# 2017 Pilot Projects in Collaborative Cancer Disparities Research
# Request for Applications (RFA)

## A. Deadlines

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| **Letter of Intent due:** | April 3, 2017 (by 5:00 p.m.) |
| **Full application due:** | May 15, 2017 (by 5:00 p.m.) |
| **Selection Decisions:** | July 3, 2017 |
| **Funding Potential:** | **Maximum $50,000 Direct Costs, one year** |

## B. Overview

Siteman Cancer Center (SCC) at Washington University and Southern Illinois University Medicine (SIUM) are pleased to announce the 2017 Collaborative Cancer Disparities Research Program (CCDRP) to support pilot research projects representing collaborations between investigators from both institutions. At least one investigator from each of the participating sites* must have a significant, defined role in the project (i.e. significant roles from people at both institutions). Previous collaboration is not a requirement. For participating investigators who have collaborated in the past, the proposed pilot project must be new and not part of an ongoing project. In other words, the proposed research must represent a new collaboration between investigators from the two sites OR a new project conducted by existing collaborators from the two sites. **Assistance in finding collaborators at partner institutions is available. New and early-stage investigators are strongly encouraged to apply.**

The 2017 Collaborative Cancer Disparities Research Program (CCDRP) is part of an NIH funded partnership between SCC and SIUM. **These joint research projects must specifically address cancer disparities relevant to Central and Southern Illinois**.

We are funded to support one pilot project per year through our P20 grants. The purpose of the CCDRP RFA is to **a)** develop the skill and experience of SIU and SCC cancer researchers to conduct cancer disparities research that is relevant to the population of Central and Southern Illinois and competitive for NIH funding, **b)** produce preliminary data for the submission of an R01/R21 or similar proposal, and **c)** develop new and long-term collaborative relationships between SCC and SIU.

*Participating sites include:
Faculty members associated with Siteman Cancer Center at Washington University
Southern Illinois University Medicine
Southern Illinois University-Carbondale
Southern Illinois University- Edwardsville
    Dental School
    Pharmacy School

**BACKGROUND**

There are two definitions important for this CCDRP RFA.

- Cancer disparities are defined by the NCI as "an adverse difference in cancer incidence (new cases), cancer prevalence (all existing cases), cancer death (mortality), cancer survivorship, and burden of cancer or related health conditions that exist among specific population groups in the United States".
- Population-based research is defined as "methods seeking to define optimal approaches to the prevention and treatment of cancer, and disseminate these interventions to populations at large". CCDRP applications that include the following three major ideas within population-based research are encouraged.
    1. reducing and understanding cancer disparities,
    2. identifying cancer risk and protective factors, and
    3. developing or examining interventions which decrease risk or increase protective factors and can later be implemented at a population level.

The following areas of research will be considered eligible for pilot funding in this round of applications. Within each of these areas, **investigators should address the relevance of their research to cancer disparities in Central and Southern Illinois.**

- Population-based research: Proposals of this type must explicitly examine cancer/cancer disparities from a population-based perspective. These projects can include secondary analysis of population data sets, engagement of communities in data generation or intervention, or collection of data from a defined population (e.g., cancer patients, residents of rural Illinois, etc.). These projects can use either quantitative or qualitative research methods, a range of study designs and be conducted in clinical or community settings.
- Basic science research: Proposals from basic science (pre-clinical) must describe the potential to eventually impact clinical practice or human health. This may include studies that primarily use human specimens (tissue, blood, etc.) or animal models.
- Clinical/translational research: Proposals of this type must explicitly involve patients or human specimens and examine methods to prevent, diagnose, treat and/or otherwise mitigate cancer in the rural clinical setting.

## C. Eligibility

Each application must include at least one SIU and at least one SCC investigator/mentor. SCC applicants must be Cancer Center members. Multiple Principal Investigator (M-PI) applications accepted but not required. PI must have a faculty appointment at one of the two institutions.

