# COMBATTING THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

# Request for Proposals

Proposals are invited for pilot research projects aimed at solving the opioid crisis. We seek interdisciplinary Penn State teams to develop novel translational research programs-- from discovery-oriented research to dissemination and implementation science.

We also are interested in applications that:

* Build collaborations involving new interdisciplinary teams whose research is aimed at attracting external funding;
* Develop collaborations that involve junior and senior faculty (associate professors can serve in either role depending on their experiences) and cross-campus team members;
* Propose novel research, including high-risk, high-reward and transformative, proof of concept projects that provide preliminary data necessary for external funding.

**Priority will be given to projects that make a convincing case for how the research can advance solutions to the opioid crisis.**

# Eligibility

All Penn State faculty members (tenured, tenure track, fixed term, and clinicians) who hold an appointment at any Penn State location are eligible to submit a seed grant proposal as a Principal Investigator (PI) of an interdisciplinary research team. Single investigator proposals will not be considered. Community organizations, state agencies, and investigators from other institutions may be collaborators, but not PIs. Investigators may be the lead or co-PI on only one proposal; however, investigators may serve as a collaborator on up to two proposals.

# Funding Availability and Timeline

At least $200,000 of funding is available through this seed grant solicitation via the SSRI’s Level 1 and Level 2 mechanisms (see below).

# Level 1 applications can be submitted at any time using the guidelines below.

# Pre-proposals for Level 2 applications are due on March 1. Level 2 preproposals consist of an abstract of up to 500 words that describes the study aims and methods and how the project can advance solutions to the opioid crisis, a preliminary budget, a statement of the project role of each team member, and an NIH or NSF biosketch for each team member.

# On March 23rd - PI’s will be notified of result and full proposals will be invited. The deadline to submit full proposals is May 21st.

# Level 2 pre-proposals should be sent as one PDF document to [info@ssri.psu.edu](mailto:info@ssri.psu.edu).

# Teams will be invited to submit full Level 2 proposals that conform to guidelines below, based on these preproposals.

**LEVEL 1 PROPOSALS**

The Level 1 funding mechanism is designed primarily to assist PSU faculty to form interdisciplinary research teams directed at pursuing external funding by supporting team meetings to discuss mutual interests, develop research questions, identify leaders, conduct literature reviews, and collect pilot data. Although external collaborators may be included, our focus is on developing ongoing PSU teams. For this reason team leaders should be tenure track or research faculty with continuing appointments.

* Level 1 proposals range from $500-$5,000
* Level 1 proposals are limited to 2 pages plus support materials
* The SSRI Director and Associate Directors, relevant college Associate Deans and content experts will review these proposals
* Funds are allocated for a 6-12 month period

**Level 1 funds are intended to provide support for:**

* Creation of interdisciplinary teams
* Development of new, innovative interdisciplinary research projects
* Support for meetings (including travel)
* Graduate assistant time
* Paying outside consultants
* Small pilot studies

**Level 1 funds are NOT intended to support:**

* Expenditures generally made by departments and colleges (e.g., travel to professional conferences, seed money for an individual project; software and computers)
* Delivery of outreach programs or services
* Requests for funds for meals and snacks should be kept to a minimum
* Student projects (masters, dissertation research)

**Criteria for Review**

* Priority is placed on new ideas that involve cross-department and/or cross-college (interdisciplinary) collaboration
* A well-articulated plan of activities
* Teams comprised of investigators who range in seniority and experience
* Proposals must provide strong evidence for access to the population of interest for human subjects research and access to necessary data sets for secondary analysis proposals; when relevant, investigators are expected to submit the appropriate requests for IRB approval of research
* Promise of the research to lead eventually to external funding

**Structure and Submission of Proposals**

Proposals must be submitted as one document via email to [info@ssri.psu.edu](mailto:info@ssri.psu.edu). To complete your proposal submission, you must download, complete, and email the forms below:

[Proposal Submission Form](http://www.ssri.psu.edu/sites/ssri/files/Level_1_Proposal_Submission_Form_11_2017.doc) (see below)

**Project Reports**

Investigators are expected to provide an annual project status update and a brief (one page) final report upon completing the project. These efforts allow us to track and report outcomes as well as monitor the successfulness of our seed grant program.

If you need to make changes to the project team, description, design, or budget during the course of your projects, please send a request to [info@ssri.psu.edu](mailto:info@ssri.psu.edu) with the details of these changes.

