Pilot Grants from the Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness

Overview
The Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness at the Milken Institute School of Public Health at the George Washington University is focused on the identification of effective nutrition and physical activity strategies that improve the prevention and management of obesity and other chronic related diseases. Improving the health of the District of Columbia, with particular attention to health inequities, is a major goal of the Center. To foster these efforts, the Center is initiating a small grant program to fund pilot projects within the Milken Institute School of Public Health. The goal of the pilot grant is to enhance the likelihood that the PI will obtain funding from NIH or other funders. Grants involving cross-disciplinary Co-Principal Investigators either within in the School or University are encouraged. One to three grants will be funded in each year’s funding cycle. Priority will be given to new investigators to encourage their engagement in the Center’s goals. Recipients will be known as Redstone Fellows.

Eligibility
- Full-time active status tenure and non-tenure track faculty in the Milken Institute SPH. Faculty may be regular or research track faculty at the rank of assistant or associate professor.
- An application may be submitted by a PI with no previous NIH funding, pending NIH funding, or an active or previous NIH award. However, the current application cannot overlap the aims in a funded grant. If a notice of award occurs for a grant with similar or overlapping aims before or during involvement with the Center program, please notify the Center Director immediately.
- An investigator may not: (a) serve as PI on more than one proposal in a given round, or (b) serve as PI and co-investigator (Co-I) in a given round. An investigator may serve as a Co-I on an unlimited number of proposals in a given round.
- Funds will not be granted for similar projects currently supported by other internal or external funding mechanisms. Funds cannot be requested for continuation of existing funded projects or as bridge funding for research activities or staff.
- Second submissions with the same research aims will not be accepted.

Funding and Project Duration
- 1-3 projects will be funded in each grant cycle. Funding can range from $25,000 to $50,000 depending on the nature of the project.
- Funding will be limited to 12 months and is not renewable.
- Unspent funds at the end of the grant year will revert to the Center.
- Funding will be on a cost-reimbursable basis from accounts set up in the PI’s department.

Allowable and Unallowable Expenses
- Allowable expenses: Supplies for data collection and analysis, reasonable travel expenses essential to achieving project aims or to present pilot study data at scientific meetings, equipment, research support staff, Graduate Research
Assistants, and publication costs. If protected time is not available, up to 5% of salary can be provided by this grant if the department provides matching support.

- Non-allowable expenses: capital equipment, indirect costs, rent, and hospitality charges.

**Awardee Requirements**

- Present mid-year and final progress reports that summarize progress and project results
- Submit funding application within six months of completion of the pilot project

**Application Instructions**

- Investigators should be aware that reviewers outside of their designated research areas might review the application. Therefore, it is important to write the proposal in a manner understandable to non-content experts. Applications will be reviewed by the Center’s Internal Advisory Committee using the standard NIH scoring criteria and scoring sheet (see [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/peer_review_process.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/peer_review_process.htm)). Applicants will receive written feedback, regardless of whether their proposal is accepted for funding.
- In keeping with NIH standards, use standard layout size of 8 ½ x 11 with at least 1/2-inch margins.
- Use an Arial typeface (or other accepted NIH fonts), a black font color, and a font size of 11 points or larger. Charts, graphs, figures, and so on may be in color with a font size no smaller than 8 points. Text should be single-spaced. SF 424 guidance should be consulted ([http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/#inst](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/#inst)).
- Page limits for each section of the application are stated below.
- Follow the outline below, Sections 1-9, in developing your proposal.

**Section 1 Face Page.** Required form provided.

**Section 2 Cover letter.** Applicants must submit a cover letter to the Center that provides:

1. A brief description of your proposed idea and your expertise
2. A specific statement of how your proposal is consistent with the Center’s activities
3. The specific funding opportunity and target submission date you plan to pursue. Describe how your research is innovative in the context of the specific funding opportunity.
4. Discuss previous/current grant funding experience and your expectations for how this pilot project will advance your research career trajectory and your ability to secure extramural funding.

The cover letter should be approximately 1 page.

