FY2019 Request for Applications
Feasibility/Pilot Research Projects

The SW Ag Center supports a Feasibility/Pilot Studies Research Program to promote health and safety in Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing (AFF) occupations. The goals of this program are to: 1) Identify and mentor new/junior researchers to conduct innovative research, intervention, and translation projects in AFF worker safety/health; 2) Support projects that provide data for innovative approaches to improve AFF occupational safety and health that justify further research, and; 3) Promote mentoring relationships between junior and established scientists to build capacity for AFF occupational safety and health careers. The SW Ag Center (2 U54 OH007541) is one of nine Centers currently funded by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) http://www.cdc.gov/NIOSH. The SW Ag Center serves U.S. Public Health Service Region 6 (AR, LA, NM, OK, TX).

Eligibility
- Junior investigators interested in gaining research experience in AFF occupational safety or health
- Graduate students, occupational medicine residents, or postdoctoral fellows
- Faculty members of any rank who are interested in exploring an AFF research question

Applications from student investigators and other scientists new to the field of agricultural occupational safety and health are strongly encouraged. Team science approaches are also encouraged.

Programmatic Interest
For this funding cycle, proposals with a focus on mental and behavioral health, emerging technologies, or infectious diseases in all the AFF subsectors will be given priority. Other topics that address occupational safety and health questions in AFF are welcome. All proposed projects must respond to the goals of the National Occupational Research Agenda for AFF. To review the National Occupational Research Agenda – AFF visit: https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/councils/agff/research.html

Key Dates
- Application Deadline: April 30th
- Notice of Award: June 15th
- Anticipated Start Date: October 1st
- Number of Awards: 2 – 3 a year
- Duration of Award: up to 12 months
- Award Amount: up to $15,000

NIOSH uses the Cooperative Agreement mechanism to fund the AFF Initiative. This approach directs NIOSH staff to be substantially involved as a partner with the Ag Centers. Similarly, the SW Ag Center staff will work collaboratively with the successful Feasibility Study PIs.

Contact
Please contact Vanessa Casanova, PhD at vanessa.casanova@uthct.edu or by phone to 903-877-5896 to indicate your intent to submit an application or for any questions you have related to the application.

For additional information about the SW Ag Center visit: www.swagcenter.org
Application Instructions

One intention of the Pilot-Feasibility Studies Program is to support young scientists with proposal development skills, a second is to assure that investigator initiated proposals are of high quality so that projects not selected for funding by the SW Ag Center could be submitted to other potential funders with minimal revisions. In order to achieve these aims, applications must be submitted using select PHS398 forms (8/2012 Revision), which, along with instructions, can be found at http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html. Note: Not all sections of the Research Plan described in the PHS398 instructions are required for this application.

Format

Please use 11 point or larger font in Arial or Calibri, and page margins of at least ½ inch.

1. Face Page, complete with signatures (Form Page 1)
2. Summary, Relevance, Project/Performance Sites, Senior Key Personnel, Other Significant Contributors, and Human Embryonic Cells (Mentor is a Significant Contributor) (Form Page 2)
3. Detailed budget for initial funding period-12 months (Form Page 4)
   **Include $700 in the budget for travel to the SW Ag Center Spring Board Meeting.**
4. Budget justification describing each item of the proposed budget and its relevance to the proposed research. (Continuation Form Page)
5. Checklist (Checklist Form Page)
6. Biosketch(es) (Biographical Sketch Format Page)
7. Specific Aims (One page limit) (Continuation Form Page; see PHS398 instructions section 5.5)
8. Logic Model (see sample)
9. Research Strategy (5 page limit for Significance, Innovation and Approach) (Continuation Form Page; see PHS398 instructions section 5.5)
10. Mentoring Plan (1/2 page): Description of how the mentor will work with the PI to facilitate the development of research skills, manuscripts/reports, and additional related grant applications—See guidance below (Continuation Form Page)
11. Bibliography and References Cited (Continuation Form Page)
12. Protection of Human Subjects (Continuation Form Page)
13. Inclusion of Women, Minorities and Children (Continuation Form Page)
14. IRB or animal care committee application/approval timeline (Continuation Form Page)
15. Letter(s) from project mentor—See guidance below
16. Other letters of support
17. Appendices

A mentoring plan should include the following:
   a. Appropriateness of mentor’s research qualifications in the area of this application.
   b. Quality and extent of mentor’s role in providing guidance and advice to candidate.
   c. Previous experience in fostering the development of other junior researchers.
   d. History of productivity and support.
   e. Adequacy of support for the research project.

Similarly, a mentor letter should address:
   a. His/her qualifications in the research area proposed by the candidate.
   b. Previous experience as a research supervisor.
   c. The nature and extent of supervision that will occur during the award period.
   d. Include an evaluation component that describes how your mentors will assess your progress (e.g., quarterly meetings).
   e. What resources, if any, they will make available to you in support of your training and/or research.
Mentors can be identified by the SW Ag Center or the PI. If the PI needs assistance identifying a mentor, please contact the SW Ag Center at least 4 weeks prior to the application deadline.

Submission Process
The completed application should be submitted electronically in pdf format to vanessa.casanova@uthct.edu. Confirmation of receipt will be emailed to the applicant.

Review Process
Complete applications that are deemed responsive to the RFA will be evaluated and scored by a review panel using the framework below.

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Award
1. Funds are awarded considering the scientific merit of the proposal, fit with the SW Ag Center mission and priority areas, and the NIOSH National Occupational Research Agenda for AFF.
2. The project period is for a maximum twelve month period.
3. Awards will be up to $15,000 (inclusive of direct and indirect costs).
4. The cap for indirect costs is 8%.
5. Equipment purchased for the project vests to the institution sponsoring the project.
6. PIs will receive critical review comments and a funding decision about 2 months after application receipt.

Expectations of Applicant
1. Documentation of IRB (or animal protections) approval must be provided within 45 days of award.
2. Successful applicants will be required to submit a progress report six months after the project start date using a format provided at the time of the award.
3. A final status report will be due 60 days after the project end date:
   a. Findings/results in the form of a manuscript for a peer-reviewed publication
   b. List of planned grant applications based on pilot study data
   c. List of manuscript(s) based on pilot study data and journals to receive manuscripts
4. The final financial status (invoice) report will be due 60 days after the end of the approved project budget period.
5. Investigators will be required to present their project to the SW Ag Center Advisory Board. **Please see budget requirement above in #3 of the Format section.
6. The investigator must acknowledge support from the NIOSH SW Ag Center in all publications and presentations resulting from the award; language will be provided in the award letter.
7. One year after the project end date, the PI will complete a report documenting actual grant and manuscript submission(s) using project data.
8. Progress of awardees will be tracked for 3 years.