**CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICOLOGY (CEET)**

**Environmental Health Science Focused Research Award**

**Pilot Project Grants**

***Grants up to $50,000 available per project***

*Supported by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) Grant P30 ES013508*

**Application Packet**

**Background**

The Center of Excellence in Environmental Toxicology (CEET) announces the following **Focused Research Award** pilot project opportunity.

Applications related to the following four CEET Thematic Areas are currently being accepted:

1. **Air Pollution & Lung Health**
2. **Environmental Exposures & Cancer**
3. **Windows-of-Susceptibility**
4. **Environmental Neuroscience**

Applicants can request up to $50,000 for one year. No salary support for the faculty member is allowable. Any standing or research faculty from any Penn School may apply.

Applicants who submitted in a previous funding cycle, and were unfunded and who were encouraged to resubmit in their decision letter, may submit a revised application.

*\*\*Projects involving children’s environmental health will be directed to the Philadelphia Regional Center for Children’s Environmental Health (PRCCEH) for consideration first and if they are declined CEET will consider the application for funding.\*\**

**Deadlines and Notifications**

All applications will be sent out for peer-review to experts in the field, the CEET Executive Committee will then meet to select the awardees. Each application will be scored using the NIH scoring system (refer to the [**Application Review Criteria**](#Application) section). Below are the application deadlines and timeline.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Application Deadline | CEET Executive Committee Review | Award Notification | Award Start Date |
| **Friday, October 11, 2024** | **Expected by**  **October 28, 2024** | **Expected by**  **October 31, 2024** | **Expected: on/after November 1, 2024** |

A close up of a logo

Description automatically generated

**Eligibility Requirements**

1. Any standing or research faculty member from any University of Pennsylvania School may apply.
2. Preference will be given to first-time applicants and senior faculty who wish to embrace environmental health or toxicology research as a new direction.
3. Preference will be given to applications that are likely to lead to grant funding from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS).
4. Preference will be given to research projects that will utilize one or more of the CEET Facility Cores:
   * Translational Research Support Core (formerly Integrative Health Sciences Facility Core)
   * Biomolecular Mass Spectrometry Core (formerly Translational Biomarker Core)
   * Environmental Health Informatics Core (formerly Exposure Biology Informatics Core)
5. The research being proposed cannot be funded by an external funding agency.

**Funding/Reporting Requirements**

The anticipated period of funded project performance will be for 12 months following the project start date.

Funded applications **must** meet the following compliance guidelines.

1. All IRB and IACUC protocols must be in place before the funding can be awarded. A copy of the approved protocols and approval letter should be submitted to the CEET before an award notice can be issued. For more information, see ‘IRB and IACUC’ in the Full Application Instructions section below.
2. Submit an annual progress report within 3 months of the end of the funding period - The progress report should follow the same format as that required for an NIH R01 RPPR-progress report.
3. Present your findings at a CEET Pilot-Project Progress Seminar within 6 months of the end of the funding cycle.
4. Acknowledge the parent P30 grant on all publications with the following language: “This publication was made possible by P30 ES013508 from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, NIH. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of NIEHS, NIH.” It is the responsibility of the PI to ensure that all papers resulting from the pilot project are submitted to PubMed Central and assigned a PMCID number.

**Full Application Instructions**

Applications must be submitted in *a single PDF* for internal review to [jkuklins@pennmedicine.upenn.edu](mailto:jkuklins@pennmedicine.upenn.edu).

Applications should include the following, in this order:

