



**California HIV/AIDS Research Program
(formerly UARP)
2007 Special Call for Applications
HIV Prevention Evaluation Initiatives
One-time Special Opportunity Awards**



To support research to advance HIV/AIDS prevention efforts and scientific evidence of effective HIV prevention in high risk populations, the California HIV/AIDS Research Program (CHRP; formerly UARP) in collaboration with the California State Office of AIDS calls for applications for funding as part of a special research opportunity:

- **Testing Promising Interventions Targeting African American and Latino MSM and Their Sexual Partners** – Collaborative research award of up to \$600,000 in total costs for a 30-month project period (2.5 years). Requires Letter of Intent.

The scope and specific requirements for this award are detailed below. The Letters of Intent (LOI) are due by **12:00 noon on Monday, August 13, 2007**. The final deadline for application is **12:00 noon on Monday, September 24, 2007**. All materials must be submitted online to proposal CENTRAL at <https://proposalcentral.altum.com/>.

Testing Promising Interventions Targeting African American and Latino MSM and Their Sexual Partners

Purpose: Funding will support the testing of an existing behavioral HIV prevention intervention designed for African American or Latino MSM and their sexual partners in California to determine its effectiveness for reducing risk in the target population. Research design must utilize either a randomized controlled trial or other rigorous hypothesis-driven scientific approach appropriate for testing the desired outcomes of the intervention. If shown effective, the intervention could potentially contribute to the nationally available pool of effective behavioral interventions. The proposed intervention should be one that can be feasibly delivered by a community-based organization or health department. Accordingly, this award is structured as a collaborative partnership between an academic research partner and a community-based partner in which the research partner provides methodological expertise, designs the data collection, measures, and data analysis plan, and ensures adherence to the scientific requirements of the trial; the community partner contributes expertise in HIV prevention with the targeted high risk population and access to an adequate sample of the population, and implements the intervention.

Background: The importance of utilizing evidence-based interventions to guide service delivery strategies in HIV prevention has become increasingly clear, and the need for such interventions is especially great in the populations most burdened by the disease.¹ In California, HIV disproportionately impacts gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (MSM), particularly African American and Latino MSM. MSM comprise 56% of infections among African Americans with AIDS, and almost 70% of infections among Latino men with AIDS in the State.² The scientific literature on health disparities suggests that to effectively support behavior change in these populations, prevention efforts must address the contextual factors that may limit the ability or willingness of an individual to implement risk reduction strategies.^{3,4} These contextual factors include social-structural, psychological and cultural issues: stigma, secrecy, homophobia, ideals of masculinity, racism, religion, anti-immigrant sentiment, lack of access to tailored preventive services, and others. Furthermore, these factors may be amplified for a subset of African American and Latino MSM who do not openly identify as gay or bisexual, placing them and their sexual partners at increased risk. Augmenting the available pool of effective interventions tailored to the needs of African American and Latino MSM is thus critical for successfully addressing disparities in HIV risk in these populations.⁵

In response to this urgent need, the California State Office of AIDS and the California HIV/AIDS Research Program in the Office of the President at the University of California have developed a funding opportunity to support the implementation and testing of promising interventions designed to serve African American and Latino MSM and their sexual partners in California who are at high risk for HIV infection. The proposed research must evaluate an existing intervention targeting African American or Latino MSM (gay or non-gay identified) and their male or female sexual partners. Eligible interventions include either 1) interventions specifically tailored for the identified high risk group, but as yet untested in a randomized controlled trial or similarly rigorous research design, or 2) behavioral interventions that have previously demonstrated effectiveness but have not been tested in African American or Latino MSM; therefore their effectiveness with the target population is unknown. The proposed research must have strong theoretical and methodological foundations, must utilize a rigorous hypothesis-driven method (RCT or equally rigorous experimental design appropriate for testing the desired outcomes), and should include process monitoring as described below. The intervention need not have been developed in California, but should be appropriate for implementation in the identified high risk California population. The investigators should have familiarity with its implementation and expertise in its core components, and/or involve the original developer(s) of the intervention as consultants to the study.

