

**Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA):  
InCHIP-IBACS Seed Grants for Collaborative Research in  
Brain and Cognitive Science and Health FY17**

Issued September 22, 2016

**A. KEY DATES**

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| • September 22, 2016           | FOA posted  |
| • Monday, December 16, 2016    | <b>Letters of Intent (required) due by 11:59 PM EST</b> |
| • Friday, December 23, 2016    | Applicants notified of LOI approval decision            |
| Friday, February 3, 2017       | <i>InCHIP Affiliate Application due by 11:59 PM EST</i> |
| • Friday, February, 17 2017    | <b>Full proposals due by 11:59 PM EST</b>               |
| • May 2017                     | Applicants notified of award decision                   |
| • July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2019 | Award period  |
| • December 31, 2019            | Deadline for external grant submission                  |

**B. PURPOSE**

The Institute for Collaboration on Health, Intervention, and Policy (InCHIP) and the Connecticut Institute for the Brain and Cognitive Sciences (IBACS) invite proposals for new research initiatives at the intersection of brain and cognitive science and health that involve collaborations requiring expertise across traditional disciplinary boundaries. Health is broadly defined and includes physical and mental health and outcomes with critical implications for health. The ultimate goal of the **InCHIP-IBACS Seed Grants** is to support innovative and exciting science and interdisciplinary pilot research that will lead to strong future external grant applications.

**C. FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND REQUIREMENTS**

Two awards of \$15,000 each are available in this seed grant competition. All grant funds must be expended within two years of the award date. Unexpended funds will revert to InCHIP and IBACS.

**Seed grant funds may only be used for direct costs of carrying out approved projects, such as:**

- a. 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.
- b. Resources that require fee-for-services within UConn.

- c. Participant incentives for recruitment or study participation.
- d. Travel that is necessary to conduct the research, NOT travel to present the results of the research, or travel to explore future funding opportunities.
- e. Equipment necessary for conducting the research ("equipment" is defined as an article of tangible, nonexpendable, personal property that costs \$5,000 or more).
- f. Project supplies, including drugs and services.
- g. Other specifically authorized expenses as may be essential to carrying out the project.

**Seed grant funds may not be used for the following:**

- a. Principal Investigator's, Co-Investigator's, or any faculty member's salary.
- b. Living expenses.
- c. Service/maintenance contracts on equipment.
- d. Laboratory renovations or other infrastructure renovations.
- e. Institutional memberships in professional organizations.
- f. Travel to professional meetings to present the results of the research, or any conference attendance.
- g. Indirect costs, including clerical and administrative personnel salaries.
- h. Costs associated with the publication of results of the research, such as purchase of reprints. Page charges are allowable costs.
- i. Investigator training costs, including tuition.

## **D. PROJECT AND INVESTIGATOR ELIGIBILITY**

Proposals must be novel and take an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to the study of brain and cognitive sciences **and** health. Multiple PI applications are encouraged and all PIs in the team are expected to make appropriate and significant contributions to the proposed research, and to perform new research that could not be achieved without the collaboration and seed grant funding.

PIs must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- 1) The PI must have an eligible faculty appointment at UConn or UConn Health, and must be eligible to submit external grants through InCHIP.
  - A. This PI is required to submit an application to be an InCHIP Affiliate by January 23, 2017, and be an approved InCHIP Affiliate *by the time of final proposal submission*. The InCHIP Affiliation application form and instructions are available [here](#).
  - B. Eligible faculty appointments are tenured or tenure-track faculty, in-residence research faculty, clinical faculty, other research faculty, research scientists/scholars, and adjunct faculty. Eligible faculty are not restricted to junior faculty.
  - C. Ineligible faculty appointments are post-doctoral fellows, lecturers, research assistants and research associates, visiting titles, and extension titles.
  - D. Graduate students are not eligible.
- 2) Seed grant proposals must be predominantly the work of the PIs and for the benefit of the PIs' research programs. Proposals written primarily by graduate students or others in the PIs' names are not allowed.
- 3) The proposed research must be consistent with the research missions of both InCHIP and IBACS:

