

**Pilot Project Announcement**  
**Center on Population Health and Aging**  
**Application Deadline: August 31, 2007**

The Center on Population Health has funding available for pilot research for the 2007-2008 academic year. The funds are intended to support innovative interdisciplinary research on population health and aging that has the potential of leading to extramural (e.g., NIH, NSF) grant applications. Proposals that speak to CPHA's core strategic aims are encouraged, although all applications will be considered on their scientific merit and potential for extramural support. CPHA's strategic themes are summarized at:

<http://www.pop.psu.edu/cpha/index.htm>

Although pilot proposals that fit within CPHA's strategic emphases will be considered, the program emphasis for the next few years aims to focus the CPHA agenda on an initiative that targets the comprehensive measurement of health and well being across the life span. This initiative builds upon Penn State's unique research strengths and the specific investments of CPHA resources to date in research on health conditions and disability, gene-environment interaction, cognitive aging, the use of biomeasures in survey research, life course factors, and the social context (including race, gender and social status) of health and disease. Consistent with the way in which we see population perspectives on aging developing (as evidenced by several National Research Council committee reports), the overall goal of the projects we hope to support will move us in the direction of producing an ecologically valid and comprehensive assessment of health status, sensory/motor functioning, cognitive functioning, and lifestyle/contextual and social status factors that contribute to understanding the health and well being of the population.

We have support available for about 4 medium-sized (Level-2) 12-month pilot projects (e.g., \$20,000 in direct costs). Support may be budgeted for a variety of activities including: course buyout, modest summer support, equipment, subject costs, and project travel. Once approved by the CPHA internal advisory committee, funding will begin subject to NIA and IRB approval.

Thirteen pilot projects have been supported during the first three years of CPHA's existence. The projects span an impressive list of topics and the faculty is from a wide variety of scientific disciplines. The projects are excellent examples of interdisciplinary research that blends population perspectives with perspectives from disciplines such as human development, nutrition, and behavioral genetics. Project summaries are available at:

<http://athens.pop.psu.edu/cpha/pilot.cfm>

Funds for smaller projects (level 1 -- \$4k or less) are available on an ad hoc basis. Level 1's are intended to help faculty form research teams (e.g., to support meetings to discuss mutual interests, develop research questions, identify team leaders, and divide responsibilities).

For both the larger pilot projects and the level 1's, interested faculty should contact Duane Alwin ([dalwin@pop.psu.edu](mailto:dalwin@pop.psu.edu)) to discuss substantive and budgeting issues. Because CPHA is a collaborative effort on the part of five major centers (PRI, Gerontology, CHCPR, CDHG, and CHDFRDC), co-funding across the centers is possible and, in some cases, desirable. Faculty members who have requested/received pilot funds from another center for the project are obligated to identify other sources of support.

## **Application Procedures for Major Pilot Projects**

Applicants are required to submit a proposal for a pilot project of 5 pages maximum (single-spaced), as well as a detailed budget and NIH Biosketch for each of the pilot project investigators. Formats for the pilot study application should follow the basic categories used in NIH proposals: specific aims, background & significance, preliminary studies, and research design & methods.

Applications are due August 31, 2007. Funding decisions will be reached during the first weeks of September.

Applications should be submitted to:  
Ms. Alyson Otto, Staff Assistant  
[E-mail: [aotto@pop.psu.edu](mailto:aotto@pop.psu.edu)]  
Center on Population Health and Aging  
426 Pond Laboratory  
University Park campus

## **Review Criteria**

Projects will be rated with respect to the following attributes (not listed in any order of importance):

1. Relevance of topic to CPHA's strategic goals, and feasibility of the proposed research
2. Likelihood that the study will make a scientific contribution to the study of population health and aging
3. Degree to which the project is consistent with NIH priorities
4. Adherence to human subjects research and other ethical guidelines
5. Extent of plans to submit the project for external funding
6. Likelihood the project will result in sustained interdisciplinary collaboration
7. Quality and quantity of the principal investigator's prior work and capacity to follow through on research aims

## **Research Infrastructural Support**

The Population Research Institute provides administrative and research support to the Center on Population Health and Aging. All pilot projects will receive project management support (e.g., budgeting, purchasing) from PRI. Based on the needs of a study, pilot projects also may budget directly for specific services in computing, geographic information analysis, and information and data archiving. Descriptions of PRI's core services are available at:

<http://www.pop.psu.edu/general/services.htm>