**Section 3 Budget Page.** Use attached budget template. Follow NIH guidelines for a budget and budget justification. Limit to 1 page.
Section 4 Budget Justification Page. Follow standard SF 424 instructions. Limit to 1 page.

Section 5 Biographical Sketch Page. Use the standard NIH ‘biosketch’ format, including the “Personal Statement” for the PI and all Co-Investigators. Limit biographical sketch to 4 pages. The NIH form and biosketch sample are available at http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-15-024.html

Section 6 Research Plan. The Research Plan, including all components of section 6, is limited to a total of 4 pages and must include the following:

- 6a. Specific Aims. List the specific aims for the proposed project and relate them to the broad, long-term goals of the project. Specific aims should be approximately 1 page.
- 6b. Significance. Describe the rationale for the proposed study and state the overall objective. Review relevant prior work and identify the gaps that the project is intended to fill.
- 6c. Innovation. Discuss between one and three novel ideas or contributions that the project offers. Clearly state the importance and relevance of the proposed work (e.g., to test the stated hypothesis, create a novel design, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm, address a critical barrier to progress in the field or develop a new intervention).
  Significance and innovation should be approximately 1 page, together.
- 6d. Preliminary Studies. Preliminary data are allowed but not required when submitting a proposal. However, a description of how the PI’s preliminary studies inform the proposed research is helpful to the reviewers.
- 6e. Research Design and Methods. Describe the research design, conceptual framework, and procedures that will be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Describe the approach to be used for data analyses and interpretation. Justify the sample size (formal power calculations not necessary). Provide a tentative sequence or timetable for the project. Human Subjects Sections and IRB protocols do not have to be provided at this point, but may be requested if awarded. The emphasis in this section should be on what the pilot project will accomplish and how those data will increase the likelihood of external funding. The description of the full project should only provide the context for the pilot project.
- 6f. Study Timeline & Future Plan. This section must include the significant benchmarks for your project, including a timetable for the identification of the specific funding opportunity and agency, and the expected submission date of your proposal.

The Preliminary studies, Research Design and Methods, and Study Timeline and Future Plan should be approximately 2 pages, together.
Section 7 References. Use the NIH format to cite your literature. The references do not count toward the page limit for the research plan.

Section 8 Appendix. Provide letters of support from research collaborators, consultants, co-investigators, or other supporting documents as needed.

Section 9 Departmental Chair Letter. The PI’s department chair must submit a letter of support with regard to your eligibility for and participation in the SPH Springboard Grant Program. We ask that chairs reflect on and address the following items in the letter:

1. Discuss the researcher’s current grant funding (approximation) and confirm that this project does not overlap with any other funded projects. Please state if new hires have existing start-up funds.
2. Explicitly state that the PI will commit 10-15% effort to successful completion of their pilot project proposal aims.
3. Give your impression of the researcher’s long-term investment and longevity in your department; specifically, “Do you see this researcher as a promising contributor to your department 5 years from today?”
4. Provide an endorsement of the researcher’s work ethic, career planning, and ability to follow through on tasks within restricted time frames.
5. If salary support is requested in the application, indicate that the department will provide matching support.

Post Award Requirements
A progress report must be submitted to the Center six months after the initiation of funding. A final report must be submitted at the end of the project. The reports should describe unexpected barriers and novel insights. At the end of the pilot project, investigators will be asked to present their findings at a Center seminar. All grantees must document that they have submitted a full proposal to the NIH or another funder within six months of completing their projects.

Application Submission Details and Deadlines
- The submission deadline is November 16, 2015 at 5:00 pm EDT.
- Proposals, with all parts of Sections 1-9, should be collapsed into a single PDF.
- The PDF should be e-mailed to bdietz@gwu.edu by 5:00 pm EDT.
- Awardees will be announced on or around Feb 1, 2016 with a March 1, 2016 start date.
- The funding period will be March 1, 2016 – February 28, 2016.
- Questions regarding the application or submission should be sent to bdietz@gwu.edu