



**Request for Applications (RFA)**  
**Center for Research on US Latino HIV/AIDS & Drug Abuse (CRUSADA)**  
**Supplemental Pilot Studies Program**

**Key Dates**

Release/Posted Date: September 14, 2018

Information Session: October 1, 2018

Letter of Intent Due Date: October 12, 2018

Submission Due Date: December 14, 2018

Peer Review Date(s): TBA

CRUSADA Review/Decisions: February 15, 2019

Anticipated Start Date: March 29, 2019

**Executive Announcement Summary**

This request for applications (RFA) solicits pilot study grant applications focusing on substance abuse, HIV, obesity, mental health, and violence/trauma health disparities with Latino and other vulnerable populations. The pilot study applications must be supplemental to (a) an existing NIH-funded research grant or (b) a recently submitted NIH research grant that was not funded but has a Principal Investigator that intends to revise and resubmit the grant to NIH. The pilot study applications submitted under this RFA can request funding to expand the focus of existing studies into additional areas of research and populations related to the original aims of the parent grant. For NIH research grants that were not funded, the pilot study applications for this RFA can collect preliminary data to strengthen the parent application for resubmission to NIH. Only early stage investigators and early established investigators are eligible to be Principal Investigators for this RFA. The purpose of this competitive funding opportunity is to: (1) expand on significant and innovative ongoing NIH-funded research studies that focus on substance abuse, HIV, obesity, mental health, and violence/trauma health disparities research at Florida International University; (2) increase the number of future health disparity researchers; (3) promote publication of scholarly papers and scientific presentations derived from the proposed pilot studies; and, (4) promote the submission of R01s to NIH or R01-equivalents to NIH sister agencies.

CRUSADA plans on funding four applications, each receiving funding up to \$50,000, in this RFA. Applications can be submitted for one-year or two-year projects. It is expected that the proposed pilot projects will be completed within the time period specified in the application. However, no-cost extensions will be considered; no-cost extensions will be largely dependent on adequate progress toward completion of the goals of the pilot study.

**Administration of the pilot studies**

The pilot studies funded under this funding announcement will be administered by the **Center for Research on US Latino HIV/AIDS & Drug Abuse (CRUSADA)**, which is directed by Dr. Mario De La Rosa. CRUSADA is a multidisciplinary center with the unifying theme of conducting and promoting multi-level community-based participatory research to prevent substance abuse, violence/trauma, and HIV/AIDS syndemic conditions and reduce their adverse health and mental health consequences in Latino and other vulnerable populations.

Expectations of Scientific Progress. Applicants funded under this request for applications are expected to: publish at least 1 article in a peer review journal and present pilot study findings at a national scientific meeting and submit a Research grant application to NIH or NIH sister agency within 3 months of completing the pilot study. **Pilot study awardees that do not submit a research grant application to NIH will lose eligibility from FIU Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED) incentive programs such as the Faculty Research Incentives Program (FRIP).**

Examples of Potential Applications. The potential areas of interest listed below are not intended to exclude other priority areas.

- Development of a substance use, violence/trauma, obesity, mental health, and/or HIV intervention targeting Latino or Haitian immigrants or African American adolescents or older adults.
- Intervention research in underserved Latino, African American, Haitian, and other vulnerable communities in the area of substance abuse, violence/trauma, obesity, mental health, and HIV/AIDS.
- Collection and analysis of social network data pertaining to adoption, implementation, fidelity, or sustainability of a substance abuse, violence/trauma, obesity, mental health, and/or HIV/AIDS evidence-based intervention for Latinos, African Americans, Haitians, and other vulnerable populations.
- The effects of substance abuse, violence/trauma, obesity, and HIV/AIDS syndemic conditions on physical health and/or mental health in Latino, African Americans, Haitians, and other vulnerable populations.

Funds Available and Reporting Requirements. CRUSADA plans on committing up to \$200,000 this year to fund 4 supplemental pilot study grants (up to \$50,000/grant) in this request for applications. It is expected that pilot projects will be completed in one year or two years. However, no-cost extensions will be considered; no-cost extensions will be largely dependent on adequate progress toward completion of the goals of the pilot study. All pilot studies will receive oversight from CRUSADA. Principal Investigators will be required to submit a 1 to 2 page progress report every 6 months. Additionally, every 6 months, an independent team of two NIH-funded, experienced investigators not affiliated to FIU, appointed by Dr. Mario De La Rosa, will review projects to assess achievement of milestones or protocol completion. Principal Investigators requesting a no-cost extension will receive the approved cost extension only if significant progress is made in achieving stated goals of the pilot study. Those projects receiving a no-cost extension will be required to submit a final report at the completion of the project to the Director of CRUSADA. Any obstacles or other problems, including changes in scope, must be reported to Dr. Mario De La Rosa via the contact information provided below.

