

Request for Pilot Funding Proposals: Projects Related to Nutrition and Childhood Obesity

DORI is pleased to announce that it will support 2 new pilot studies (up to \$40,000 each for 1 year of funding). In addition, we will also consider smaller requests in the form of vouchers to be used to offset normal core charges at any existing cores at USC/CHLA (\$5,000 per proposal). Typically, voucher funding is used to add on to an existing study to incorporate a new element such as a new assay or measure that was not part of the original aims of a study. The main focus of funded proposals (pilots and vouchers) will be to stimulate and support new research in the area of how nutrition and/or obesity during childhood or critical periods of development affect any health-related outcome. We welcome proposals from basic scientists as well as clinical/translational investigators. These pilot studies will be initially funded through DORI and be included as part of a new P30 Center application being submitted to NIDDK in the Fall, to establish a Nutrition and Obesity Research Center. This P30 proposal will encompass investigators at USC and CHLA so we welcome applications from faculty and postdoctoral fellows across USC and CHLA. Applicants should be junior faculty without current NIH/Federal funding at the RO1 level, senior investigators with strong records of productivity outside of the field of nutrition/obesity who are interested in applying their expertise to research related to childhood nutrition or obesity, or postdoctoral trainees and MD fellows with faculty sponsors.

Submission Guidelines

Due Date: June 28th by 5pm for funding September 15th

Please email a single PDF with the following to Christina Ayala at trujillc@usc.edu

- 1. Project Summary (1 Page):** Clearly and concisely summarize your proposal with project aims, novelty of research and how these aims relate to the theme of the proposed P30 and use of any current or P30 proposed cores as well as how pilot funding will be leveraged for future funding (see below for further details on P30).
- 2. Approach (3 Pages; not required if applying for the voucher program):** Provide a description of the research approach that is planned to meet the goals of this program. Be sure to include the following sections:
 - a. Significance and Premise
 - b. Innovation
 - c. Approach
 - d. Potential importance of the pilot study to the feasibility and design for future studies and future external grant applications.
 - e. Use of any existing USC/CHLA shared resources/cores and discussion of how the proposed project has potential to utilize the cores proposed for the new P30 Center (see below) and how utilizing these cores through the NORC would enhance their research efforts.
- 3. Budget & Budget Justification** – Provide a brief budget (33.5% fringe and no indirects) and budget justification to explain how you would use the award. Please note that up to 10% of effort may be requested for PI.



4. **Biosketch** – NIH-format biosketch for the PI and for any faculty collaborators. If a trainee, include a biosketch and letter of support from your primary mentor/sponsor.

Selection Procedure

Proposals will be reviewed by external reviewers and funding decisions made by a USC/CHLA internal scientific peer review committee.

Please direct any questions to:

For Faculty at CHLA: Michael I. Goran (mgoran@chla.usc.edu); For Faculty at HSC: Katie Page (kpage@usc.edu); For Faculty at UPC: Scott Kanoski (kanoski@usc.edu).

Further Details on the P30 NORC Application

Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA), and the University of Southern California (USC) propose to submit a P30 application in response to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) solicitation RFA-DK-19-002 [<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-DK-19-002.html>]. The overall objective of this proposal is to establish a Nutrition Obesity Research Center in Los Angeles (NORC-LA) through collaboration between CHLA and USC. The proposed NORC will support basic, clinical, and translational research in nutrition and obesity through the following Center components: Administration Core with a clinical component focused on pediatric obesity management; Pilot & Feasibility Program; Enrichment Program; and 4 Biomedical Research Cores in the areas of data science, exposures and epidemiology, obesity imaging and morphology and animal models.

The NORC will bring together research across USC and CHLA. The unifying theme will be focused on pediatric obesity in diverse populations and the broad role of nutrition, obesity and the environment in the developmental origins of health and disease. The NORC will support the following cores that are expected to promote new collaborative research and enhance the quality of research in nutrition and obesity. Some aspects of these Cores will be new Core resources while others will enhance existing cores to make them more relevant to nutrition/obesity research.

- **Clinical Component** (part of the Administrative Core): clinical study design and management, clinical referrals and recruitment, digital and mobile health tools, and a clinical registry for childhood obesity.
- **Data Science Core**: data management, clinical informatics, bioinformatics, omics analysis and biostatistics
- **Exposures and Epidemiology Core**: access to data-bases for secondary analysis, assessment of environmental and chemical exposures, dietary assessment, biomarkers and metabolomics.
- **Obesity Imaging and Morphology Core**: providing expertise in body composition, fat distribution, fat imaging and structural and functional brain imaging of obesity/nutrition related outcomes
- **Animal Models of Developmental Origins Core**: animal model designs related to developmental origins, neonatal injections and surgeries, small animal body composition/imaging, indirect calorimetry/metabolic cages, small animal feeding behaviors and chemogenetics, optogenetics & fiber photometry.

