Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA):
FY20 InCHIP Seed Grants for Faculty Affiliates

A. KEY DATES
- Friday, November 1, 2019 FOA Posted
- As Soon As Possible Intent to Apply (strongly recommended)
- Monday, March 16, 2020 InCHIP Affiliate Application Due by 11:59 PM EST
- Wednesday, April 1, 2020 Full Proposals due by 11:59 PM EST
- May 2020 Applicants Notified of Award Decision
- July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2022 Award Period

B. PURPOSE
UConn’s Institute for Collaboration on Health, Intervention, and Policy (InCHIP) offers seed grants for faculty at UConn Storrs, UConn Health, and the regional campuses who are InCHIP Affiliates. These grants are designed to fund pilot work that will directly support a future external grant application in the area of human health, consistent with InCHIP’s mission. The external grant must be submitted through InCHIP or UConn Health within one year of completing the pilot project.

Seed grant funding will be prioritized based on:
- How the pilot work will increase the likelihood of external grant funding, AND
- The scientific merit of the larger future project for which external funding will be sought and the extent to which it is novel or innovative.

C. FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND REQUIREMENTS
Two seed grants of $15,000 each are available for award in this seed grant competition. One of these seed grants will be reserved for applicants who have never been awarded, as a PI, a grant that provides more than $100,000 in total costs per year of external funding. All grant funds must be expended within two years of the award date. Unexpended funds will revert to InCHIP. Please see InCHIP website for allowable expenses.

Seed grant funds may only be used for direct costs of carrying out approved projects, such as:
- Personnel who are essential for conducting the research project, such as graduate research assistants and student labor. Individuals who are not on the regular state payroll (i.e., consultants and other off-campus assistance) may be hired to perform special research-related tasks as needed.
- Resources that require fee-for-services within UConn.
- Participant incentives for recruitment or study participation.
- Out of state travel that is necessary to conduct the research.
- Equipment necessary for conducting the research (“equipment” is defined as an article of tangible, nonexpendable personal property that costs $5,000 or more).
- Project supplies, including drugs and services.
- Other specifically authorized expenses as may be essential for carrying out the project.

Seed grant funds may not be used for the following:
- Principal Investigator’s, Co-Investigator’s, or any faculty member’s salary.
- Living expenses.
c. Laptops or desktop computers, unless used exclusively for the project and not for any other activities.
d. Service/maintenance contracts on equipment.
e. Laboratory renovations or other infrastructure renovations.
f. Institutional and/or individual memberships in professional organizations.
g. Travel to professional meetings to present the results of the research, or any conference attendance.
h. Indirect costs, including clerical and administrative personnel salaries.
i. Costs associated with the publication of results of the research, such as purchase of reprints.
j. Investigator training costs, including tuition.

D. PROJECT AND INVESTIGATOR ELIGIBILITY
1. Proposals must be clearly linked to a planned external grant application in the area of human health.
2. The investigator must have an advanced degree (e.g., PhD, MD, PharmD), have an eligible faculty appointment at UConn Storrs, UConn Health, or one of the regional campuses, and be eligible to submit external grants through InCHIP or UConn Health. Eligible faculty appointments are tenured or tenure-track faculty, in-residence research faculty, clinical faculty, other research faculty, and research scientists/scholars.
3. Ineligible faculty appointments are post-doctoral fellows, lecturers, research assistants and research associates, visiting titles, and adjunct faculty.
4. Graduate students are not eligible for this opportunity.
5. Applicants are required to be approved InCHIP Faculty Affiliates by the time their final proposals are submitted. Applicants who are not currently Affiliates must submit an application to become one by 11:59pm EST on Monday, March 16, 2020. The InCHIP Affiliation application form and instructions are available here. Please allow at least two weeks for approval.
6. The proposed research must be consistent with InCHIP’s mission, which can be found here. It does not have to involve intervention development, implementation, or evaluation. A wide range of research is permitted, including but not limited to, natural history studies, observational studies, qualitative research, correlational studies, pilot trials, and secondary data analysis.
7. The proposed seed grant project should address a novel research question, not a research question that is already being explored as part of an existing externally-funded project.
8. If funded, changes to the project’s objectives and budget will require prior approval from InCHIP staff.
9. The PI(s) must commit in good faith to using the seed grant funds to obtain pilot data to support an external grant proposal that will be submitted through InCHIP or UConn Health within a year of completing the pilot project.
10. An investigator who already has an InCHIP seed grant (with the exception of an Interdisciplinary Team Building Grant), must close out the award from that InCHIP seed grant prior to the start of the award period for the FY20 InCHIP Seed Grant.
11. Each individual may only submit one LOI/proposal for this competition as the Principal Investigator (PI).

E. APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS
NOTE: InCHIP staff are available to answer questions about the seed grant application including the budget.

Stage 1: Intent to Apply (Optional)
1. All applicants are strongly encouraged to fill out a brief online form (found here) indicating their Intent to Apply. Although submitting this form is not required, doing so will allow InCHIP program staff to better assist applicants with finding potential collaborators, identifying relevant external funding mechanisms, and determining the eligibility of their proposed research.
2. If assistance is needed in identifying collaborators and/or external funding mechanisms, please contact InCHIP Research Development at boundaryspanners@chip.uconn.edu.