1. Application Form (included below)
2. Current NIH Biosketch for the PI and other co-investigators
3. An abstract – a brief summary of the project (no more than 300 words)
4. Introduction (*For Revised Applications Only)* – please include a one-page response to the previous critique; and then follow the instructions below.
5. Specific Aims (limit 1 page) – concise goals of the proposed research and a summary of expected outcomes, including specific objectives
6. Research Strategy (limit 6 pages)
   * Significance – describe the importance of the problem or critical barrier that the project addresses in Environmental Health Sciences, and explain how the project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, or clinical practice if the proposed aims are achieved
   * Innovation – describe how the proposed research seeks to shift research practice paradigms and how any methodologies or theoretical concepts that are being developed or used in the project may have an advantage over existing practices
   * Approach – describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish specific aims, including how data will be collected. Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks of success
   * Statistical Plan and Plan for Scientific Rigor & Reproducibility
7. Project Timeline (1 page) –a proposed timeline of study performance should be included, identifying specific tasks and milestones in project progress for the 12-month period of performance
8. A brief outline of how the results from the pilot study will enable the submission of a subsequent NIEHS/NIH grant and a detailed plan for this subsequent grant submission (not more than 1 page)
9. List of Current and Pending Grant Support (*This should be a separate document in addition to the Biosketch)*
10. References
11. Budget – an NIH-style budget table of personnel, equipment, supplies, and other estimated costs to perform the proposed project. Travel is not allowed.
12. Budget Justification – a detailed explanation and justification of the funding request. *Applications lacking sufficient justification will be returned without review*. Non-allowable expenses include:
    * Faculty salaries
    * Tuition for graduate students
    * Travel expenses
13. Facility Core Usage and Correspondence – The CEET Facility Cores offer technical and research support to Center investigators and Pilot Project awardees. A wide range of capabilities, including biostatistical support, analytical sample preparation/processing, and biological sample measurements are available. Early discussion with Core Directors is strongly encouraged. CEET Facility Core Directors should be contacted to provide a letter of support as a part of this application.

**IRB and IACUC**

Applications using Vertebrate Animals or Human Subjects must also submit the corresponding sections required in an NIH grant (*see below*). Failure to do so will lead to the application being not considered for funding.

Vertebrate Animals:

1. Proposed Use of Animals
2. Justification for the Use of Animals
3. Veterinary Care
4. Procedures
5. Method of Euthanasia

Protection of Human Subjects:

Please complete the Human Subjects form below along with all attachments.

**Application Form (*Please Type*)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name | |  | | | | |
| Position/Title | |  | | | | |
| Department | |  | | | | |
| Please select applicable research area | | \_\_\_Air Pollution & Lung Health (AP)  \_\_\_Environmental Exposures & Cancer (EC)  \_\_\_Windows-of-Susceptibility (WS)  \_\_\_Environmental Neuroscience (EN) | | | | |
| Preferred Phone Number | | | Preferred Email | | | |
| Preferred Mailing Address | |  | | | | |
| Application/Research Title | |  | | | | |
| Total Funding Amount Being Requested | |  | | | | |
| Name and Contact Information of Business or Grant Administrator | |  | | | | |
| **Questionnaire** | | | | | | |
| Are you a CEET Member? | | \_\_\_ Yes | | | \_\_\_ No | |
| If CEET Member, please list your Thematic Area(s) | |  | | |  | |
| Are you an Early-State Investigator? | | \_\_\_ Yes | | | \_\_\_ No | |
| Do you plan to use a CEET Facility Core? | | \_\_\_ Yes | | | \_\_\_ No | |
| If so, please indicate which Core(s) you plan to use? | | \_\_\_\_\_ Translational Research Support Core (TRSC)  \_\_\_\_\_ Biomolecular Mass Spectrometry Core (BMSC)  \_\_\_\_\_ Environmental Health Informatics Core (EHIC) | | | | |
| Have you met with a Core Director? | | \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No | | | | |
| If yes, please list of names of the individuals that you have met with? | |  | | | | |
| Is a letter of support from a Core Director included with this packet? | | \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No | | | | |
| If you **do not** plan on using a CEET Facility Core, please provide a written justification here. | |  | | | | |
| Are there animals included in this study? | | \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No | | | | |
| Are Humans Subjects included in this study? | | \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No | | | | |
| **Application Check List** | | | | | | |
| Please provide a ‘check’ or ‘x’ next to every item that is included in this application packet. | | | | | | |
| Application Form | Biosketch | | | Abstract | | Specific Aims |
| Preliminary Studies | Methods | | | Research Strategy  Statistical Plan | | Project Timeline |
| Future Funding Statement | Grant Support List | | | References | | Budget/Budget Justification |
| Facility Core Letter of Support | Applicable IRB Approval | | | Applicable IACUC Approval | |  |