Requirements:

1. ***Collaborative Partnership:*** The proposed study must include one Principal Investigator (PI) from an academic/research institution and one PI from a CBO or local health department in California. Additional collaborators or community organizations may be included through subcontract. The community partner should have expertise in HIV prevention and in the target population, should provide access to an adequate sample size of the population, and have the capacity to implement a rigorous experimental trial under the scientific guidance of the academic partner. The academic partner should provide expertise in designing the data collection, measurement, and data analysis plan; should be familiar with the theoretical and methodological foundations of the intervention; have expertise in HIV intervention development for the target population; and have prior experience in community collaborative research. Each contracting organization will be required to demonstrate financial independence and stability as part of its application and prior to final selection. Applicants should also demonstrate a history of successful collaboration. In addition, applications must allocate adequate resources to the service provider/CBO to ensure successful implementation of the intervention. *Note:* Principal Investigators (academic and community) and key personnel can participate in only one application. Community partner institutions with sufficient capacity and infrastructure may participate in more than one application, but must document access to distinct study populations, and the capacity to potentially run two non-overlapping trials concurrently.
2. ***Eligible Interventions:*** The intervention must be designed to serve African American or Latino MSM and their male or female sexual partners at high risk for HIV infection. It may target a subset of this population, as appropriate. It should be an existing intervention that has shown promising results in previous pilot research, formative evaluation, or in a quasi-experimental study. Results from previous implementation efforts, including qualitative and quantitative outcome data, process evaluation of feasibility and acceptability, or other evidence of potential effectiveness should be described in the application. The intervention should have previously developed curriculum, training and implementation manuals, and other support materials available for replication (and appended to the application). The research team must have access to the intervention protocols, manuals, and measures to ensure ready initiation of the proposed study. Since the purpose of this funding opportunity is to support a first-time effectiveness trial, interventions that have been previously designated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as Effective Behavioral Interventions (EBIs) are not eligible, unless they are being tested on a new population (African American or Latino MSM). If an effectiveness trial of a translated intervention is proposed, a detailed description of the adaptation process, adapted intervention elements, implementation history, and any pilot or formative data must be included in order to demonstrate readiness for a controlled trial.

3. **Research Design and Focus:** The proposed research should be designed to determine whether the intervention is effective at reducing specified risk behaviors among the target population. It must utilize a hypothesis-driven experimental design appropriate for the measurement of the targeted outcomes and sufficiently rigorous to demonstrate effectiveness. Emphasis will be placed on development of a feasible randomized controlled trial study design that, if the results are statistically significant, would qualify the intervention for inclusion in the national pool of interventions with demonstrated effectiveness. The research plan should include process monitoring to evaluate intervention fidelity and adherence to the study protocol, and document client experiences with the intervention. It must include a timeline that allocates adequate time within the designated timeframe for all research activities, including start up, pilot phase, intervention implementation and data collection (including post intervention follow up), data analysis, and preparation of manuscripts.
4. **Outcome Measurement and Data Analyses:** The proposal must detail the data collection, measures, and analysis plan, and should utilize measures appropriate for the target population. (The proposed measures and their psychometrics, preferably within the target population, should be appended to the application.) The sample size and proposed analysis must be adequately powered to demonstrate statistical significance of effectiveness within the designated study population. Data collection should occur at a minimum of three time points: baseline, end of intervention, and post-intervention follow-up (no less than three months) with recall referring to the post-intervention period.
5. **Selection of the Target Population:** The target population must be a subset of African American or Latino MSM (gay or non-gay identified) at high risk for HIV infection in California, and the intervention may include a component targeting their sexual partners (male or female), families or social networks.
6. **Proof of Need and Potential for Impact:** Applicants must document the need for prevention services in the proposed geographic areas to be served, including the presence of sufficient numbers of the target population to enable successful recruitment of participants as well as the potential for significant impact of the proposed intervention. Documentation may include epidemiologic data, community needs assessments, or findings from previous or current research projects that provide compelling evidence for access to the target population and the potential impact of prevention services within this population.
7. **Dissemination:** Proposals should describe plans for dissemination of findings through publication in scientific peer-reviewed manuscripts, presentation at CHRP-sponsored meetings, and dissemination of findings, curriculum and training materials, as appropriate, through the OA/CHRP sponsored venues, including the ChoiceHIV website.
8. **Project Oversight:** Projects approved for funding must adhere to the aims of the initiative and will join consortia and work collaboratively with CHRP and OA on study implementation to ensure that the goals of the research initiative and the scientific validity of the project are maintained, and that challenges encountered during implementation that could compromise achievement of intended outcomes are adequately addressed. To meet this requirement, the selected projects will participate in at least two cooperative meetings with OA and CHRP staff (one in 2008 and one in 2009) and at least one annual site visit.

