

Objective

CFAR Pilot projects should lead to future independent HIV/AIDS funding. The CFAR is especially interested in proposals from new investigators and those from established investigators who are turning their focus to HIV/AIDS. **Two types** of one year, Pilot Awards are available:

- ❖ Standard (7 pages) Pilot Awards – up to a maximum award of \$100,000 direct funding
- ❖ Focused (3 pages) Pilot Awards– up to a maximum award of \$60,000 direct funding

Applications should address the [Research Priorities established by the Office of AIDS Research](#).

These research priorities outline the NIH's broad HIV/AIDS research agenda, guide decision-making processes related to HIV funding, and inform the development of the [NIH Strategic Plan for HIV and HIV-Related Research](#):

- [Reduce the Incidence of HIV](#), including supporting the development of safe and effective vaccines, microbicides and pre-exposure prophylaxis.
- [Develop Next-Generation HIV Therapies](#) with improved safety and ease of use.
- Conduct [Research Toward HIV Cure](#).
- [Address HIV-Associated Comorbidities, Coinfections, and Complications](#) through research designed to decrease and/or manage these conditions.
- Advance [Cross-Cutting Areas](#) of research in the basic sciences, behavioral and social sciences, epidemiology, implementation science, information dissemination, and research training.

Specific topics of current interest to the CFAR also include: *Artificial Intelligence and HIV & Aging* and may be prioritized.

RFP Schedule

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| • Due Date for Letter of Intent (required) | Monday, February 19, 2024 |
| • Due Date for Proposals | May 1, 2024 |
| • Application Review | May 2024 |
| • Projected Award Date | July 1, 2024 |
| • Period of Award | Award period is 12 months or less |

Eligibility for CFAR Pilot Grant Award

Faculty

- No prior R01-level funding in the HIV/AIDS field
- Applicants with prior R01 funding in other fields are encouraged to apply

Post-doctoral and Clinical fellows

- Applicants with a current K award must have NIH pre-approval
- T32 awardees cannot use CFAR award for training or stipends
- Separate letter of support from faculty mentor required, see *Application* information below
- A [PI Status request](#) must be submitted and obtained by the applicant's home department prior to grant submission.

Questions on eligibility should be directed to the [CFAR Developmental Core](#)

Letter of Intent

A LOI is **required** for all CFAR Pilot Grant submissions (no exceptions), but should only include the general scope of the project and is expected to evolve prior to full submission.

❖ Assistance with preparing the LOI is available. To schedule, contact the [Developmental Core](#)

The LOI should and will include the following information:

1. Name, department, position and email of the Principal Investigator(s)
2. Names of other key personnel
3. Descriptive title of proposed research
4. Abstract
5. This is the appropriate time to request pre-submission services. See [CFAR pre-award Core Services](#) below.

Submit your LOI [THROUGH THIS FORM](#) on or before February 19, 2024.

Center for AIDS Research Project Guidelines ([website link](#))

Additional National Institutes of Health approval may also be needed before initiation of a project and before CFAR funds are disbursed. The CFAR Administrator, will provide guidance to awardees during this process.

Projects with an International Component: Please refer to this [Guidance for NIH Approval Process for CFAR-Supported International Studies](#)

Projects with a Clinical Component: CFARs are unable to fund clinical trials, however, projects involving clinical research (e.g., observational studies or sub-studies using existing data from an ongoing clinical trial) may be funded by the CFARs. The [NIH definition of a clinical trial](#) is very broad. **Some investigators conducting human subjects research may not be aware that NIH considers their study to be a clinical trial.** For guidance, [click here](#) and [here](#) for CFAR-funded clinical research.

- Start dates for funded awards involving clinical research entailing greater than minimal risk to the subjects will dependent on IRB approvals and the date that the NIH issues clearance for the project. The Duke CFAR Finance Administrator will provide guidance to Awardees on the NIH clearance process.
- Research effort is allowed on the grant (no admin or clerical). *Faculty effort must comply with primary department policy.*
- Sub awards for external collaborations are allowable and **will incur F&A**. Consultation with departmental grant manager pre-application is recommended to comply with [Duke Sub-award policies](#).
- Travel is restricted and must be in support of project completion or presenting results from the CFAR Developmental Project Award.

Community Engagement

Mission Towards the Community: The Duke CFAR supports collaborative and community-centered research by facilitating connections and communication between CFAR researchers and community members. We aim to inform research at Duke by centering community needs and feedback and enhance the reach and impact of Duke studies by assisting researchers in the sharing and application of findings in community settings.