## D. Amount

Selected projects will be awarded a maximum of **$50,000 (direct cost) for one year**, non-renewable. Indirect costs are not allowed. Funding is provided through the P20 for the SCC/SIU Partnership, with $25,000 from SCC and $25,000 from SIU. Applications must include a budget up to $25,000 for SCC and a budget up to $25,000 for SIU, with separate budget pages for each site. **Each investigator is responsible for internal budget deadlines and should check with the grant administrators of their department regarding these policies.**

Expenditures Allowed

- Salary support for the applicant as needed (NIH salary cap should be used)
- Research supplies and animal maintenance (including animal per diem charges)

- Per diem charges for patients, for clinical study components not reimbursable by standard payment terms
- Technical assistance
- Publication costs, including reprints, study instruments, surveys, etc.
- Computational services
- Other expenses such as lab and core fees; e.g. pathology, imaging, etc.
- Regional travel required for conduct of the study (e.g. between collaborating institutions)

Expenditures NOT Allowed

- Secretarial/administrative personnel salary support
- Office equipment and supplies
- Equipment
- Computer/equipment maintenance fees
- Tuition
- Indirect institutional costs
- Nonessential travel (e.g. travel to conferences)

## E. Submission Guidelines

This small grant program will support discrete, well-defined projects that realistically can be completed within one year and within the limited levels of funding outlined above. Pilot or feasibility studies and small, self-contained research projects are allowed. Pilots should be developed to move investigators toward a subsequent successful external grant submission.

Each application must be submitted by a team that includes at least one SCC investigator and at least one SIU investigator. Each application may request up to $50,000 in total costs (indirect costs not permitted) for research efforts to be conducted over a one year period. Applications will be scored by a Multi-Institutional Scientific Review Group. Pilots will be selected based on scientific merit, and relevance/fit with the P20 programmatic goals. Applications do not have to be routed through WU Grants & Contracts Office at this stage, but budget and budget justifications must be checked by SIU Grants & Contracts; contact them if you plan to apply.

The earliest possible start date for pilot projects is September 1, 2017. Monies will not be transferred from one institution to another. Funding amount is subject to reduction in the event that the study team experiences significant delays that the funders determine to be avoidable. Additional budgetary restrictions may apply, as determined by policies and procedures at the participating institutions. Projects must have IRB approval prior to release of funding.

Applications from NIH-defined new investigators or investigators who are junior or transitioning to cancer research are strongly encouraged. In these cases, the application must include an experienced senior investigator (Mentor) from one of the institution and a Career Development Plan. NIH “new investigator” definition: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/new_investigators/index.htm.

**Specific Instructions**

**Step 1: Letter of Intent (LOI):** Two (2) page limit

To prepare for adequate expertise of reviewers, each team planning to submit an application must submit an LOI including the 1) title, 2) investigator names/institution/expertise/contact info, 3) description of the project’s cancer disparity relevance, 4) very brief research plan outline, and 5) description of each investigators' role on the project and how work will be divided.

**LOIs are due by 5:00 pm CT on April 3, 2017. Send electronically to SIU Project Manager, Amanda Fogleman (afogleman@siumed.edu).**

**Step 2: Full application:**

Applications should adhere to guidelines below and generally follow NCI format [Arial 11 or Times New Roman 12 pt. (9 pt. or larger in tables, figures, legends, etc.), ½ inch margins, one-sided, page numbers, etc.]. Resubmissions from previous application rounds are allowed but must include an additional one-page Introduction that addresses reviewers' critiques.
**Applications must be received electronically by 5:00 pm CST on May 15, 2017. Send as a single PDF to the Project Manager, Amanda Fogleman (afogleman@siumed.edu).**

**A. Project Application:** Face page, abstract and likelihood for external funding, key personnel (1 for each site) and budget sheet (1 for each site)

**B. Relevance to SCC-SIUM P20 Partnership**: One (1) page limit

Describe the relevance to cancer disparities and to the partnership goals (specifically, collaboration between institutions, supporting new lines of research, likelihood that research will result in future NIH funding, etc.).

**C. Budget Justification:** no limit, be concise, 1 for each site

**D. Biosketches:** 5-page current NIH format, Attach biosketches for all key personnel

**E. Career Development Plan (CDP):** One to two (1-2) page limit

If the PI is a less experienced, new or early stage investigator per NIH guidelines, or if they are transitioning into cancer disparities from a different area, a CDP is required. At least one Mentor must be identified. Include a career development plan, anticipated learning and scholarly activities, and specifics of how the investigator will engage or collaborate with the Mentor. Training in responsible conduct of research must be addressed. CDPs are important to the application and are taken into account by reviewers. This requirement is only for PI(s), but any early/new investigator on the application is welcome to submit a CDP. Any Mentor letter of support or biosketch can be included in the biosketch section of the application.

**F. Resources**: One (1) page limit, includes both sites

**G. Specific Aims:** One (1) page limit

The specific aims section should include a clear description regarding how the research is of concern to the population of Central and Southern Illinois.

