'Culture' refers to

integrated patterns of human behavior that include the language, thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups. 'Competence' implies having the capacity to function effectively as an individual and an organization within the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors, and needs presented by consumers and their communities." (From "National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health Care - Final Report," available at: <http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/assets/pdf/checked/finalreport.pdf>). More information on cultural competency from NIH is located here: <http://www.nih.gov/clearcommunication/culturalcompetency.htm>

Institutional Eligibility

Institutions must be nonprofit 501(c) (3) community-based organizations or research institutions, academic institutions, non-profit health service providers, or local health jurisdictions based in California.

Institutional Capacity

Demonstrated potential to establish or enhance outreach capacity to allow for the ability to locate, test, and link to care and prevention services those African American and/or Latino individuals at high-risk for HIV infection and unaware of their infection status. This requirement may be met by the applicant institution and/or through Memoranda of Understanding with other institutions.

Proposed Use of Funds

1. ***Formative and pilot research phase.*** The first year of funding will support formative and pilot research. By formative research, we mean exploratory research that will inform and guide the proposed innovative intervention to find and link members of the target population who are unaware of their HIV status. The formative phase should explore the needs of the population, establish a strong relationship between the population and the researchers, and assess the acceptability and feasibility of the proposed intervention. The formative and pilot research must be fully developed and it must be evident how the results and outcomes of the research will guide the planned intervention. That is, specific unanswered questions about the proposed intervention should be listed, and a clear connection made between the formative research outcomes and potential answers to these questions. The formative phase should also include a pilot of the proposed intervention. The formative and pilot research phase should be completed in the first grant year.

2. **Implementation and Evaluation of the intervention.** The remaining two years of the award will focus on the intervention implementation and evaluation strategies. Near the end of the first year of the award applicants will be required to provide a detailed revised workplan describing the specific methods for implementation and evaluation. Once the plan is approved, applicants will receive year 2 funds. Applicants should clearly describe how the formative research done in Phase 1 guided the development of the intervention, including the results of the pilot.
3. **Funding of directed participant services.** These grants will **not** cover the cost of existing care and service efforts, but instead will help fund and evaluate innovative approaches (outreach, testing, triage, and linkage to and engagement with care and prevention).
4. **Performance-Based Renewal:** Grantees will be subject to funding renewal on an annual basis contingent upon adequate performance, using metrics established with CHRP before the receipt of funding for the year. Applicants will submit a detailed project evaluation plan that may be modified during the course of the study in collaboration with CHRP.
5. **Dissemination:** Proposals should describe plans for dissemination of findings through print or online publications, creation and dissemination of training materials, and through presentation of findings to impacted communities and to local, statewide, and national planning bodies and at meetings and conferences.
6. **Collaborative Meetings:** Projects approved for funding will work collaboratively on study implementation to provide opportunities for grantees to learn from each other as they face challenges encountered during implementation, share findings with other grantees, and work together on dissemination of results. To meet this requirement, grantees will attend regularly scheduled collaborative consortia meetings with CHRP and participate in at least one annual site visit. Grantee expenses for these meetings will be covered by the CHRP award, and the meetings will be organized by CHRP.
7. **Community Advisory Board (CAB):** Proposals must describe plans to recruit and convene a local community advisory board. The board should meet a minimum of four times during the grant period to provide advice and community input, and to address concerns regarding plans, protocols, outcomes, and dissemination.

Award Amounts, Duration, and Requirements

1. The project start date is March 1, 2014, and the project period will span 36 months, ending February 28, 2017.
2. For each research project, it is anticipated that the annual direct costs will be up to \$240,000 per year for 36 months, contingent on available funding.
3. Institutions are eligible for additional indirect costs of up to 25% of total eligible direct project costs, or at the rate established for the institution through a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (or other similarly established rate), whichever is lower. Both UC and non-UC institutions are eligible for indirect costs.
4. CHRP anticipates funding up to 3 research project awards, contingent upon receipt of sufficient number of meritorious² applications, and availability of funds.
5. Grants are one-time, non-renewable grants.
6. CHRP reserves the right to reallocate research funds for other purposes if there are no institutions that meet qualifying standards for research funding under this initiative.
7. Grantees will be subject to funding renewal on an annual basis contingent upon adequate performance, using metrics established with CHRP.
8. Availability of funds is contingent upon receipt of a sufficient allocation to CHRP

