Request for Applications:
Research Projects on Disparities in African American Men’s Health throughout the Life Course (RFA-CHAAMPS-15-001)

The Center for Healthy African American Men through Partnerships (CHAAMPS) (U54MD008620), led by the University of Minnesota and the University of Alabama at Birmingham, invites applications for community-based research projects on disparities in unintentional and violence-related injuries and homicide, head injuries in athletes, and chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease, stroke, hepatitis C, and cancer, especially prostate cancer, in African American men across their life course.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Background
Men are at greater risk of the major causes of premature death in the US (including violent/accidental death and chronic diseases) compared to women. Men also live fewer years and experience fewer quality years of life due to a greater burden of comorbid conditions. African American men experience consistently poorer health outcomes compared to Caucasian men. African American men have the highest age-adjusted all-cause mortality rate of any race-gender group in the United States (1,067.3 per 100,000 for African American men vs. 869.3 per 100,000 for Caucasian men in 2011) and a life expectancy that is at least four years lower than that of Caucasian men. Causes of death in African American men differ at various ages, with unintentional injuries being the primary cause of death in ages 1-14, homicide in ages 15-34, heart disease in ages 35-54, and cancer in ages 55-84. Multiple factors are suspected of leading to poorer health outcomes in African American males, including cultural, socioeconomic, lifestyle/behavioral, and biological. For example, African American men are less likely to have health insurance, more likely to have poor diets and be physically inactive, and more likely to have hypertension and diabetes than Caucasian men.

Purpose
In exploring the factors responsible for the differential health outcomes of African American males, CHAAMPS promotes an integrative approach that accounts for multiple pathways to poor health outcomes, including environmental factors as well as psychosocial and biological factors. CHAAMPS thus encourages transdisciplinary collaboration between academic experts and community stakeholders to study the pathways to disparities in African American men’s health.

CHAAMPS seeks to fund community-based research projects that investigate the biological, psychosocial, and environmental factors driving and sustaining health disparities in African American men’s health across the life course. Proposed research should consider pathways to unintentional and violence-related injuries and homicide, head injuries in athletes, and chronic diseases; and the mechanisms connecting such pathways to health disparities throughout the life course of African American men. Examples of proposed research include:

1. Studies of the relationship between psychosocial and biological factors and African American men’s health during critical periods in their life course, such as youth/adolescence, young adulthood, middle age, and older adulthood.
2. Implementation and evaluation of community-based interventions to improve individual and/or socio-environmental outcomes in unintentional and violence-related injuries and homicide, head injuries in athletes, cardiovascular disease, stroke, hepatitis C, and cancer, especially prostate cancer.

Available Resources
To stimulate academic-community partnerships, the CHAAMPS Collaborations and Partnerships Core will connect academic investigators with community partners with national presence: the National USA Foundation, Inc., 100 Black Men of America, Inc., and the National Football League. Applicants are required to
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contact the Collaborations and Partnerships Core Coordinators (Joanice Thompson at the University of Alabama at Birmingham or Raymond Ogagarue at the University of Minnesota) for a consultation about available resources and services. Contact information is provided at the end of this document. Additionally, biostatistical and study design support may be provided to funded pilot research projects. Participation in an informational webinar is required prior to submission of the Letter of Intent.

II. Award Information

Available Funds: CHAAMPS intends to commit approximately $525,000 for this round of applications. Funding is contingent upon NIH appropriations.

Number of Awards: Four to six projects will be funded. One or more projects per community partner will be funded. It is allowable to collaborate with more than one community partner or academic institution.

Award Budget: Awards will range from $75,000 to $125,000 (average award of $100,000) for the entire duration of the project. Funding will be disbursed in phases, contingent upon making adequate progress consistent with the proposed research plan. No indirect costs will be paid. A maximum of 80% of the budget may be allocated to the academic partner(s) on the application. Community partners must be included in the budget development and must be funded at an appropriate level for the proposed work. Final budgets will be determined after the selection process is completed. The Steering Committee may request revisions if it considers the proposed funding insufficient for a participating partner to perform the described work.

Award Project Period: The award project period is 1 year, with the possibility of a no-cost extension upon submission of a written request no later than 60 days prior to the end of the project period. Quarterly progress reports will be required for all funded projects.

III. Eligibility Information

1) Faculty members at the University of Minnesota, University of Alabama at Birmingham, Johns Hopkins University, MD Anderson Cancer Center, and the University of California, Davis are eligible to apply. Applicants at the levels of Instructor or Assistant Professor must have a senior faculty member serving as a mentor. Collaborations with the CHAAMPS national community partners (the National USA Foundation, Inc., 100 Black Men of America, Inc., or the National Football League) are required.

2) Representatives of the CHAAMPS national community partners – the National USA Foundation, Inc., 100 Black Men of America, Inc., and the National Football League – in collaboration with an academic investigator from the University of Minnesota or the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Applicants may participate in more than one application per cycle but may not submit more than one application as the Principal Investigator of a project.