#### Eligible Applicants.

Faculty who qualify for the NIH Next Generation Researchers Initiative (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-17-101.html>). This NIH Initiative identifies two types of next generation researchers:

1. **Early Stage Investigator (ESI):** An ESI is a Program Director / Principal Investigator (PD/PI) who has completed their terminal research degree or end of post-graduate clinical training, whichever date is later, within the past 10 years and who has not previously competed successfully as PD/PI for a substantial NIH independent research award. A list of NIH grants that a PD/PI can hold and still be considered an ESI can be found at <https://grants.nih.gov/policy/early-investigators/list-smaller-grants.htm>. ESIs are encouraged to enter the date of their terminal research degree or the end date of their post-graduate clinical training in their eRA Commons profile to ensure their correct identification.
2. **Early Established Investigator (EEI):** An EEI is a PD/PI who is within 10 years of receiving their first substantial, independent competing NIH R01-equivalent research award as an ESI. A meritorious application with a designated PD/PI EEI may be prioritized for funding if:
  - The EEI lost or is at risk for losing all NIH research support if not funded by competing awards this year, OR
  - The EEI is supported by only one active award.

K99 awardees who are in the training phase of their grant are **not** eligible for this RFA. Only one application will be accepted from each Principal Investigator per deadline for submission.

Applicants from diverse backgrounds, including racial and ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, and women, are encouraged to apply.

Allowable Expenses. Below are allowable and non-allowable grant expenses.

*Allowable expenses include:*

- Effort for PI or Co-PI between 0.6 to 1.2 calendar months up to the NIH cap of \$187,000.
- Effort for staff and graduate students
- Research supplies, services, or participant incentives/honoraria related to conducting the research plan
- Specialized computer software required to carry out the research
- Consultant fees for specific expertise
- Domestic travel to present findings at a national conference

*Non-allowable expenses include:*

- Salary effort for mentor
- Student tuition
- Office rent or telephone charges
- Computer hardware
- Reimbursement for activities that occur before the project period begins
- Activities already supported by another grant
- Indirect costs (i.e., F&A costs)

Content and Form of Application Submission. All proposals must include the following items:

- Cover letter with title of application and name of PI
- Project Description / Abstract
- 1-page specific aims
- 6-page research plan (including significance, innovation, methods, and relevance of proposed project to CRUSADA aims)

- 1-page proposed timeline
- 2-page description of protections for human subjects
- 1-page inclusion of women, children, and minorities
- 1-page data safety and monitoring Plan (if applicable for clinical trials)
- 1-page data sharing plan
- Detailed budget of planned expenditures and budget justification
- NIH Biosketch

### Information Session

An information session will be held at **10:00am on October 1, 2018**. The meeting will be held in Academic Health Center 5 (AHC5), in conference room #300.

### Submission and Award Dates

Letters of intent should be sent by **5:00pm on October 12, 2018**. Please note that letters of intent are not required and are not binding. However, these letters will be informative for forming the review committee, particularly in providing expert scientific review and to avoid conflicts of interest. We therefore highly encourage all potential applicants to submit a letter of intent and recommend that the letter includes:

- Full name of the proposed pilot study PI and other members of the investigative team
- Draft title for the proposed pilot study
- Draft abstract of the proposed pilot study

Proposals must be received **no later than 5:00 pm on December 14, 2018**. Late or incomplete proposals will not be accepted. It is anticipated that funding announcements will be made on February 15, 2019, with the earliest anticipated start date of proposed research projects being March 29, 2019. Proposals must be submitted via email to: [crusada@fiu.edu](mailto:crusada@fiu.edu)

Application Review Criteria. Review criteria will parallel that of NIH and include the study's: (1) significance, (2) investigator, (3) innovation, (4) approach, (5) environment, (6) overall impact, and (7) potential to lead to an external research grant application. Additional review criteria will include: relevance of the proposed pilot study to substance abuse, HIV, obesity, mental health, and violence/trauma health disparities.

Contact. For questions about this RFA, please contact Dr. Mario De La Rosa:

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