Human Subjects Questionnaire

Please answer all questions below. Note that some questions require attachments. Please use additional paper as needed to answer questions. NOTE: If your study does not include human subjects, please answer ‘no’ to question number one. There is no need to answer other questions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title of Application** |  |
| **Name** |  |
| **Position** |  |
| **Title** |  |
| **Contact Information** |  |
| **Study Title** |  |
| **SECTION 1 - Clinical Trial Questionnaire:** | |
| 1. **Does this study involve human participants?** | **\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No (If no, stop here)** |
| 1. **Are the participants prospectively assigned to an intervention?** | **\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No** |
| 1. **Is the study a Delayed Onset study?**   Delayed onset means you can't fully define your plans for the human subjects study in your application. Typically, this means you need initial results from the first part of the grant before finalizing plans for the human subjects portion. | **\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No** |
| 1. **Is this study exempt from federal regulations?** | **\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No** |
| **If “Yes” to question 4 above, Circle the appropriate exemption number:** | **1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8** |
| 1. **Is the study designed to evaluate the effect of the intervention on the participants?** | **\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No** |
| 1. **Is the effect that will be evaluated a health-related biomedical or behavioral outcome?** | **\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No** |
| **SECTION 2 – STUDY POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS** | |
| 1. **Conditions or Focus of the Study**   **Identify the name(s) of the disease(s) or condition(s) you are studying, or the focus of the study.**  **If available, use appropriate descriptors from NLM’s Medical Subject Headings (MeSH)** |  |
| 1. **Eligibility Criteria** |  |
| 1. **Age Limits – if no limit, enter “N/A”** |  |
| 1. **Inclusion of Women, Minorities, and Children** | **Attach as additional document** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Recruitment and Retention Plan – not required if Exempt #4** | **Attach as additional document** |
| 1. **Recruitment Status (Please Select One):** | **\_\_\_\_Not yet recruiting**  **\_\_\_\_Recruiting**  **\_\_\_\_Enrolling by invitation**  **\_\_\_\_Active**  **\_\_\_\_Not Recruiting**  **\_\_\_\_Completed**  **\_\_\_\_Suspended**  **\_\_\_\_Terminated (Halted prematurely)**  **\_\_\_\_Withdrawn (No Participants Enrolled)** |
| 1. **Study Timeline** | **Attach as additional document** |
| 1. **Enrollment of First Subject – Enter the date and if it is Anticipated or Actual** |  |
| 1. **Inclusion Enrollment Report** | **Attach as additional document** |
| **SECTION 3 – PROTECTION AND MONITORING PLANS (ATTACH AS ONE SINGLE DOCUMENT)** | |
| 1. **Protection of Human Subjects** | **Attach as additional document** |
| 1. **Risks to Human Subjects**    1. **Human Subjects Involvement, Characteristics, and Design**    2. **Study Procedures, Materials, and Potential Risks** | **Attach as additional document** |
| 1. **Adequacy of Protection Against Risks**    1. **Informed Consent and Assent**    2. **Protections Against Risk**    3. **Vulnerable Subjects, if relevant to your study** | **Attach as additional document** |
| 1. **Potential Benefits of the Proposed Research to Research Participants and Others** | **Attach as additional document** |
| 1. **Importance of the Knowledge to be Gained** | **Attach as additional document** |
| 1. **Is this multi-site?** | **\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No** |
| **If yes to the question above, describe the single IRB plan** | **Attach as additional document** |
| 1. **Data and Safety Monitoring Plan – required for Clinical Trial, optional for all other Human Subjects research** | **Attach as additional document** |
| 1. **Will a Data and Safety Monitoring Board be appointed for this study? – required for Clinical Trial, optional for all other Human Subjects research** | **\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No** |
| 1. **Overall structure of the study team - required for Clinical Trial, optional for all other Human Subjects research** | **Attach as additional document** |

## APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA

Applications will be sent out for peer-review to experts in the field. The CEET Executive Committee will then meet to select the awardees.

The major review criteria are noted below and will be scored using the NIH system:

1. Significance
2. Approach
3. Innovation
4. Investigator
5. Resources & Environment
6. Budget/Budget Justification
7. Likelihood that the project will lead to NIEHS/NIH grant support

Funding is expected to begin **on/before November 15, 2024** and notification of award will be sent to the PI and their BA.

Each application will receive a decision letter and a copy of the critique and scores. If an applicant is encouraged to reapply, they must provide a response to the critique (no more than one page).

For questions or more information, contact: Jennifer Kuklinski

(215) 746-3031

[jkuklins@pennmedicine.upenn.edu](mailto:jkuklins@pennmedicine.upenn.edu)

A close up of a logo

Description automatically generated