

MASSACHUSETTS ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE RESEARCH CENTER



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL



HARVARD
MEDICAL SCHOOL

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2017 Call for Pilot Projects Proposals

The Massachusetts Alzheimer's Disease Research Center ("MADRC") is pleased to announce a Call for pilot project proposals on Alzheimer's disease (AD) and related dementias for funding from **April 1, 2017 - March 31, 2018** (pending confirmation of the Center's NIH/NIA Notice of Grants Award [NoGA]). The Call is open to investigators from within the Harvard community – including the Harvard-affiliated hospitals and institutions -- with priority given first to junior investigators, then to senior investigators who are new to AD and related dementias research and finally, to established investigators with a new line of such research that lacks funding. The MADRC anticipates that up to 3 awards in the direct cost amount of up to \$40,000 per project will be awarded for the aforementioned 1-year funding period.

We encourage applicants to be familiarized with the MADRC's Core components (see www.madrc.org/cores) and to develop applications that make use of these resources. Likewise, investigators are also encouraged to submit applications that utilize data available from the National Alzheimer's Coordinating Center (NACC) (www.alz.washington.edu) if appropriate.

Applications will be judged on the basis of scientific merit, novelty and the value of the project in obtaining preliminary data that could lead to sponsored research (investigator-initiated R01 research grants, career development awards, industry or foundation support). Availability of appropriate Core resources and the technical ability to carry out the project in a relatively short time frame are fundamental. Clinical projects as well as basic research will be considered.

Applicants are urged to review the **Selection Criteria** and **Rules and Requirements** sections that are attached to this Call, and to contact Liang Yap (lyap@mgh.harvard.edu) or Dr. Brad Hyman (bhyman@mgh.harvard.edu) for any pre-submission inquiries that they may have.

All applications will be treated as confidential documents.

Anticipated Schedule of Deadlines and Reviews:

Call for Pilot Projects Announced: **Wednesday, November 9, 2016**

Applications Due Date: **Wednesday, December 28, 2016 (5pm EST)**

Awards Announced: **Wednesday, January 11, 2017**

Awards Start Date: **April 1, 2017** (pending the MADRC's NIH/NIA NoGA)

Guidelines

1. Applicants should have a doctoral degree (MD, PhD, ScD, PharmD, DO, etc...), have undertaken or completed formal research training and where appropriate, have documentation of training in the protection of human research participants and/or ethical care in the use of animals for research.
2. An applicant who either has a Harvard Research/Clinical Fellow or an Instructor level appointment must have a Harvard sponsor who is recognized as an independent investigator and who has been actively involved in AD and related dementias research. The sponsor must have had a successful record of providing research training and guidance and is committed to continued project involvement throughout the total award period.
3. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain all relevant clearances from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), IRB and animal research & care agencies. In circumstances where an IND (“Investigational New Drug”) is needed, please indicate the status of the IND application in your proposal. Please initiate IRB/IACUC approvals at the time of application to avoid possible delays in initiating projects, as carry-forwards at the end of the 1-year award period are generally not allowed.
4. Funding is intended to be flexible. That is, it is to be used in a manner most useful to the applicant’s project, including the applicant’s and/or other personnel’s salary and fringe benefits, supplies or other uses. **Equipment requests will not be considered.** Funding can be made for work that is supplemental to an ongoing funded research project.
5. This Call does not seek to support fellows or others in need of bridging salary support. This is not a fellowship program. Instead, it aims to support pilot projects that will test novel ideas and approaches.

