



Funding Opportunity Announcement FY2021

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

CHARM Mission

The Center for HIV and Research in Mental Health (CHARM) at the University of Miami aims to bridge the boundaries that have traditionally divided behavioral and biomedical research to catalyze mental health HIV science in one of the regions of the United States hardest hit by HIV/AIDS, with the over-arching theme of ***“Reducing the Impact of Mental Health and Minority Health Disparities across the HIV Prevention and Care Continua.”***

The Center offers the expertise, infrastructure and resources necessary to address and strengthen mental health-related HIV prevention and care research at the University of Miami and reduce the impact of mental health disparities as barriers to behavioral and bio-behavioral approaches in HIV prevention and care.

Purpose of the CHARM Pilot Awards

CHARM will be accepting applications for pilot projects in HIV/AIDS and mental health research. The purpose of this program is to stimulate new, community-engaged research projects for generation of preliminary data to increase competitiveness for future extramural HIV/AIDS and mental health research funding. The University of Miami Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) anticipates partnering with CHARM to support a community-engaged, translational science pilot proposal.

Proposal Areas of Interest

Pilot award proposals in any area relevant to the intersection of HIV and mental health disparities will be given full consideration. Proposals that are translational in nature are encouraged. Priority research areas, informed by the Community Advisory Board and Internal Advisory Board, include the intersection of any of the following:

1. Studies addressing structural/systemic barriers to HIV and mental health care among Black individuals living with unsuppressed HIV; barriers may include racism, transphobia, homophobia, incarceration, unstable housing, food insecurity, etc.
2. Impact of COVID on HIV and mental health disparities

CHARM is interested in funding at least 1 proposal which addresses research area #1 (above). The Pilot Awards Program encourages proposals addressing the intersection of HIV and mental health in South Florida. Applications proposing international research, especially in neighboring Caribbean and Latin America regions, may also be given consideration.

Number of Awards, Funding Amount & Award Period

Up to two (2) pilot awards will be awarded this cycle in the amount up to **\$40,000** (direct costs only), with a 1-year project period (approximately April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022).

Applicant Eligibility

All eligibility criteria must be met as of date of submission (October 2, 2020).

- University of Miami affiliation is required
- [NIH-defined “Early Stage” or NIH-defined “New Investigators”](#) or established investigators with prior R01 funding who are new to HIV research
- Interested post-doctoral fellows should consult the CHARM leadership team prior to applying. If invited to submit an application, post-doctoral fellows will be required to submit a Letter of Support from the chairperson of their home department indicating support for the application and a potential research/faculty appointment at the completion of the post-doctoral fellowship.
- Previous CHARM pilot awardees are not eligible.

Core Usage

All applicants are required to use the CHARM resources pre-submission and post-award, as applicable. Applicants are advised to consult with the *Methods Core* on quantitative methods and statistical issues. The *Mental Health Disparities Core* provides consultation on community engagement, qualitative methods, and culturally tailored assessment and intervention approaches for research projects with ethnic, sexual, and gender minorities. Junior faculty and post-doctoral fellows should work with the *Developmental Core* to identify a primary mentor, develop a mentoring plan, and receive feedback prior to submitting a pilot award application. Junior faculty and post-doctoral fellows will be required to submit a letter of support from a primary mentor for their applications. Please visit the [CHARM website](#) for information on the available resources and services. To request support or schedule a consultation, please visit the [CHARM Research Navigation Portal](#).

Community Engagement

All applicants must identify a community partner that is engaged in the design and execution of the project as well as in the interpretation and publication of findings. Community partners can be engaged at varying levels from a consultative role to community-based participatory research. The *Developmental Core* or *Mental Health Disparities Core* can assist applicants with identifying an appropriate community partner, as needed. The proposal must include a letter of support from the community partner or agency. The proposal must explain a) how the project will engage the community, b) the role of the proposed community partner(s) or agency(ies), and c) how the findings may impact the community. Applicants are encouraged to identify and correspond with a community partner or agency early.

Proposal Submission Process

Proposal submission is a multi-step process that includes 1) an optional **Letter of Intent (LOI) and Speed Review (which are strongly advised to lay the foundation for a full application)** and 2) a **Full Application**. Submission instructions and portals follow.