**Example of a Successful SSRI Level 1 Proposal**

* David Proctor, PI, Professor of Kinesiology, College of Health and Human Development: [*Acute Vasoprotective Effects of Nitrate-rich Beetroot Juice*](http://www.ssri.psu.edu/sites/ssri/files/Proctor.pdf). Collaborating investigators are: Penny Kris-Etherton, Professor of Nutritional Sciences; Ann Skulas-Ray, Post-doctoral Fellow, Nutritional Sciences; Laura Klein, Associate Professor of Biobehavioral Health; and Courtney Whetzel, Research Associate, Healthy Aging Center all in the College of Health and Human Development.

**Questions? Contact** [Danielle Downs](mailto:dsd11@psu.edu), Ph.D., Interim Associate Director of the Social Science Research Institute and Professor of Kinesiology and Obstetrics & Gynecology

LEVEL 1 Proposal Submission Form

Please complete all sections below, save the document to your computer, and email the document to us at: [info@ssri.psu.edu](mailto:info@ssri.psu.edu). Proposals must be single-spaced, in Times New Roman font size no smaller than 12-point type, left-aligned with one inch margins. Proposals cannot exceed 2 pages (excluding information requested in Parts 7 - 11).

Note that your effort to follow these formatting requirements is excellent practice for successfully submitting a proposal for external funding!

Remember that many members of review committees will not have specific expertise in your area and that proposals should be written for a broad academic audience. Appendices should not be included.

Your proposal must be sent as one document including letters of support. Proposals that do not conform to guidelines will be returned to the PI.

1. Title of Proposal and name of PI:

2. 3-5 Descriptive Keywords

3. Purpose:

Describe the specific aims of the proposal.

4. Brief Background and Description of Activities:

Provide a brief background or rationale for the proposal, highlighting its innovative elements and potential contribution to combatting the opioid epidemic, and a description of the specific activities.

5. *Describe how the proposed research will contribute to combatting the opioid epidemic*.

6. Indicate if SSRI services will used: [Geographic Information Analysis (GIA)](http://www.ssri.psu.edu/services/geographic-information-analysis-core), [Survey Research Center (SRC)](http://www.ssri.psu.edu/survey/), [Social, Life, and Engineering Sciences Imaging Center (SLEIC)](http://www.imaging.psu.edu/), and [***Quantitative Developmental Systems Methodology***](http://quantdev.ssri.psu.edu/)

7. Budget and Justification:

Provide an itemized budget and budget justification that includes salaries, fringes, and other expenses. Exclude fringes for faculty; include fringes for staff and students.  Expenditures for food are to be kept to a minimum.

Name and phone number of your department's budget coordinator:

Budget and fund number:

Administrative area number:

8. Timeline:

Describe the anticipated timeline to accomplish the goals of the proposal.

9. Investigator Information:

Identify the lead investigator, collaborating investigators, and the departments or units they represent. Contact information must be included for all investigators. Please follow the format outlined below for each investigator.

Lead Investigator:

Name

Title

Department/Organization

College/Campus

Phone

Email

Tenure Track - Yes/No; if Yes, please include tenure home department.

Project role:

Collaborating Investigator:

Name

Title

Department/Organization

College

Campus

Email

Tenure Track - Yes/No; if Yes, please include tenure home department.

Project role:

[Please include complete contact information for additional investigators here.]

10. Letters of Support from All Collaborators

Collaborating investigators must indicate their support of the project by writing letters of support; these letters should be emailed to the Lead Investigator, and be attached to this proposal.

11. Attach NIH or NSF biosketches

**LEVEL 2 PROPOSALS**

The Level 2 mechanism is designed to assist PSU faculty to advance their research by securing extramural funding. Although research teams can include students, post docs, faculty from other institutions and other external collaborators, our goal is to support interdisciplinary teams comprised of Penn State faculty and researchers. For this reason team leaders should be tenure track or research faculty with continuing appointments.