Mechanisms of Support:

1. Collaborative applicants should include one not-for-profit community-based partner or local health department and one partner from a not-for-profit research institution in California. The academic partner must take the lead in developing and submitting the application, with active participation from the community partner. The application must include a letter from the Executive Board or other institutional leadership of the community partner indicating the institution's commitment to carrying out the proposed project.

2. Total funding for the collaborating partners is \$600,000 to cover the entire project time period. The total cost may include indirect costs up to a maximum of 15% of personnel costs (salary and fringe benefits). Resources are available to fund up to three meritorious awards, at least one of which will be an intervention targeting African American MSM and one targeting Latino MSM. Applicants may utilize matching funds or contributions from other available research or service dollars to enable investigators to supplement this award providing that the proposal clearly meets the requirements of this funding opportunity.
3. The project start date is January 1, 2008, and the project period will span 30 months (2.5 years), ending June 30, 2010. The budget should be developed for three intervals: an initial 6-month, and two subsequent 12- month budgets. The academic partner must be prepared to undertake preparatory activities prior to research with human subjects immediately upon formal notification of award, and must have the institutional capacity and infrastructure to utilize funds within the designated contract period.
4. If funded, each of the two collaborating institutions may request to be contracted separately by CHRP. Therefore the community partner must demonstrate capacity to administer the award. Other institution(s) may participate through subcontract(s).
5. Grants are one-time, non-renewable awards.
6. The academic/research institution-based investigator must have principal investigator status at a non-profit California research institution. The collaborating investigator from the community partner must be a project director, executive director, or otherwise designated as having principal investigator status within the community organization.
7. Each of the two collaborating principal investigators must contribute a minimum of 15% effort to the project.

Review Criteria: Reviewers will evaluate applications for:

1. Responsiveness to this Call for Applications, and adherence to the stated "Requirements".
2. Evidence of need and potential impact on the proposed population.
3. Demonstrated appropriateness of the proposed intervention for effectiveness testing based on prior development of intervention materials and on findings from previous implementation research, as detailed in "Eligible Interventions."
4. Availability of and access to intervention materials, protocols and measures for implementation by the study team.
5. Strength of investigators' expertise and institutional capacity to ensure adequate recruitment and successful implementation, as shown by previous experience working with the target population, demonstrated access to the population, and familiarity with the methods and core elements of the proposed intervention.
6. Feasibility and strength of the study design, proposed measures and data analysis plan.
7. Strength of dissemination plan
8. Strength of the collaborative partnership and linkages.
9. Potential for contribution to national pool of interventions with demonstrated effectiveness if study findings are positive.

General Information

Application Cycle Timeline: *All deadlines are at 12:00 noon Pacific Time, unless explicitly stated.*

July 23, 2007	RFA Release Date
July 31, 2007	Application Instructions and Materials available online at proposalCentral
August 7, 2007	Applicant Informational Teleconference (1:00 PM)
August 13, 2007	Letters of Intent (LOI) submission deadline
September 24, 2007	Application submission deadline
Mid-November, 2007	Funding notification
January 1, 2008	Award start date

Applicant Teleconference: Specific information for registering for the Applicant Informational Teleconference will be posted on our website at <http://chrp.ucop.edu> by Tuesday, July 31, 2007. The teleconference is scheduled for Tuesday, August 7, 2007 at 1:00 PM. Understanding of the intent of the award and the application review process is central to the success of applicants. Participation by potential applicants is strongly encouraged. During this meeting, program representatives will answer questions about the application and review process and the potential relevance of proposed research projects to the goals of this special opportunity award.

Letters of Intent: The LOI serves as a mechanism to provide support for applications through input from CHRP staff. The LOI should be no more than 2 pages maximum, and should include the following: (a) Identification of the two collaborating principal investigators and their affiliations; (b) Name and affiliation of any subcontractors or consultants; (c) Identification of the proposed intervention, and brief description of the research plan; and (d) Brief history or experience of the collaborators with the proposed intervention, and with collaborative research; and (e) Description of the community partner's capacity to manage CHRP research funds and access the target population.