A 'Public Health Statement' must be submitted as part of the Checklist. The statement should:

- Communicate the public health relevance of the project to the public in 2-3 sentences, using plain language understandable by a general audience.
- Describe how, in the short or long term, the research would contribute to the well-being of Persons Living with HIV and/or prevent future infections

Pre-Submission Consultation and Review

Applicants are encouraged to utilize CFAR Cores' pre-submission services, at no cost, and this support can be requested with the [LOI submission form](#). In addition, Letters of Intent will be shared with all CFAR Cores, so all appropriate pre-submission services will be offered. Grant preparation supports include but are not limited to:

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| ▪ Statistical/Bioinformatics Review | ▪ Scientific Consultations |
| ▪ Specific Aims Review | ▪ Research Question Review |
| ▪ Experimental Design | ▪ Specimen ID/Procurement |
| ▪ Quality Assurance | ▪ Letters of Support |
| ▪ Study Design, Implementation and Analysis | ▪ Literature Reviews |
| ▪ Database and Biorepository Access | ▪ Community Engagement Support |
| | ▪ PI Status Request Support |

Application and Submission of Pilot Grant

Applications must contain the following components *in order* and be submitted as one complete PDF document. (No SPS Record required)

1. The completed CFAR Pilot Grant Cover Sheet *with signatures*, 2024CFAR.CoverSheet
2. The CFAR Pilot Grant Checklist. 2024CFAR.Checklist
3. Document addressing the "Authentication of Key Biological and/or Chemical Resources" as discussed in [NIH notice NOT-OD-17-068](#)
4. Research Proposal (choose one format)
 - A. Standard Research Proposal (\$100K Award)
Specific Aims 1 page, Research Strategy 6 pages (Uses the current NIH R03/R21 format)
 - B. Focused Research Proposal (\$60K Award)
3 Page maximum: Suggested format: Specific Aims 1/2 page, Research Strategy 2 1/2 pages

The Research Strategy should include sections to address Significance, Innovation and Approach. In the Significance section, applicants should address "...the strengths and weaknesses in the rigor of the prior research (both published and unpublished) that serves as the key support for the proposed project." In the Approach section, applicants should "describe plans to address weaknesses in the rigor of the prior research that serves as the key support for the proposed project."

<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-18-228.html>

5. A current NIH Biosketch of PIs [NIH format page](#)
6. For a multi-PI application, include a Project Leadership Plan, [per NIH guidelines](#).
7. Budget and Budget Justification on [NIH 398](#) form pages.

Applications should be prepared as a single PDF file, using the proper naming convention (e.g. first initial.lastname.cfar.jan2024), and uploaded directly to:

May2024.7pngl6dhfrbx1wjk@u.box.com

Simply email your completed Application to the above address. You will receive a confirmation email stating that your upload was successful. *If you do not receive a confirmation within a few minutes of submission, your application was not submitted, and you should try again.*

****To be eligible for a CFAR Pilot Award, Post-doctoral and Clinical Fellows must also have a faculty letter of support. This letter should be emailed separately, and directly to the same address.** May2024.7pngl6dhfrbx1wjk@u.box.com

Questions concerning the application or submission should be directed to the [CFAR Developmental Core](#).

Review Process

Applications will be reviewed by the CFAR Study Section, comprised of Leaders from the CFAR Cores. If necessary, outside expertise may be used to evaluate the scientific merit of a proposal. All applications are subject to NIH approval and all applicants will receive a written review of their proposals, regardless of funding.

The Committee will review the application based on the following criteria:

- [NIH Next Generation Researchers Policy](#)
- [NIH HIV/AIDS Priority Areas](#) and [Office of AIDS Research HIV/AIDS Research Priorities](#)
- Overall scientific merit, level of innovation, and relevance of the proposal to AIDS research
- CFAR QS Core statistical/bioinformatics review
- Utilization of [Duke CFAR Core Services](#)
- Potential for generating independent funding
- Potential for drawing investigators from other fields into AIDS research
- Potential for developing new interactions between or among CFAR investigators.

Duke Center for AIDS Research Mission

The principal mission of the Duke Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) is to provide, establish, and enrich infrastructure support for research and to promote collaboration and coordination among the community of HIV/AIDS investigators at Duke and its principal international research partners.

NIAID Division of AIDS created the CFAR program in 1988 and most recently renewed through a 2021 program announcement. CFARs are co-funded by eleven NIH Institutes. (NIAID, NCI, NICHD, NHLBI, NIDA, NIMH, NIA, NIDDK, NIMHD, NIDCR and NINR)

The CFAR program is scientifically managed by the Office of AIDS Research (OAR) and Fogarty International Center (FIC).