



University of Washington  
Behavioral Research Center for HIV

**2021 Request for Applications**

**Synergistic Pilot AIDS Research Center (SPARC) Awards**

<b><i>Key Deadlines</i></b>	<b><i>Date Due</i></b>
RFA released	July 12, 2021
Eligibility check	August 9, 2021
Methods consultation	August 13, 2021
Non-binding, letter of intent (Optional)	August 16, 2021
<b>Applications Due</b>	<b>Sunday, August 22, 2021 at 11:59 PM PDT</b>
Notification of award	September 10, 2021
Period of performance	September 13, 2021 to August 30, 2023

**See the following pages for a description of the award program and application process.**

## PURPOSE

HIV prevention and treatment should optimally be delivered within integrated systems of mental health and HIV primary care that can be implemented at scale. Through this integration, programs can optimize HIV prevention, medication adherence, and engagement in treatment - critical for the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) vision of “Getting to Zero” and the US “Ending the HIV Epidemic” priorities. To succeed, integrated programs need to incorporate a diversity of ideas and perspectives applied to rigorous research methods. Well-trained mental health and HIV researchers from diverse communities, including researchers from underrepresented groups (URG), are necessary to innovate, effectively implement, incorporate community knowledge, and expand research and community networks. Through this RFA for pilot awards, the UW BIRCH aims to support researchers to conduct work that examines mental health and associated conditions in the context of HIV.

Successful awardees will be included in the University of Washington Behavioral Research Center for HIV (UW BIRCH) Synergistic Pilot AIDS Research Center (SPARC) Scholars program which includes **monthly fellowships meetings, access to mentors across the UW BIRCH network, and opportunities to collaborate with other SPARC scholars.**

## APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must:

- 1) Have an MD, PhD or equivalent terminal degree (including an MBChB plus Master’s Degree)
- 2) Have not yet served as Principal Investigator on an NIH R01 or equivalent grant
- 3) Have an appropriate appointment with the University of Washington (UW) or UW-affiliate institution (see 4a), as follows:
  - a) Junior faculty (including acting positions), **OR**
  - b) Scientist completing a fellowship, **OR**
  - c) Senior post-doctoral fellow initiating a new area of HIV- or mental health-related research that will form a basis for an independent program, **OR**
  - d) Faculty-equivalent investigator at a community-based organization whose primary mission is research, **OR**
- 4) *[If from non-US institutions]*
  - a) Have an appointment at an institution that has an existing collaboration with UW, such as an NIH, CDC, HRSA, or equivalent grant funded project (e.g. P-HERT, S-MhINT), **AND**
  - b) Have a local mentor and a mentor who is has a faculty appointment with the UW. Both mentors should have an established relationship of working together.

People with backgrounds typically underrepresented among researchers of HIV and mental health are especially encouraged to apply.

**If you have any doubt/question about eligibility, please reach out to [uwbirch@uw.edu](mailto:uwbirch@uw.edu).**

## PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

- Research topics could include any aspect of mental health in the context of HIV or HIV in the context of mental health, but may not include clinical trials, as defined by the NIH.

## FUNDING AVAILABLE

- Direct costs: \$8,000 per year for up to 2 years (\$16,000 maximum for the 2-year duration, no more than \$8,000/year)
- Previously funded projects will not be considered (but novel additions to funded projects are allowable).
- Funding cannot be applied to alterations or renovations of any facilities or IRB/ERC fees.
- If the proposal requires a subcontract, subcontractor F&A costs must be budgeted as a direct cost.
- For international institutions, the allowable F&A rate to be budgeted as a direct cost is 8%.
- For domestic organizations without an established F&A rate, the default F&A rate is 10%.

## PRE-SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- **Letter of intent.** A non-binding, optional letter of intent will assist the UW BIRCH team to optimally organize a review of applications. Please submit the following information via [this form](#) by **August 9, 2021**. The form requires the following information: PI name, draft title, and the potential primary mentor for the proposed work.
- **Eligibility check.** Please email [uwbirch@uw.edu](mailto:uwbirch@uw.edu) by **August 9, 2021** to schedule an eligibility check for the PI and project idea.
- **Consultation with the Methods Core.** Please fill out a [consultation request form](#) to schedule a consultation on your study design and scientific approach. In advance of the meeting, please be prepared with at least a draft specific aims page describing your primary research aims and scientific approach. **Consultations must be completed by August 13, 2021** and may require several weeks to schedule, so we encourage you to submit a consultation request early.