Stage 2: Proposal Development (Optional)
1. It is strongly recommended that, prior to developing their seed grant proposal, applicants watch the previously recorded InCHIP webinar on how to effectively structure a seed grant to support a future external grant application. It is essential that the work supported by an InCHIP seed grant be linked to a larger future project.
2. Applicants are also encouraged (but not required) to utilize resources offered by InCHIP’s Cores when developing their research ideas and proposals. Seed grant-related services available through the InCHIP Cores include:

- **Training and Development Core:** Individual consultations are available by appointment with InCHIP Training and Development Core staff. Additionally, Grant Proposal Incubators can be scheduled to provide applicants the opportunity to meet with a panel of InCHIP investigators to receive feedback on their research idea and proposal. More information can be found [here](#).

- **Community-Engaged Health Research Core:** This Core can help UConn researchers make linkages to community researchers and community-based organizations (e.g., community health centers). For assistance with identifying possible community partners, email [boundaryspanners@chip.uconn.edu](mailto:boundaryspanners@chip.uconn.edu). For information about this Core, click [here](#).

NOTE: InCHIP Cores offer more extensive services for those applying for external funding including pre- and post-award services, as well as assistance with the design, development, implementation, and dissemination of research. A complete description of the Core services can be found on their respective webpages (see links above). Please look for announcements from InCHIP about Core trainings, workshops, and events in the coming months.

**Stage 3: Full Proposal**

1. Full proposals must be submitted online [here](#) by the above specified due date/time as a single PDF. The application must include 1) a cover page; 2) abstract/project summary; 3) research plan; 4) biosketches for key personnel; 5) statement about the roles/functions of key personnel; 6) budget with justification; 7) disclosure of other sources of support for the proposed project; and 8) statement about how the proposed pilot project is related to any current projects being conducted by the PI. Letters of support are optional. Detailed instructions for each section can be found here.

   a. **Cover Page**
      i. Project Title (maximum 200 characters).
      ii. PI(s) Contact Information.
      iii. If relevant, Co-Investigators, Community Partners, and/or Consultants.

   b. **Abstract/Project Summary (maximum 1 page)** – This section should describe the concept for the future external grant application and explicitly state how the proposed seed grant will help the research team develop a more competitive external grant.

   c. **Research Plan (maximum 4 pages)**
      i. Specific Aims – In addition to information about the proposed pilot project, this section should include information about the planned future external grant application. Include an explanation of how the proposed pilot project will lead to a new externally-funded research project.
      ii. Research Strategy – Provide a brief description of significance, innovation, and approach. The significance and innovation descriptions should focus on the larger research questions that will be addressed by the future external grant application. The approach portion of the Research Strategy should focus on the pilot project that is being funded by the seed grant.

   d. **References** (not included in the 4-page maximum for the Research Plan).
   e. Biographical sketch of PI(s), in NIH or NSF format.
   f. Roles and functions of project personnel, and the individual responsibilities of the PI(s) (maximum 1 page).
   g. Budget with justification for each item (maximum 1 page).
   h. Other Sources of Support for the proposed project (e.g., additional funding, in-kind services, equipment).
      i. Brief discussion of how the proposed pilot project is related to any current projects being conducted by the PI(s).
      j. **Optional:** Letters of Support.

2. Seed grant proposals are **not** required to be routed through InCHIP or Sponsored Program Services (SPS).

3. Seed grant proposals must be predominantly the work of the Principal Investigator (PI) and for the benefit of the PI’s research program. Proposals written primarily by graduate students or others in the PI’s name will not be considered.

4. Full proposals will undergo a rigorous review process by reviewers from the InCHIP affiliate network. One or more external reviewers may be consulted as well. Individuals who are Senior/Key Personnel or Other Significant
Contributors on a seed grant proposal will be excluded from participation in the review process. Reviewers and InCHIP staff may request additional information from applicants to better evaluate the scientific merit of the application, to clarify any aspect of the proposal, or to assess how the application fits within the strategies priorities of InCHIP.

5. Investigators will be notified via email whether or not their proposal has been awarded funding.

F. REVIEW CRITERIA

Priority for funding will be based on the following review criteria:

• Scientific merit of the planned external grant application and the extent to which it is novel or innovative (e.g., testing a new methodology, theory, or understudied research area).

• Scientific premise and rigor of the pilot work to be supported by the seed grant, and the extent to which it will make a substantial contribution to the planned external grant application.

• Relevance of the study to InCHIP’s research mission and strategic priorities.

• Composition of the research team (preference will be given to interdisciplinary work).

• Feasibility of plans to submit an external grant proposal to external funders no later than one year following completion of the pilot project.

G. AWARDEE REQUIREMENTS

If awarded, the PIs are not required to route their proposal through Sponsored Programs Services (SPS).

The awarded PIs are responsible for obtaining all required approvals for their research from the relevant IRB(s). Please visit the UConn IRB website for more information about the IRB approval process for research conducted at the UConn Storrs Campus, the four regional campuses, and the School of Law. For more information about the IRB approval process for research conducted at UConn Health, please visit the UConn Health IRB website.

Awardees will be required to submit a brief summary report of their progress annually to InCHIP for a period of 5 years following receipt of their funding award. Changes to the project’s objectives, PI(s), and budget will require prior approval from relevant InCHIP staff.

Faculty based at UConn Storrs, Hartford, Avery Point, Stamford, and Waterbury must submit any external grant applications that result from this seed grant award through InCHIP.

All research products (e.g., publications, presentations) must acknowledge InCHIP funding support: “This research was supported by pilot grant funding from the Institute for Collaboration on Health, Intervention, and Policy (InCHIP) at the University of Connecticut.”

Detailed awardee instructions/requirements will be distributed to seed grant winners when they are notified of the award decisions. All awardee requirements described above are subject to change in accordance with updated institutional procedures (e.g., routing requirements).

H. CONTACT

For questions not addressed in this FOA or on our seed grant webpage, please contact seedgrants@chip.uconn.edu.