Selection Criteria

1. **Significance.** Does the study address an important problem relevant to our understanding, diagnosis or treatment of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias? Please note that it is up to the applicant to **clearly demonstrate** the **clinical significance** of the proposed project.
2. **Prospects.** If the aims of the proposed work are achieved, is it likely that a proposal for additional extramural support (federal, industry, or foundation) will be successfully submitted and awarded?
3. **Approach.** Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative approaches?
4. **Innovation.** Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches, or methods? Are the aims original and innovative?
5. **Investigator.** Is the investigator or sponsor appropriately trained to carry out this work? In the case of a proposal submitted by a Fellow or an Instructor, might the proposed project lead to a career development award?
6. **Environment.** Does the scientific environment in which the work will be conducted contribute to the probability of success? Do the proposed experiments take advantage of unique features of the scientific environment? Is there evidence of institutional support?
7. **Collaborative potential.** Does the study involve the Massachusetts Alzheimer's Disease Research Center's Cores, inter-departmental/inter-institutional collaboration across the Harvard community or data from the National Alzheimer's Coordinating Center (NACC)? These criteria will be used to prioritize funding decisions among projects deemed scientifically meritorious.

Rules and Requirements

1. The deadline for the receipt of all applications is **5pm EST on Wednesday, December 28, 2016.**
2. Applications must be submitted electronically to lyap@mgh.harvard.edu. Applicants will receive notification of the receipt of their proposals within 1 business day. In order to preserve the line spacing, figure location and the overall appearance of your application, you must submit your entire package as a **single PDF document. Word files will not be accepted.**
3. Applications must include the following:
 - a. Title page that includes applicant's name, institution, email address and proposal title.
 - b. Research plans (Maximum of 4 pages in a mini-NIH style format; see <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.pdf> for guidance) that include:
 - Specific Aims (½ page)
 - Background and Significance (approx ½ page)
 - Preliminary Studies (approx 1 page)
 - Research Design and Methods (Study design, description of subjects, data to be collected, analyses plans (1 page)
 - Bibliography (maximum of 1 page)
 - c. Ancillary documents must include the following (see the above NIH link for guidance):
 - Detailed Budget and Budget Justification (1 page)

NOTE: A draft budget that includes only a direct cost of up to \$40,000 is allowed. If application is awarded, a final budget page with indirect costs (if applicable) will be negotiated. Salary and fringe benefits of the recipient are to be actual costs.

A separate financial report must be maintained by the sponsoring institution for each recipient, and this account must be available for audit at anytime.

- NIH Biographical Sketch (for all Senior/Key Personnel)
 - Letters of support (if applicable) from MADRC Core directors and/or collaborators confirming the availability of the necessary resources for the support of the proposal
 - PHS Planned/Targeted Enrollment Table (for proposals that involve human subjects)
- d. Application text should be in Arial or Times New Roman font and can be no smaller than 12-point font type. Figures, charts, tables, figure legends, and footnotes must be readily legible.
 - e. Single-spacing on the application is allowed. Margins, in all directions, must be at least 0.5 inches.

4. Decisions of the peer-review committee will be final and will be announced by Wednesday, January 11, 2017.
5. Awardees must include an interim or final copy of their project's progress report in the MADRC's annual NIA grant renewal by mid-January in the year(s) following the award period (i.e., interim report due in mid-January 2018, final report due in mid-January 2019).
6. Awardees must participate in the MADRC's annual poster symposium to be held in the spring of the year following the award period (i.e., in 2018).
7. All publications, abstracts, posters and other forms of publications resulting from a project supported by this award must indicate the following acknowledgement: "This research was in part supported by a pilot grant from the Massachusetts Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (5 P50 AG005134)".
8. Should a recipient discontinue the funded project or leave his/her primary institution of research during the award period, he/she must notify the MADRC in writing within 2 weeks prior to his/her intended departure, with reasons for the discontinuation of the project.

For questions of a scientific nature, please contact the Director of the MADRC - Dr. Brad Hyman – at bhyman@mgh.harvard.edu (email subject line should read "2017 Pilot Project Proposal Questions").

For questions regarding an MADRC Core, please contact the relevant Core directors listed at www.madrc.org/leadership.

For questions of an administrative nature, please contact MADRC administrator - Liang Yap - at lyap@mgh.harvard.edu (telephone: 617-726-3987).