



## EXPORT HEALTH

CENTER FOR MINORITY HEALTH, Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh

# Pilot Studies Core Fall 2004 Call for Proposals

(Revised Instructions for late second distribution on October 25, 2004)

### *Purpose of the Core*

- Develop pilot data for future research proposals to NIH, CDC, and other appropriate agencies;
- Engage community partners as full participants in research that is meaningful and useful for addressing community concerns;
- Provide training in Community Based Participatory research for young investigators and community partners.

It is the intent of the core and the EXPORT Center to have a strategic approach to developing research on minority health and health disparities that builds upon knowledge indigenous to the community and increases the likelihood that research will directly contribute to improving the health status of African Americans in the region.

The projects may cover a wide range of research methodologies from qualitative structured interviews, to quantitative hypothesis testing, to policy analysis and to translation of research into practice. The EXPORT Center will facilitate necessary linkages between community partners and investigators if no pre-existing partnership exists. The EXPORT Center has as a goal to increase the number of minority investigators; therefore, the Pilot Studies Core strongly encourages minority investigators to submit proposals.

### *What is Community Based Participatory Research?*

Israel and colleagues (2003) define community based participatory research as “a partnership approach to research that equitably involves community members, organizational representatives, and researchers in all aspects of the research process.” (p.54). They go on to summarize other aspects of CBPR as: enhancing the understanding of an issue, providing insight into the social and cultural dynamics of a community, building upon strengths of each partner, and using the results of such research to improve the health of the community. Israel and colleagues identify the following principles as key to community based participatory research. CBPR:

- Recognizes community as a unit of identity;
- Builds on strengths and resources within the community;



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- Facilitates collaborative, equitable involvement of all partners in all phases of the research;
- Integrates knowledge and action for mutual benefit of all partners;
- Promotes co-learning and capacity building among all partners;
- Integrates and achieves a balance between research and action for the mutual benefit of all partners;
- Emphasizes local relevance of public health problems and ecological perspectives that recognize and attend to the multiple determinants of health and disease;
- Involves systems development through a cyclical and iterative process;
- Disseminates findings and knowledge gained to all partners and involves all partners in the dissemination process; and
- Involves a long-term commitment by all partners (2003, p.58).

A community-based participatory research model is consistent with the themes and mission of our EXPORT Center. We believe that CBPR will continue to build trust between researchers and community members and increase the ability of community members to understand the research process. Secondly, we believe that CBPR can provide a foundation of research data that is directly relevant to community concerns and act as a stimulus for action by community members, policy makers, and academics. Finally, we believe that participation by community members in the research process will build skills, resources, social and inter-organizational networks, critical reflection and community power, all components of community capacity.

Where it is feasible, pilot studies that build upon relationships with existing community partners of the Center for Minority Health such as the State Health Improvement Partnerships, the Urban League, the Metro-Urban Institute, the Faith-Based Initiative, BWHOLE, etc. are desirable. The Community Outreach and Information Dissemination Core can assist with developing appropriate partnerships for a pilot study. However, pilot proposals that include new partners will certainly be considered.

### *Eligibility*

- Documentation of true community partnership is critical (i.e., name staff member of the community partner as co-investigator, community partner initiated research proposal; partner and investigator demonstrate past collaboration and experience on this issue).
- The Principal Investigator must be either an assistant professor or a post-doctoral fellow.
- The Principal Investigator must designate an appropriate research mentor.
- The Principal Investigator can be in any school of the Health Sciences or the School of Social Work at Pitt, or at an EXPORT Center-affiliated institution.



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*How many grants will we give and for how much?*

We hope to fund 2-4 studies. The maximum budget for each study is \$20,000. More costly grants must be likely to contribute substantially to a successful application to NIH, CDC or equivalent funding. Those proposals that can make more effective use of limited resources will be preferred.

*Technical Assistance Meeting*

We will offer one technical assistance (TA) meeting for interested investigators and partners. The purpose of this meeting will be to provide a clear explanation of the pilot study core and to answer questions prior to the submission of a letter of intent.

*Process*

- We strongly encourage potential investigators to attend the Technical Assistance Meeting.
- Submit a two-page letter of intent (LOI), due 3 weeks after the TA meeting.
- The letter of intent must include the following: names, title, address, phone and fax numbers for all investigators; name, address, phone, email of community partner; name, address, phone and e-mail of research sponsor; brief description of the community partner; identification of the principal research question; general approach of the pilot study; and plan for subsequent funding.
- The core directors of the pilot study core will review the LOI's with regard to eligibility and respond within 2 weeks.

Please submit letter of intent via e-mail to the following address:

[EXPORTPilots@cmh.pitt.edu](mailto:EXPORTPilots@cmh.pitt.edu)

- Following acceptance of the LOI, investigators have six weeks to prepare this proposal. To assist in the preparation, the Shared Resource Core will provide access to appropriate measurement tools, statistical and analytic support.

*Guidelines for Proposal Preparation*

The proposal should be no more than 10 pages double-spaced (excluding references and biosketches). The proposal should follow a modified PHS 398 format including:

- Cover page
- Abstract
- Budget and budget justification



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- Biosketches
- One page description of community partner
- Specific aims
- Background and significance
- Relevance to the EXPORT Health Project (see [www.exporthealth.pitt.edu](http://www.exporthealth.pitt.edu))
- Research design and methods
- Specific plans for subsequent funding
- Human Subjects
- References

Please submit completed proposals on Tuesday, November 30, 2004, by 5:00 p.m., to the same e-mail address to which Letters of Intent were submitted ([EXPORTPilots@cmh.pitt.edu](mailto:EXPORTPilots@cmh.pitt.edu)). After electronic submission, please send 2 hard copies of your completed proposal via campus mail to:

Rachael Berget  
Center for Minority Health  
Room 125 Parran Hall  
GSPH

### *Review criteria*

The Co-Directors of the Pilot Studies and Feasibility Studies Core, Drs. Sandra Quinn and Harold Pincus, will initially review applications to determine whether proposals meet eligibility criteria. The following criteria will be considered by the review committee as described below in evaluating the merit of each eligible proposal:

- Significance
- Approach
- Innovation
- Investigator team
- Environment
- Community partnership

In addition, strong preference will be given to proposals that:

- Reflect the principles of CBPR and true partnership with a community organization.
- Include minority investigator(s).



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- Focus on one of the identified areas of health disparity (i.e., HIV/AIDS, Immunization, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease, Mental Health, and Cancer Screening and Prevention).
- Will advance the field of minority health and health disparity research.
- Are likely to lead to subsequent extramural peer-reviewed funding and/or publications.
- Are likely to provide some foundation for the community partner's efforts to address an issue they have identified as a priority.
- Make effective use of limited resources.

Drs. Quinn and Pincus will convene a review committee that includes university investigators and community partners, at least one of whom will be a member of the CRAB.

All Principal Investigators will receive copies of the reviewers' comments (i.e., "pink sheets") as part of the Pilot Core's educational effort.

Drs. Quinn and Pincus will notify applicants in writing of the results of the review process. Prior to beginning the study, the investigators are responsible for securing approval from the University of Pittsburgh's Institutional Review Board.

### *Timeline:*

September 10:	Technical Assistance meeting
October 1:	Letter of Intent due
October 15:	Response from core directors on LOI
November 30, 2004:	Submission of proposals
January 10, 2005:	Completion of Review and Notification of Funding Decisions