- A. “InCHIP will undertake research to create new scientific knowledge, theoretical frameworks, and methodological advances in the areas of health behavior, health behavior change, health intervention, and prevention. This work will focus on understanding the dynamics of health behavior and related systems, the science of health behavior change, and the science and practice of developing, implementing, evaluating, and disseminating effective interventions.”
- B. “IBACS will be an essential hub and engine for innovation in the interdisciplinary science of mind and brain at UConn, within and across traditional areas of strength – language plasticity, neurobiology of language, dynamical systems science (modeling systems that undergo continuous change), language and logic, philosophy of mind, evolution of communication, language acquisition (typical and atypical), learning, reading, and communication disorders, neurophysiology, behavioral neuroscience, and molecular genetic neuroscience, among others. It will provide the infrastructure and resources for developing emerging links with bioscience, biomedical engineering, education, physics, and mathematics, and for nurturing connections between these and other domains within the schools and colleges of UConn.”
- 4) Eligible topics of study include but are not limited to any topic at the interface of brain and cognitive science **and** health. We particularly welcome proposals which address issues linking between mind, brain, and body (including its organs) and implications for health and/or quality of life.
- 5) The PI(s) must commit in good faith to use the seed grant funds to obtain pilot data to support an external grant proposal that will be submitted by both PIs **through InCHIP** by December 31, 2019.
- 6) The PI(s) must commit in good faith to use the seed grant funds to obtain pilot data to support an external grant proposal that will be submitted by both PIs **through InCHIP** by December 31, 2019.
- 7) If a PI already has a seed grant from a previous fiscal year, s/he must close out that award prior to the start of the award period for the 2017 InCHIP-IBACS seed grant.

## E. APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

### Stage 1: Proposal Development (Optional)

Applicants are 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. A workshop series will be offered in the fall to assist applicants in structuring their specific aims and a grant proposal incubator is available for applicants to meet with a panel of InCHIP investigators to present and receive feedback on their research ideas. InCHIP will also hold a Q&A session on how to prepare a seed grant budget.

- *Biostatistics and Methodology Core:* This Core can help researchers make connections and form research collaborations with statisticians at UConn. A consultant is available to meet with investigators to determine the goals of the proposal and provide recommendations for the design of the study. This could include recommendations for survey design, the development of appropriate data collection and statistical analysis techniques, and power analyses. Biostatistics and Methodology Core services can be accessed [here](#).
- *Intervention Core:* For proposals involving an intervention, the InCHIP Intervention Core is available to assist with theory-based intervention development, implementation and rigorous outcome evaluation and dissemination.
- *Community Engaged Research Core:* This Core can assist University researchers with making linkages to community researchers and CBOs, provide guidance on how to effectively and efficiently conduct community-engaged research, assist with community-engaged strategic and project planning, and provide resources about Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR).

Individual consultations are also available by appointment with the IBACS executive (see [IBACS consultants page](#)).

## **Stage 2: Letter of Intent**

1. All applicants must submit an online Letter of Intent (LOI) form, available [here](#), by the above specified due date/time. Each team should submit only one LOI. A budget is not required at the time of LOI submission. LOIs do not require routing through grants offices at UConn Storrs.
2. LOIs will be reviewed by relevant InCHIP and IBACS staff to determine the eligibility of the proposed research and applicant team.
3. Applicants must receive written approval of their LOIs prior to submitting a full proposal.

## **Stage 3: Full Proposal**

1. Full proposals must be submitted online [here](#) by the above specified due date/time. The application must include the following:
  - a. Project Information – title, PI(s), community partner(s), requested amount
  - b. Abstract/Project Summary (3000 characters)
  - c. Research Plan (maximum 3 pages)
    - i. Specific Aims
    - ii. Research Strategy– brief description of significance, innovation, and approach
  - d. References
  - e. Roles and functions of project personnel, and the individual responsibilities of the PI(s) (maximum 1 page)
  - f. Budget with justification for each item
  - g. Biographical sketch of PI(s), in NIH or NSF format
2. Full proposals will undergo a rigorous review process with reviewers from InCHIP and IBACS. 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 and IBACS 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 the institutes.

3. Each team 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, in no particular order:

- Scientific merit of the research plan.
- Extent to which the project is novel or innovative, especially a proposal testing a new methodology, new theory, or new area in need of pilot data.
- Extent to which a successful outcome is considered likely and any risk in outcome is outweighed by the potential benefits of success.
- Relevance of the study to the research missions and strategic priorities of InCHIP and IBACS.
- Importance of the research question to external funders and the feasibility of plans to submit a subsequent proposal to external funders no later than December 31, 2019.
- Composition of the research team (preference will be given to teams that fully utilize multiple areas of expertise across the Institutes).

## 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 the research from their relevant IRB(s). Please visit the [UConn IRB website](#) for more information on IRB approval for research conducted at the UConn-Storrs Campus, the five regional campuses, the School of Law and the School of Social Work. For more information on IRB approval for research conducted at UConn Health, please visit [UConn Health IRB website](#).

Awardees will be required to submit brief summaries of progress reports every 6 months and a final report at the conclusion of the project or award period. Changes to the project's objectives, PIs, and budget will require prior approval from relevant InCHIP and IBACS staff.

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 at [our seed grant website](#), please contact [seedgrants@chip.uconn.edu](mailto:seedgrants@chip.uconn.edu).