

Center for Women's Reproductive Health
University-Wide Interdisciplinary Research Center (UWIRC)

Request for Applications (RFA): 2024 Pilot Research Projects in Reproductive Health

PURPOSE: One of the goals of the UAB Center for Women's Reproductive Health (CWRH) is to foster interdisciplinary research collaborations to improve women's health across the lifespan. We also aim to foster development of scholars whose research is intended to improve health and birth outcomes among persons who reside in urban/rural Alabama or in global settings.

To accomplish these goals, the CWRH invests in local UAB investigators and trainees and their affiliated divisions, departments and schools. One example of this investment in continued excellence in women's health research at UAB is with pilot grant funding. CWRH research pilot funds are intended to support high quality and impactful women's health research that generates preliminary data for future NIH/Federal grant applications. Interdisciplinary collaborations are strongly encouraged.

DURATION OF FUNDING: 12-24 months

RANGE OF REQUESTED FUNDS: \$5,000-\$20,000 (CWRH encourages co-funding from other UAB centers and/or departments but co-funding is not required)

NUMBER OF AWARDS: 1-2

TIMELINE:

- RFA Released: December 11, 2023
- Earliest Submission (via RED-ASSIST): January 3, 2024
- Application Deadline: February 26, 2024 (midnight CT)
- Award(s) Announced: April 1, 2024
- Funding Start: April 1, 2024

ELIGIBILITY: The principal investigator (PI) of the application must be a UAB faculty member in any division or department working towards an identified NIH or similar grant project. Co-investigators are not required to be UAB faculty and fellows should work with faculty to obtain funding. The potential research topics can include basic science, translational science or clinical research questions, but must focus on the **women's health of persons across the lifespan or pregnant people and/or outcomes of pregnancy**. Funds can only be used for actual research project costs, (i.e., statistician/nurse effort, patient reimbursement, lab supplies, advertising, etc.) and not ancillary research activities or training. Use of CWRH resources when available (analysts, programmers, research nurses or coordinators, etc.), is strongly encouraged. Funds cannot be used to cover faculty salary.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS: Submit the following components via the **RED-ASSIST Proposal Submission Portal** [<https://redcap.dom.uab.edu/surveys/?s=XKRYLHKE34>] prior to the application deadline at midnight (Central Time) on February 26, 2024.

1. Cover Page: include title of project, Principal Investigator's name, title, department, phone number and e-mail address; names, titles and department affiliations of any co-investigators.
2. Letter of Support: letter from division director or department chair affirming support for the proposal and potential co-funding.

3. Specific Aims: one page overview of the proposal that outlines significance, innovation, specific aims and NIH/Federal funding plans.
4. Project Proposal: up to four (4) single-spaced pages including specific aims page, 11-point Arial font, ½-inch margins; critical elements are described below.
5. Budget: include the following budget categories as relevant: research support effort, materials and supplies, equipment, other research-related activities, and services needed to complete the project.
6. Budget Justification: justify the amounts requested for each category and explain what the funds will accomplish.
7. Biosketch: follow the NIH biosketch format for PI and key co-investigators.
8. Submit a single PDF file with application components in the order outlined above.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF THE PROJECT PROPOSAL (Up to 4 pages including aims page):

Significance and Innovation. Provide an overview of the topic relevant to the specific aim(s) to demonstrate the public health significance and the need for this project. Describe how the project is likely to innovate health care.

Approach. Summarize the methodology/activities, data collection plans, and the timeframe that is proposed to address the specific aims.

Impact. Briefly describe the potential transformational impact of achieving these goals. Indicate how results will be used to enhance future research and to support NIH grant proposals. Provide specific benchmarks to evaluate progress and success.

Preliminary or Related Findings. Describe current and past efforts that are relevant to this project. Describe any already available resources such as institutional funds or support from co-investigators. Preliminary findings are encouraged but not required.

Investigators. Briefly describe the expertise of investigators and how they will interact to achieve the goals of the project and future funding (attach NIH biosketch, not counted towards page limits).

Bio-sketches. All applicants and collaborators should submit NIH biographical sketches (5-page limit) with personal statements adapted to describe defined roles on the project. Use the NIH biographical sketch form approved for use on/after January 25, 2022. The form, instructions, and sample biographical sketches are available at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>

REVIEW PROCEDURES: Applications will be reviewed by investigators with relevant expertise within or outside the UAB community. The evaluation will follow the NIH scale (1-9) to assess overall Significance and Innovation (including targets for future funding), Approach, Impact, Preliminary or Related Findings, and Investigators (including involvement of trainees and junior investigators, as well as community stakeholders).

FUNDS AVAILABLE: Final award decisions will be made by the CWRH leadership. It is anticipated that one to two awards totaling up to \$20,000 will be awarded for this cycle based on scientific merit and promise. These awards are meant to accomplish small, concise projects that will lead to submissions for larger funded projects. Applicants should request only the budget that is reasonably needed to accomplish the stated goals.

AWARD DETAILS: Funding will be awarded from the CWRH Administrative Office. All questions regarding the awarding of funding should be directed to the contact listed in the notice of award. Prior to the awarding of funding, the following information must be provided, if applicable:

Institutional Review Board approvals, if applicable, must be obtained prior to **receipt** of funds, but are not required to submit an application. Prior to receipt of an award involving human subjects, IRB approval from all participating sites and human subjects training certification for all key personnel will be required.

For more information about human subjects approval, see: <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/index.html> and <https://www.uab.edu/research/home/irb>

Additional Details. Maximum award is \$20,000. Indirect costs are generally not covered but line items (e.g. IRB, communication, etc.) essential for the success of the project, should be included in the budget. Awards are one year in length. One no-cost extension may be requested at the end of the first-year budget period only.

All costs must conform to the NIH Grants Policy Statement (GPS) and applicable U.S. Office of Management and Budget OMB circulars for necessity and reasonability, allocability, conformance and consistency, as well as allowability. Please follow the link for NIH cost principles: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/HTML5/section_7/7.2_the_cost_principles.htm

POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS: Awardees will be expected to provide semi-annual progress reports. In addition, awardees will be expected to present the details of their study at a CWRH seminar, research forum, or other meeting to be announced. This will provide an opportunity to identify additional synergies within UAB, explore other means of support, and gather recommendations to enhance the project.

For questions or more information, please email: cwrh@uabmc.edu