## REQUIRED APPLICATION COMPONENTS

1. **Application title page (no page limit)** - Fill out your project title, demographic information, and information of your collaborating investigators. Copy and paste the section for collaborating investigators if you have more than one.
2. **Abstract (250 words)** - summarize your proposal in 250 words or less.
3. **Specific Aims (½ page)** - State concisely and realistically what the research is intended to accomplish. Indicate how the research relates to the overall mission of the UW BIRCH.
4. **Significance and Innovation (1 page)** - Briefly sketch the scientific literature pertinent to the proposed study by critically evaluating existing knowledge and identifying the gaps that the pilot study is intended to fill. Describe how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms. This may include any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or interventions to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.
5. **Career Goals and Training Needs (½ page)** - Describe the ways in which this project will help to fill any training gaps and needs. Specifically, are there any behavioral methods or quantitative skills that this study will help you to practice.
6. **Methodological Approach (2 pages)** - Detail here the study design and the procedures to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include the means by which the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted. Proposals should describe the composition of the proposed study population in terms of age, sex, gender, and racial groups, and provide a rationale for selection of such subjects. Any exclusions based on

age, sex, gender, or race must include a rationale and justification based on a scientific or ethical basis.

7. **Research Team, Timeline, and Future Plans (½ page)** - Briefly describe the qualifications and roles of the research team. Multidisciplinary teams are encouraged. Include a timeline for the work planned, including a projected completion date. Describe plans for how the proposed pilot study will support a follow-on grant application to the NIH or other funding agency.
8. **Community engagement plan (½ page)** - Describe the methods that will be used to engage with the community from which data are ascertained.
9. **Positionality statement (½ page)** - Describe the positionality of the PI from multiple angles, including but not limited to race, gender, and citizenship, and how your positionality may impact the research approach and interpretation of the data. *(Positionality is the notion that personal values, views, and location in time and space, influence how one understands the world. IN this context, gender, race, class, and other aspects of identities are indicators of social and spatial positions and are not fixed, given qualities)*
10. **Biosketches (no page limit)** - Include a biosketch in the [NIH format](#) for the PI and any key personnel (including mentors).
11. **Letters of support (no page limit)** - Letters of support should be provided from 1) the PI's primary mentor and 2) any individuals who will be providing key resources, e.g. data, samples. If the applicant is from a non-US institution, the applicant must submit letters from UW and local mentor, with the distinct roles for each mentor described in their letters.
12. **Budget and budget justification (no page limit)**

## REVIEW CRITERIA

Applications will be judged and scored along nine criteria:

1. Scientific merit
2. Potential to create a sustained impact in the field
3. Significance of the problem or question
4. Academic potential and qualifications of the applicant to perform the proposed work
5. Relationship of the project to a path toward independence
6. Appropriateness of the approach
7. Project's innovation
8. Focus on integrating mental health in HIV contexts
9. Strength and appropriateness of the community engagement plan

## PRE-AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Per NIH policy, UW BIRCH may not release pilot research funds until awardees complete the NIH administrative clearance process. Clearance will require final IRB approval from all participating institutions and documentation of human subjects training from all investigators. This process often takes several months, so please consider it in your timeline. More information on NIH requirements for international studies can be found at: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/foreign/index.htm>

*Projects that are unable to complete the NIH clearance process within one year of award date are at risk of losing funding*

## POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS

1. BIRCH support must be acknowledged in all publications derived from BIRCH funding.
2. A progress report is required annually and upon completion of the project. This should include information about publications, collaborations, and future grants related to your BIRCH funded project.
3. Awardee becomes a member of the SPARC fellowship. Requires participation in monthly fellowship meetings.
4. Final report of spent funds including receipts and completion of regular annual updates.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

After fulfilling all pre-submission requirements, submit your application by **Sunday, August 22, 2021, at 11:59 PM** to [uwbirch@uw.edu](mailto:uwbirch@uw.edu) using the following application form. The application, letters of support, and any other supporting documentation must be combined into a single PDF.