The LOI must be submitted by the academic partner online at <https://proposalcentral.altum.com/> by 12:00 PM Pacific Time (3:00 PM Eastern Time) on Monday, August 13, 2007. Upon approval, applicants may then proceed to prepare a full application.

Additional Information and Contacts:

Applicants are required to adhere to the *Application Instructions and Guidelines*, available on our website at <http://chrp.ucop.edu> and on the proposal Central website beginning Tuesday, July 31, 2007. All applications must be completed and submitted online at <https://proposalcentral.altum.com/> by the deadline: 12:00 Noon Pacific Time (3:00 p.m. Eastern Time) on Monday September 24, 2007. The completed hard copy of signed Face Page with original signatures must be mailed directly to CHRP and must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 27, 2007. Awardees must have the capacity to begin preparatory activities prior to research with human subjects immediately upon formal notification of award.

Technical assistance with the online application process is available through proposalCENTRAL from 5:30 AM - 2:00 PM Pacific Time, Mon.-Fri. Call toll-free (800) 875-2562 ext. 227 or (301) 916-4557; or email pcsupport@altum.com.

For questions regarding CHRP application procedures, instructions, and budget requirements, contact:

Irma L. Moreno, JD
510/987-9964
irma.moreno@ucop.edu

To obtain guidance or direction on the suitability of a proposed project for this funding opportunity, contact

Kathleen Erwin, PhD
Program Manager, Community Research & Dissemination
510/987-9889
kathleen.erwin@ucop.edu

Developing a Grant Proposal

Applicants with little or no experience in developing and writing grant proposals may find that these websites offer useful information about proposal development:

- http://12.46.245.173/pls/portal30/catalog.grant_proposal_dyn.show
- http://ninds.nih.gov/funding/write_grant_doc.htm
- <http://deainfo.nci.nih.gov/extra/extdocs/gntapp.htm>
- <http://www.niaid.nih.gov/ncn/grants/write/index.htm>

Applicants may also glean useful advice from the following sources:

- <http://www.annals.org/cgi/reprint/142/4/274.pdf>
- <http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/DissPropWorkshop/>
- <http://www.aas.org/grants/hints.html>
- <http://www.hfsp.org/how/ArtOfGrants.htm>
- <http://www.research.umich.edu/proposals/PWG/pwgcontents.html>
- <http://www.learnerassociates.net/proposal/>
- <http://www.cpb.org/grants/grantwriting.html>
- <http://nextwave.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/2000/01/06/1>

California HIV/AIDS Research Program

The California HIV/AIDS Research Program (CHRP; formerly UARP) at the University of California provides state funding for the support of merit-reviewed HIV/AIDS-related research to be conducted at non-profit research institutions and community organization throughout California. The program's mission is to support excellent, timely, and innovative research that is attentive to the needs of California and will accelerate progress towards prevention and a cure for HIV/AIDS.

CHRP funding mechanisms are intended to provide a niche that can best serve California investigators and to complement rather than duplicate funding opportunities offered by other sources.

How to Contact CHRP

California HIV/AIDS Research Program
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300 Lakeside Drive, 6th Floor
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Awards pursuant to this announcement are contingent on the availability of funds allocated to the University of California by the California State Office of AIDS.

REFERENCES CITED

- ¹ Herbst JH, Beeker C, Mathew A et al. The effectiveness of individual-, group-, and community-level HIV behavioral risk-reduction interventions for adult men who have sex with men: A systematic review. *Am J Preventive Med.* 2007; 32(4S): S38-S67.
- ² California HIV/AIDS Registry (HARS). California Department of Public Health, Office of AIDS. Data for AIDS cases to March 2007.
- ³ Malebranche DJ. Black men who have sex with men and the HIV epidemic: next steps for public health. *Am J Public Health* 2003; 93(6): 862-5.
- ⁴ Marin, BV. HIV prevention in the Hispanic community: Sex, culture and empowerment. *J. Transcultural Nursing* 2003; 14(3): 186-192.
- ⁵ cf Kelly JA, Heckman TG, Stevenson LY, et al. Transfer of research-based HIV prevention interventions to community service providers: fidelity and adaptation. *AIDS Educ Prev.* 2000; 12(5 Suppl): 87-88.