* Level 2 funding is designed to support research projects with specific research questions, a well-conceived theoretical basis, an identified team of Penn State faculty collaborators, and the potential to gain external funding
* Level 2 proposals are between $5,000 and $20,000
* For projects greater than $20,000, please consult with the SSRI Associate Director or Director
* The SSRI Director, Associate Directors, relevant college Associate Deans and researchers with relevant expertise review Level 2 proposals
* Funds are allocated for a 12-24 month period

**Level 2 funding support will be provided for:**

* Innovative interdisciplinary research, training, and integrated research-outreach projects that involve collaborations among Penn State faculty
* Costs for student wages; pilot data collection; data analyses
* Innovative workgroups or conferences that might include outside speakers and consultants. **Note:** The SSRI supports conferences only when they are specifically designed to enhance faculty expertise, thereby leading to new funded research. Proposals for conferences must indicate the expected date and specify that other sources of conference funding have already been explored.
* Travel, consultants, graduate student time, or hourly support of activities
  + **Note:** special guidelines for international travel
    - Funds will be provided for only one investigator
    - Funds will not be provided for graduate students
    - Proposals must include a letter of support from the international collaborator(s) outlining his/her role in the project
* Faculty salary up to $8000; summer funding for faculty will not be provided.

**Level 2 funds are NOT intended to support:**

* Student (masters, dissertation research) or post-doctoral projects
* New or ongoing projects of individual faculty or any on-going programs or research activities
* Delivery of outreach programs or services
* Funding for the kinds of activities supported by departments and colleges (travel to conferences, seed money for an individual's project, computer or software purchase, etc.)
* Summer salaries
* Projects involving a Penn State faculty member and external collaborators only; our goal is to build and support Penn State teams

**Criteria for Review**

* Priority is placed on new ideas for projects that involve cross-department and/or cross-college (interdisciplinary) connections among Penn State faculty
* A well-articulated plan of activities
* Teams comprised of investigators who range in seniority and experience
* Proposals must include a specific product (e.g., external grant proposal; workshop and conference; or training activities) and a timeline for its attainment
* Proposals must make a clear contribution to combatting the opioid epidemic
* For human subjects research, proposals must provide strong evidence for access to the population of interest; for secondary analyses, proposals must describe dataset availability; investigators are expected to prepare and submit the appropriate requests for IRB approval.

**Structure and Submission of Proposals**

Proposals must be submitted as one document via email to [info@ssri.psu.edu](mailto:info@ssri.psu.edu).  To complete your proposal submission, you must download, complete, and email the forms below:

[Proposal Submission Form](http://www.ssri.psu.edu/sites/ssri/files/Level_%202_Proposal_Submission_Form.doc) (see below)

**Other Ideas to Consider as You Construct Your Level 2**

* Consult with the SSRI Director or Associate Director about your project. Talk with any of the SSRI unit directors (Geographic Information Analysis (GIA), Survey Research Center (SRC), Social, Life, and Engineering Sciences Imaging Center (SLEIC), and Methodological Consulting Center) about how you might use the expertise of their units to enhance your research
* If you need time and funding to network, organize your team, or further develop your research ideas, consider applying for a Level 1 project

**Project Reports**

Investigators are expected to provide an annual project status update and a brief (one page) final report upon completing the project. These materials allow us to track and report outcomes as well as monitor the success of our seed grant program.

If you need to make changes to the project team, description, design, or budget during the course of your projects, please send a request to [info@ssri.psu.edu](mailto:info@ssri.psu.edu) with the specific details of these changes.

**Example of a Successful SSRI Level 2 Proposal**

Stephen Wilson, PI, Assistant Professor of Psychology, College of the Liberal Arts: [*Blood Nicotine Absorption, Subjective and Neurocognitive Effects of Different Types of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Devices (ENDDs) in Current Daily Users*](http://www.ssri.psu.edu/sites/ssri/files/Wilson.pdf). Collaborating investigators at Penn State Hershey College of Medicine are: Jonathan Foulds, Professor of Public Health Sciences and Psychiatry, Gang Chen, Assistant Professor of Public Health Sciences, and Arthur Berg, Assistant Professor of Public Health Sciences and Statistics.

**Questions? Contact** [Danielle Downs](mailto:dsd11@psu.edu), Ph.D., Interim Associate Director of the Social Science Research Institute and Professor of Kinesiology and Obstetrics & Gynecology

LEVEL 2 FULL Proposal Submission Form

Please complete all sections below, save the document to your computer, and email the document to us at: [info@ssri.psu.edu](mailto:info@ssri.psu.edu). Proposals must be single-spaced, in Times New Roman font size no smaller than 12-point type, left-aligned with one inch margins. Please include a NIH or NSF biosketch for each investigator. Proposals cannot exceed 5 pages (excluding information requested in Part II).

Remember that many members of review committees will not have specific expertise in your area and that proposals should be written for a broad academic audience. Other than biosketches, appendices should not be included.

Your proposal must be sent as one document including letters of support and biosketches. Proposals that do not conform to guidelines will be returned to the PI.

