



Request for Pilot Research Project Proposals: 2023

The Heartland Center for Occupational Health and Safety, supported by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), announces the availability of funds to support pilot projects. The mission of the Heartland Center is to serve Federal Region VII by providing graduate training, continuing education, and outreach in occupational health and safety (OHS).

PROJECT SCOPE AND LOCATION

Research projects must be related to one of the National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) sector areas (see: <https://www.cdc.gov/nora/comment/agendas/default.html>), and pertain to an occupational health or safety issue. The research must be conducted in the United States.

WHO MAY APPLY

This pilot mechanism is limited to faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students (MS, MPH, PhD, MD) conducting research in an OHS area (See Part B of the Research Plan). Proposals submitted by a graduate student or postdoctoral fellow must have a faculty sponsor and accompanying mentoring plan to enhance student training and increase the likelihood of success (See Letters of Support).

FY 2023 AWARDS

Two types of projects will be awarded on a competitive basis:

- 1) A project that can include student funding with a maximum award of \$20,000
- 2) A project that does not include student funding with a maximum award of \$5,000

Funding will be provided for the period 7/1/23 – 6/30/24, although an earlier start date can be requested.

BUDGET RESTRICTIONS

- If the PI is a Heartland Center trainee, then the requested salary support for the PI plus PI stipend support provided by the Heartland Center for the 2023-24 academic year, cannot exceed the NIH stipend rate, currently \$25,836. A budget that includes trainee funding must be sent to Ms. Mindy Sickels-Sterbenz for approval prior to submission (mindy-sickels@uiowa.edu).
- Funds for meeting/conference travel is not allowed.
- Faculty salary support is not allowed.
- Indirect costs of 8% can be applied for budgets originating outside the University of Iowa.

APPLICATION MECHANISM

The following format must be followed for both funding types. Omission of any requested component of the application may result in the application not being considered for funding. The research plan for applications will be no longer than 5 pages, single-spaced, for \$20,000 funding, and no longer than 3 pages, single-spaced for \$5,000 awards. Applications for the \$5,000 awards should emphasize the “research plan” and the specific aspects of the project requiring the budgeted equipment and/or supplies.

Application Format and Content

Proposals should include the following sections:

Required Sections:	Page Limit
1) Cover Letter	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include the project title• Rationale for research concept and project's potential impact	
2) Front Page	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Title, date, investigator/organization name(s), affiliation• Project summary (150-word limit)• A short paragraph describing the proposed project's relevance to occupational safety and health• The following statement should be posted: <i>If I submit this pilot grant application (or an application with similar aims) to another funder while it is under review by the Heartland Center, I will notify the Heartland Center. I understand that failure to comply with this policy is grounds for rejection of the application and withdrawal of any funds that may be awarded.</i>	
3) Research Plan	5 (or 3)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A) Specific aimsB) Background and significance to occupational health and safety*C) Methods or approachD) Anticipated benefits to occupational health and safety <p>The Research Plan should address "burden, need and impact" as defined by NIOSH (https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/bni.html) and describe how the project aligns with the National Occupational Research Agendas (Sector or Cross-Sector) (https://www.cdc.gov/nora/comment/agendas/default.html).</p>	
4) Expected products (conference abstracts, papers, subsequent grant application)	1
5) References	No page limit
6) Budget and budget justification	2
7) Timeline and milestones	1
8) Biographical sketch (use current NIH biosketch formatting)	2 (per investigator)
9) Letters of Support	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborative relationships must include a letter affirming the willingness to actively collaborate on the project. If the PI is a student/trainee, the application must include a letter of support from a faculty advisor and a mentoring plan. For additional information about a mentoring plan, please contact Dr. Nir Keren at nir@iastate.edu.	
10) Appendices	No page limit
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Items may include draft surveys/questionnaires, background information on web tools or smartphone apps, training materials, maps, etc.	

HUMAN SUBJECTS

For projects involving human subjects, approval by an appropriate institutional review board (IRB) is not required for grant consideration; but applicants are encouraged to begin the submission process early so minimal time will be lost in securing approval. If the pilot application is approved for funding, funds will be made available when IRB approval is obtained, or the project is determined “exempt” from IRB regulations by an appropriate IRB. Please submit IRB documentation to Ms. Janie Simmons at janie-simmons@uiowa.edu.

PROPOSAL REVIEW

Occupational health and safety specialist(s) will evaluate project applications. Proposed projects will be reviewed and scored on the following areas (in order of importance):

- Relevance to occupational health and safety issues
- Scientific merit (originality, validity, and reliability of methods; quality assurance)
- Project feasibility in terms of budget, timetable, and applicant expertise
- Capacity to build the research skills of the PI (Mentoring Plan)
- Potential for future grant support or significance of other grant outcomes
- Appropriateness of the budget and budget justification.

SUBMISSION PROCEDURE, DEADLINE, AND AWARD DATE

Please send an electronic pdf version of the application to Ms. Janie Simmons at janie-simmons@uiowa.edu.

Applications will be accepted as early as December 20, 2022, through March 1, 2023, to be considered for funding. Applicants will be notified of an award decision by May 15, 2023.

If you have any questions regarding the pilot grant requirements, or you would like to determine whether your topic applies to this funding mechanism, please get in touch with the Pilot Program Director, Dr. Nir Keren, at nir@iastate.edu.