**H. Research Strategy:** Six (6) page limit for all sections combined.

Sections to be included: Significance, Innovation, and Approach (traditional NIH sections)

**I. Investigators:** One (1) page limit

Describe qualifications of investigators at each site and how they will collaborate. Describe the role played by the SIU and SCC co-investigators/mentors. Identify which aspects of the pilot project will be conducted primarily at SIU and which will be conducted at SCC. If investigators are active or past collaborators, describe their previous collaborative research and provide a clear statement as to how the proposed project is distinct from that research.

**J. Multiple PI Plan:** One (1) page limit

For projects proposing multiple PI(s), a Project Leadership Plan is required. Visit the NIH Multiple Principal Investigator(s) Policy and submission details in the Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) Component of the SF 424 (R&R) Application Guide for details/examples.

**K. Human Subjects** and/or **Vertebrate Animals:** If applicable, include sections that follow NIH guidelines and required elements. If the section is not applicable, please include the Section Title with words "Not Applicable".

a. **Human Subjects** No page limit, please be concise. If appropriate, a planned enrollment table must be included. (See the NIH SF424 guide for required elements: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SF424_RR_Guide_General_Adobe_VerB.docx

b. **Vertebrate Animals Section (VAS)** Two (2) page limit

## G. Terms of the Award

- Funds are for one year. It is expected that the grantee will completely utilize the full funding amount during the one-year term of the award. No-cost extensions up to one year may be granted with approval of the Internal Advisory Committee. Requests must be made 45 days prior to the end of the funding period. All unspent funds at the end of the grant period (unless PI requests and is granted a no-cost extension) will be returned.
- IRB approvals are not required at the time of submission. However, all awards must have appropriate institutional regulatory approvals before funds will be allocated.

Expectations from funded investigators:

- Submission of regular updates/progress reports during the Partnership's P20 funding period to capture subsequent grants or publications.
    - Brief monthly updates on study progress
    - Annual progress reports
    - Final progress report within 60 days after the end of the funding period
- Participate in the annual P20 retreat and present the project progress. Participate in other P20 activities such as attending seminars.
- Present project results to the Central/Southern Illinois community.

## H. Review Process

Each proposal will be peer-reviewed and scored by a joint SCC and SIU scientific review panel based upon the NIH peer-review system and scoring range. Review criteria will be slightly modified to meet the purpose of the P20 (see criteria in following sections). The P20 Internal Advisory Committee will then rank all scored proposals and select those which are the most meritorious, meet the spirit and intent of the CCDRP and the P20 application, and are likely to result in preliminary data to support competitive proposals for federal funding.

**REVIEW CRITERIA**

- **SIGNIFICANCE:** Scientific feasibility and scientific merit of the project
    - Does the project address an important problem?
    - If the aims are achieved, will it improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, or clinical practice?
    - RFA specific: Does it have the potential to lead to more comprehensive studies of explicit relevance to cancer disparities in Central and Southern Illinois?

- **INVESTIGATORS:**
    - Do investigators have the necessary expertise and training to conduct the proposed activities?
    - Are the scientific roles of investigators from all sites clearly defined and significant?
    - RFA specific and if applicable: Is Career Development Plan complete and adequate?
- **INNOVATION:**
    - Is the project novel and not simply a next logical step in ongoing studies?
    - Does it apply new concepts, approaches, or methodologies, or use existing ones in a new way?
- **APPROACH:**
    - Are the strategies and methodology well-reasoned and feasible?
    - Are outcomes or benchmarks clearly defined and measurable?
    - Does the application address potential challenges and alternative strategies?
- **RELEVANCE TO DISPARITIES and THE PARTNERSHIP (Specific to this RFA):**
    - Does the proposed project reflect the general goals of the planned partnership?
    - Is there strong likelihood that the project will generate compelling preliminary data to support both SCC and SIU investigators in successfully competing for NIH funding?

## I. Questions

For questions regarding the application submission and review process, please contact:

- Amanda Fogleman, MEng, *SIUM Coordinator*
  afogleman@siumed.edu
  (217) 545-6987

- Sonya Izadi, *WUSM Coordinator*
  izadis@wudosis.wustl.edu
  (314) 286-2168

Assistance is available for potential investigators to locate suitable co-investigator(s) at the partner institution. Investigators with a potential proposal who need assistance in finding suitable collaborators should contact:

- Wiley Jenkins, PhD, *SIUM Faculty*
  wjenkins@siumed.edu
  (217) 545-9700

- Aimee James, PhD, MPH, *WUSM faculty*
  jamesai@wudosis.wustl.edu
  (314) 454-8300