



Southwest Center

FOR AGRICULTURAL HEALTH, INJURY PREVENTION, AND EDUCATION

FY2022 Request for Applications Feasibility Studies Research Program

The SW Ag Center supports the Feasibility 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 eleven Centers currently funded by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/oep/agctrhom.html>. 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, medical residents and interns, 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

Feasibility study projects should have a well-defined, narrow scope with achievable goals. NIOSH has established the following priority areas for AFF. <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/agff/bni.html>

- Reducing pesticide exposure in agricultural workers
- Reducing traumatic injuries among AFF workers
- Reducing disparities among vulnerable workers
- Reducing environmental and zoonotic exposures
- Reducing musculoskeletal disorders among AFF workers

Other topics related to improving the safety and health of AFF workers will be considered. All proposed projects must respond to the goals of the National Occupational Research Agenda for AFF and the goals must be explicitly stated in the proposal. To review the National Occupational Research Agenda – AFF visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/nora/councils/agff/research.html>

Key Dates

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Application Deadline: | May 31 st |
| Notice of Award: | July 16 th |
| Anticipated Start Date: | October 1 st |
| Number of Awards: | up to 3 |
| Duration of Award: | 12 months |
| Award Amount: | up to \$20,000 |

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 investigators.



Contact

Please contact Kevin Moore, PhD at kevin.moore@uthct.edu or by phone to 903-877-1455 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 Feasibility Studies Research Program is to support junior 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 (3/2020 Revision), which, along with instructions, can be found at <https://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. Please include the sections outlined below.

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. Project Summary, Relevance, Project/Performance Sites, Senior Key Personnel, Other Significant Contributors, and Human Embryonic Cells (Include Mentor as a Significant Contributor) (Form Page 2)
3. Detailed budget for initial funding period-12 months (Form Page 4)
4. Budget justification describing each item of the proposed budget and its relevance to the proposed research. (Continuation Format Page)
5. Checklist (Checklist Format Page)
6. Biosketch(es) (Biosketch Format Page - <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>)
7. Specific Aims (One-page limit) (Continuation Format Page; see PHS398 instructions section 5.5)
8. Logic model (see sample)
9. Research Strategy (5-page limit for Significance, Innovation and Approach) (Continuation Format Page; see PHS398 instructions section 5.5)
10. Mentoring Plan (1/2 page): Describe 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 Format Page)
11. Bibliography and References Cited (Continuation Format Page)
12. Vertebrate Animals (Continuation Format Page)
13. Protection of Human Subjects: *You do not need to complete the PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information form.* If research involving human subjects is anticipated to take place under the award, you must provide sufficient information for reviewers to determine that the proposed research meets (1) the requirements of the DHHS regulations to protect human subjects from research risks (45 CFR Part 46), and (2) the requirements of NIH policies on inclusion of women, minorities, and children. An approved IRB is not required at the time of proposal submission, but please address the application/approval timeline. (Continuation Format Page)
14. Letter from project mentor: See guidance below
15. Other letters of support
16. 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 3 weeks prior to the application deadline.

Submission Process

The completed application should be submitted electronically in pdf format to kevin.moore@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.

| Impact | Score | Descriptor | Significance of Issue | Innovation | Approach | PI/Mentor |
|--------|-------|--------------|-----------------------|------------|----------|-----------|
| High | 1 | Exceptional | | | | |
| | 2 | Outstanding | | | | |
| | 3 | Excellent | | | | |
| Medium | 4 | Very Good | | | | |
| | 5 | Good | | | | |
| | 6 | Satisfactory | | | | |
| Low | 7 | Fair | | | | |
| | 8 | Marginal | | | | |
| | 9 | Poor | | | | |

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 \$20,000 (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 by July 16th.

Expectations of Applicant

1. Documentation of IRB (or animal protections) approval must be provided within 45 days of award.
2. Successful applicants will provide an oral progress report three months after the project start date.
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 at the feasibility studies symposium.
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.