**Application sections can be expanded or shortened, however proposal narratives (the application from sections 3 – 9, not including the title page, abstract, budget, letters of support and biosketches) should be no longer than six pages.**

BIRCH  
Sparc Awards  
2021 Application

<b>1. Title of Project</b> [redacted]
<b>2. Principal Investigator</b> Name: [redacted] Academic Title: [redacted] Primary Institution/Organization: [redacted] Address: [redacted] City: [redacted] State: [redacted] Zip: [redacted] Phone: [redacted] Email: [redacted]
<b>Gender:</b> [redacted]  <b>Race:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American <input type="checkbox"/> East or South Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Other:  <b>Do you fit the <a href="#">National Institutes of Health definition</a> of an individual with a disability and/or an individual from a disadvantaged background?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

<b>3. Collaborating Investigator – add more sections for more collaborating investigators</b> Name and Title: [redacted] Organization: [redacted] Address: [redacted] City: [redacted] State: [redacted] Zip: [redacted] Phone: [redacted] Fax: [redacted] Email: [redacted]
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### ABSTRACT

Please provide a description of your project appropriate for a lay reader. Limit your description to no more than 250 words.

### SPECIFIC AIMS

(½ page) State concisely and realistically what the research is intended to accomplish. Indicate how the research relates to the overall mission of the UW BIRCH.

### SIGNIFICANCE AND INNOVATION

(1 page) Briefly sketch the scientific literature pertinent to the proposed study by critically evaluating existing knowledge and identifying the gaps that the pilot study is intended to fill. Describe how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms. This may include any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or interventions to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.

### CAREER GOALS AND TRAINING NEEDS

(½ page) Describe the ways in which this project will help to fill any training gaps and needs. Specifically, are there any behavioral methods or quantitative skills that this study will help you to practice

### METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

(2 pages) Detail here the study design and the procedures to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include the means by which the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted. Proposals should describe the composition of the proposed study population in terms of age, sex, gender, and racial groups, and provide a rationale for selection of such subjects. Any exclusions based on age, sex, gender, or race must include a rationale and justification based on a scientific or ethical basis.

### RESEARCH TEAM, TIMELINE, AND FUTURE PLANS

(½ page) Briefly describe the qualifications and roles of the research team. Multidisciplinary teams are encouraged. Include a timeline for the work planned, including a projected completion date. Describe plans for how the proposed pilot study will support a follow-on grant application to the NIH or other funding agency.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

(½ page) Describe the methods that will be used to engage with the community from which data are ascertained.

### POSITIONALITY STATEMENT

(½ page) Describe the positionality of the PI from multiple angles, including but not limited to race, gender, and citizenship, and how this will impact the research approach and interpretation of the data. 1. Describe the positionality of the PI from multiple angles, including but not limited to race, gender, and citizenship, and how your positionality may impact the research approach and interpretation of the data. (*Positionality is the notion that personal values, views, and location in time and space, influence how one understands the world. IN this context, gender, race, class, and other aspects of identities are indicators of social and spatial positions and are not fixed, given qualities*)

### BIOSKETCHES

(no page limit) Include a biosketch in the NIH format for the PI and any key personnel.

### LETTERS OF SUPPORT

(no page limit) Letters of support should be provided from 1) the PI's primary mentor and 2) any individuals who will be providing key resources, e.g. data, samples. If from a non-US institution, must have mentor from UW and one from the non-US institution and the distinct roles for each mentor should be described in the application.

**BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION**

**Budget**

	Requested from BIRCH		
	Year 1	Year 2	Total requested
<b>Salaries</b>			
<i>Faculty</i>			
<i>Staff</i>			
<i>Student</i>			
<b>Benefits</b>			
<i>Fringe Benefits Based on Payroll Load Rate In Effect</i>			
<b>Supplies and Materials</b>			
<i>Supplies, Equipment Under \$5,000, etc.</i>			
<b>Equipment</b>			
<i>Equipment Over \$5,000</i>			
<b>Travel</b>			
<i>Per Diem Lodging/ Meals/ Expenses, Air Fare, Mileage, Car Rental</i>			
<b>Tuition</b>			
<i>For graduate students</i>			
<b>Other</b>			
<b>Total Direct Costs</b> (requested funding amount cannot exceed \$8,000 in either year)			

**Budget Justification**

(no page limit) Detail expenses listed above and explain how funds will be used. For example, please describe how faculty salary will be allocated, purposes and types of supplies, each piece of proposed equipment over \$5,000, the number of proposed trips, travel destinations and purpose, total travelers, “other” expenses, and so forth.