- LOI Submission: [Click here.](#)
- Speed Review Submission: [Click here.](#)
- Full Application Submission: Please contact CHARM for full application details and link to the submission portal website (CHARM@miami.edu)

Speed Review Program

The goal of the Speed Review Program is to provide investigators applying for a pilot award with a critique that will increase the likelihood of obtaining funding. Attendees will receive one-on-one feedback on their Specific Aims page from up to 3 University of Miami faculty. Reviewers will be NIH funded researchers with experience as NIH/CDC/PCORI reviewers and with a background in HIV and/or mental health research. Members of the CHARM Community Advisory Board will provide feedback on community engagement during the Speed Review meeting or shortly after.

The Speed Review will be held on August 28, 2020 (1:00 – 3:00 PM) via Zoom to enable participants to apply the critique to applications being submitted to CHARM on October 2, 2020.

- Participation in this program is voluntary but strongly encouraged for junior and mid-level investigators and those senior investigators new to the area of HIV and mental health research.
- Participants should be investigators planning to apply for a pilot award. The PI of the proposed pilot application must be present during the Speed Review.
- Participants should submit the following by August 14, 2020 by 5:00 PM EST.
 1. a single page draft of the proposed specific aims and
 2. a paragraph (separate from the former) explaining a) how the project will engage the community, b) the role of the proposed community partner(s) or agency(ies), and c) how the findings may impact the community.
- Each applicant will have 20 minutes of feedback on their application per reviewer; following the first reviewer, the applicant will meet with the next reviewer.

Speed Grant Review Program Duration (2 hours)

- Overview of Speed Review, CHARM Mentoring Program and Community Engagement (25 minutes)
- Speed Review (approximately 1.5 hours)
- Summary (5 minutes)

Deadlines and Award Timeline

RFA disseminated	June 19, 2020
Letter of Intent (LOI) (Optional)	July 31, 2020, 5:00 PM EST
Specific Aims (if participating in Speed Review)	August 14, 2020, 5:00 PM EST
Speed Review (Optional)	August 28, 2020, 1:00 – 3:00 PM EST
Full application	October 2, 2020, 5:00 PM EST
Announcement of applications selected for funding consideration	November 2020
Start of award (Tentative)	April 1, 2021
Award period (Tentative)	April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022

Budget

Funds Available and Budgetary Limitations: Awards will be of up to **\$40,000** (direct costs only) for a one-year period (04/01/2021 – 03/31/2022; the period may start before or after 04/2021). Expenses should be restricted to personnel, research supplies, cost for subject participation, test supplies and technical support. Applicants must provide a budget justification for each person, including a detailed description of the role for each investigator considering the proposed effort, and item listed in the budget. [Fringe rates](#) prescribed by the University of Miami should be used. Names and positions of all personnel must be individually listed and the percentage of time to be devoted to the project by each person should be noted. If an individual is being listed with effort but no salary support, they typically should be listed as mentor or other significant contributor. If an individual has not yet been hired, please list as "TBD." Applicants may be asked to revise the proposed budget and corresponding justification before funding consideration.

Evaluation Criteria

Reviews will be based on scientific merit and the likelihood of attracting NIH or similar funding in the future. All applicants will receive feedback on their proposals. Specific criteria include:

- Innovation and significance to HIV/AIDS and mental health research
- Scientific merit of proposed research
- Probability of subsequent peer review funding
- Investigator productivity
- Collaboration with community partner/agency

Additional Requirements and NIH Review

Prior to issuance of a Notice of Award by CHARM and NIH, the pilot award applications selected for funding consideration will be forwarded to NIH for review and approval. This process may take approximately 2 to 3 months. Therefore, while the applications selected for funding consideration will be forwarded to NIH early in February 2021, the Notice of Award will be issued after this process is complete.

The PIs whose applications are selected for final review by NIH will be required to provide their current Other Support, proof of CITI Human Subjects Research Training, information included in the Human Subjects section of an NIH grant, IRB approval letter, and other information.

Progress Reporting

To allow tracking of the progress and success of each project, the CHARM funded pilot awardees will be required to submit a brief progress report every 6 months, whether interim or final, until the end of the project. Progress reports must include an update on progress for all aims and an NIH inclusion enrollment table. We will also highly encourage recipients to participate and present in the CHARM Research in Progress (RIP) monthly meetings to discuss progress and receive feedback from the CHARM investigators.