1. PROPOSAL

1. Title of Proposal and name of PI:

2. 3-5 Descriptive Keywords:

3. Abstract:

Provide a succinct overview of the proposal including its innovation and potential for combatting the opioid epidemic. Assume that reviewers do not have technical knowledge in a specific field. Avoid or explain technical jargon, field-specific terminology, or acronyms.

4. Specific Aims and Objectives:

List the specific aims and objectives of the proposal, including how the accomplishment of the objectives will inform the development of a project for external funding.

5. Brief background, rationale, and description of methods:

Provide a brief summary of the background and rationale for the proposal, including its innovation and potential for combatting the opioid epidemic, and a specific description of the methods and activities for which support is requested.

6. Anticipated Outcomes:

Describe the anticipated outcomes in operational terms (e.g., later grant submission, research/outreach program). Priority is placed on proposals designed to lead to external funding.

Proposals for the development of shared infrastructure or training must include the plans for dissemination and outreach (anticipated dates, methods for dissemination, audience targeted).

If the plan involves any type of working group or conference, the target audience must be specified and an estimate of the audience size must be included.

1. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. External Funding Plans and Possible Funding Sources:

**Specify:**

a) investigators involved

b) title of proposal

c) time frame of proposal, and

d) external funding sources to be targeted

2. Timeline:

Describe the anticipated timeline to accomplish the goals of the proposal.

3. Personnel:

Describe the roles of the lead investigator(s), the collaborating investigator(s), and any other personnel included in the proposal. For key personnel, include titles and brief descriptions of their expertise.

4. Budget and Justification:

Provide an itemized budget and budget justification that includes salaries, fringes, and other expenses. Exclude fringes for faculty; include fringes for staff and students.  Requests for international travel should include no more than one investigator.  Expenditures for food are to be kept to a minimum.

Name and phone number of your department's budget coordinator:

Budget and fund number:

Administrative area number:

5. Indicate if SSRI services will used: [Geographic Information Analysis (GIA),](http://www.ssri.psu.edu/services/geographic-information-analysis-core) [Survey Research Center (SRC)](http://www.ssri.psu.edu/survey/), [Social, Life, and Engineering Sciences Imaging Center (SLEIC)](http://www.imaging.psu.edu/), and [***Quantitative Developmental Systems Methodology***](http://quantdev.ssri.psu.edu/).

6. Investigator Information:

Identify the lead investigator(s), collaborating investigators, and the departments or units they represent. Contact information must be included for all investigators. Please follow the format outlined below for each investigator.

Lead Investigator:

Name

Title

Department/Organization

College/Campus

Phone

Email

Tenure Track - Yes/No; if Yes, please include tenure home department.

Collaborating Investigator:

Name

Title

Department/Organization

College/Campus

Email

Tenure Track - Yes/No; if Yes, please include tenure home department.

[Please include complete contact information for additional investigators here.]

7. Pre-Submission Checklist

Proposals must include the pre-submission checklist (see below). The pre-submission checklist catalogues the potential your project has for external funding. It is weighed heavily in the review process.

Level 2 proposals are designed to support the development of research that has the potential for external funding. As we have tracked Level 2 proposals over time, we have found that they are more likely to be funded when the faculty team has fully explored funding opportunities and used that information to inform the design of their research plan and Level 2 activities. Please respond to each of the following questions.

1. Which agency or foundation officials (e.g., project officer) have you spoken with to determine their interest in this project or project area? What feedback did you receive on your concept and approach?
2. Are you responding to a specific request for proposal (RFP/RFA), program announcement, or other special funding initiative? If yes, which one and how is your Level 2 a good match for it?
3. Is this Level 2 being undertaken in response to feedback from a prior external proposal? If so, how does this project address reviewer concerns?
4. How does your study compare with projects in similar domains that have been funded by your targeted agency? In particular, how does the scope of your methodology appear similar to other funded projects (in terms of the size and representativeness of the sample, measurement strategies, design and planned analytic approach, etc.)?

Foundation search sites: NIH: **h**ttps://projectreporter.nih.gov/reporter.cfm

NSF: <http://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/>

1. What criteria will be used to evaluate your proposal and what do you know about the likely reviewers?

8. Letters of Support from All Collaborators

Collaborating investigators must indicate their support of the project by writing letters of support; these letters should be emailed to the Lead Investigator, and be attached to this proposal.

9. Attach NIH or NSF biosketches