Merit Review Criteria

Reviewers will evaluate applications for:

1. Innovative nature, strength and feasibility of concept, approach and methods.
2. Experience and capacity to collect relevant data and evaluate the research.
3. Qualifications of the investigators and capacity and experience of the institution(s) to carry out the research. It is expected that the Principal Investigator and other research staff will demonstrate extensive experience and cultural competency in designing and conducting research with the study populations.
4. Documentation of meeting the eligibility requirements outlined in this Call for Applications.
5. Capacity and readiness to implement proposed activities.
6. Feasibility of the proposed plan to conduct research with results that will provide actionable information for the improved and practical implementation of innovative models for

² 'Meritorious' is defined by an overall merit score in the very good, excellent, or outstanding range.

finding, testing and linking African American and Latino populations most highly impacted by HIV to prevention and treatment services.

7. Proven ability to recruit and enroll African American and Latino populations most highly impacted by HIV.
8. The capacity to form and continually engage an effective and representative community advisory board.
9. Capability and proposed plans for the timely dissemination of outcomes and results.

General Information

Application Cycle Timeline: *Letter of Intent deadline is 12:00 noon Pacific Time. All LOI and application materials will be submitted electronically.*

- **May 8th, 2013:** Release of the Call for Applications
- **May 21st, 2013:** Prospective Applicant Webinar (10:30am Pacific Time). See the [CHRP Website](#) for details.
- **June 6th, 2013:** Letters of Intent due before noon, Pacific Time.
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Prospective Applicant Webinar: Information for participation in the Prospective Applicant Webinar will be posted on the [CHRP Website](#) by **May 17th, 2013**. The webinar is scheduled for **May 21st, 2013** from 10:30 am to 12:00 pm (Pacific Time). Understanding of the intent of the award and the application review process is central to the success of applicants. Participation by prospective applicants is strongly encouraged. During this meeting, program representatives will answer questions about the application and review process.

How to Apply and Required Letter of Intent

A Letter of Intent (LOI) is required for all Innovative Models for Identification, Testing and Linkage Research Award applications. LOIs will be evaluated by CHRP for responsiveness to the Call for Applications to ensure that all full applications will qualify to be forwarded for peer review. Specific instructions for submitting a Letter of Intent are available from the [CHRP Website](#). *It is important that LOI submissions follow these instructions.* LOIs must be submitted electronically before noon Pacific Time, June 6th, 2013. Applicants with approved LOIs will be notified by e-mail, and will then have access to materials to prepare a full application. **LOI approvals will be emailed by 5pm Pacific Time on Monday June 10th.** *NOTE: It is recommended that applicants review the instructions and the LOI submission web pages as soon*

as possible in order to allocate sufficient time for the completion of the process before the deadline.

Full applications are due on **August 6, 2013 before noon, Pacific Time**, and will also be submitted electronically. Application instructions and guidelines, templates and forms will be available upon approval of the LOI.

Contact Information:

For logistical questions regarding application preparation and submission, contact:

Research Grant Programs Office Contracts and Grants Unit at RGPOGrants@ucop.edu or 510/987-9386

To obtain guidance or direction on the suitability of a proposed project for this funding opportunity, or for scientific questions regarding application preparation, contact:

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California HIV/AIDS Research Program

The California HIV/AIDS Research Program (CHRP; formerly UARP) at the University of California provides funding for the support of merit-reviewed HIV/AIDS-related research to be conducted at universities, non-profit research institutions and community organizations throughout California. The program’s mission is to support excellent, timely, and innovative research that is attentive to the needs of California and will accelerate progress towards prevention and a cure for HIV/AIDS.

How to Contact CHRP

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