IV. Application and Submission Information

Key Dates

Informational webinars (prerequisite for submission of a Letter of Intent): October 1, 15, and 29, 2014
Letters of Intent due: December 1, 2014
Invitations to submit a full application: December 22, 2014
Applications due: February 27, 2015
Announcement of recipients: May 1, 2015
Project start date: July 1, 2015

Applicants are expected to establish a partnership with one of the community partners as soon as possible. Participation in at least one informational webinar is a prerequisite for submission of a Letter of Intent and application. Letters of Intent and applications must be submitted electronically at www.uabmhrc.org by 11:59 pm on the respective due date.
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**Letter of Intent (2 pages):** Letters of intent must include:
- PI/Investigator(s) names, title(s), and academic institution/community organization
- Mentor(s) and title(s), if applicable
- Description of the academic-community partnership
- Project title
- Purpose of the project
- Description of the specific aims, timeline, and project cost
- Description of the partnership plan
- Responsibilities of the academic and the community partners in the project

**Application:** Investigators should submit an NIH-format application on combined PHS 398 forms ([http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html)) as a single Word or PDF file. Applications should be single-spaced, with at least 0.5-inch margins, and should use 11-point Arial font.

Applications should include:
- Face Page
- Project Summary/Abstract and Relevance
- Project/Performance Sites
- Key Personnel
- Other Significant Contributors
- Mentorship Plan – for Instructors and Assistant Professors only (limit to 1 page)
- Table of Contents
- Detailed Budget
- Budget Justification
- Resources/Equipment
- Research Strategy (6 pages, plus 1 page Specific Aims):
  - a. Specific Aims (1 page)
  - b. Significance
  - c. Innovation
  - d. Approach
- Human Subjects Research (if applicable)
- References/Literature Cited
- Letters of Support are optional

**V. Funding Restrictions**
The following types of expenditures are allowable:
- a. Research supplies and animal maintenance
- b. Technical assistance
- c. Domestic travel when necessary to carry out or present the proposed research
- d. Publication costs, including reprints
- e. Special fees (pathology, photography, etc.)
- f. Stipends for graduate students/postdoctoral fellows if their role is to support the project
- g. Equipment costing less than $2,000
- h. Registration fees for scientific meetings
- i. Investigator salary
- j. Consultant/contractor costs

The following types of expenditures are **not** allowed:
- a. Secretarial/administrative personnel
b. Tuition
c. Foreign travel
d. Honoraria for visiting lecturers
e. Per diem charges for hospital beds
f. Construction or building maintenance
g. Office and laboratory furniture
h. Rental of office or laboratory space (excluding rental space specific to the conduct of a study. Examples of allowable expenses would be rental of a community space for participant interviews and focus groups. Space rental from an academic institution is not allowed.)
i. Recruiting and relocation expenses
j. Dues and membership fees in scientific societies

VI. Application Review Information
Applications will be evaluated on the scientific merit of the project, its relevance to the scope of CHAAMPS, the strength of the partnership plan, the proposed mentorship plan, if applicable, and the applicant’s potential for future funding. It is expected that awarded projects will lead to NIH R01/R03/R21 applications, K-awards, or other extramural funding.

Review Criteria
Overall Impact. Reviewers will provide an overall score, based on the NIH overall impact scoring criteria (9-point scale, with 1 being “exceptional” and 9 being “poor”). The overall score will reflect the reviewers’ assessment of the likelihood that the project will exert a sustained, powerful influence on the research field(s) involved, in consideration of six scored review criteria:

Relevance and Significance: Is the project relevant to the focus of the RFA? Does the proposal address an important issue? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice improve? How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field?

Partnership Plan: Does the project clearly require a joint effort from academic and community partners? Has a contact between the academic and the community partner(s) been established? Is there a description of communication methods (i.e., meetings) between academic and community partners? Is there evidence that both academic and community partners contributed to the development of the research question and approach? Is the sharing of resources between academic and community partners appropriate? Is there evidence of support for the project from the community partner(s)? Is there a shared dissemination plan that encompasses outreach to both the scientific community and the community at large?

Investigator(s): Are the PIs, collaborators, and mentors well suited to the project? Do they have appropriate experience and training? Does the proposed mentorship plan ensure accomplishment of the project aims?

Innovation: Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions? Are the concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions novel to one field of research or novel in a broad sense? Is a refinement, improvement, or new application of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions proposed?

Approach: Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Are potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented? If the project involves clinical research, are the plans for protection of human subjects from research risks, and engagement with community partners adequate?

Future Funding: What is the likelihood that the pilot project will lead to an NIH R01/R03/R21 application, a K-award, or other extramural funding?
VII. CHAAMPS Contacts
We encourage inquiries concerning this funding opportunity from potential applicants.

Application Submissions
Online: www.uabmhrc.org

Application Submissions Contact
Gabriela Oates, MA; goates@uabmc.edu; 205-975-7940

Financial/Grants Management Contact
Lisa Rogers, MS; roger031@umn.edu; 612-626-4762

Collaborations and Partnerships Core
Monu Fouad, MD, MPH, University of Alabama at Birmingham
Contact via Coordinator Joanice Thompson; jthompson@uabmc.edu; 205-934-6889

Kola Okuyemi, MD, MPH, University of Minnesota
Contact via Coordinator Raymond Ogagarue, MD, MPH; ogaga001@umn.edu; 612-625-1787

Principal Investigators
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