

NOFO RFA-CE-22-001: Grants to Support New Investigators in Conducting Research Related to Understanding Polydrug Use Risk and Protective Factors

Questions and Answers

1) Question: The research questions/priorities in the RFA mention "risk and protective factors and trajectories" of substance use and misuse. Would an application that just focuses on multilevel and intersecting risk and protective factors without also evaluating individual trajectories be aligned with this NOFO's priorities or- must the work *definitely* focus on trajectories as well?.

a) **Answer:** The application is not required to evaluate both risk factors and trajectories of polydrug use and overdose. Per *Section I. Funding Opportunity Description* "Applicants should propose a research project that addresses **at least one aspect of one key research question related to NCIPC's priority** to identify risk and protective factors for polydrug overdose included in NCIPC's Overdose Prevention Research Priorities" listed here: "(1) How do risk and protective factors and trajectories for use, misuse, substance use disorder, and/or overdose differ for prescription opioids, illicit opioids, and other emerging drug threats such as resurging methamphetamine and cocaine use?; (2) What are risk and protective factors and trajectories related to polydrug use and overdose, including co-use of opioid and non-opioid drugs, with a focus on methamphetamine, cocaine, and benzodiazepines?; (3) How do these risk and protective factors and trajectories vary by sociodemographic and geographic characteristics at all levels of the social ecology (described in the Background section of this NOFO)?; (4) What are risk and protective factors for early drug use initiation (i.e., particularly during youth and adolescence as described in the Background section of this NOFO) and escalation of use?; (5) What are the associations among ACEs, prescription opioid misuse and/or illicit drug use, and chronic pain, as well as moderators of these associations?; (6) What are norms and behaviors surrounding prescription opioid misuse, illicit drug use, overdose, and related health and behavioral outcomes? What are the best strategies to communicate about risk for these outcomes to the public?" Thus, applicants are not required to address all aspects of the selected research question(s).

Furthermore, mixed methods approaches are allowable. From the NOFO: "*rigorous research designs using quantitative or mixed methods that are appropriate to address the research questions are preferred.*" Thus, it would be appropriate to use qualitative methods as part of a mixed methods approach. Applicants are always encouraged to review the scored review criteria and responsiveness criteria closely when developing their proposals.

2) Question: Is my institution, which is a private university/institute of higher education, eligible to submit an application to this NOFO?

a) **Answer:** Per *Section III. Eligibility Information* of the NOFO, private institutions of higher education are eligible to apply to RFA-CE-22-001. CDC does not make awards to individuals.

3) Question: I completed my doctorate in 2010 but have been working in an administrative capacity and have only now begun to look for grant funding with myself as PI. Am I eligible to apply?

- a) **Answer:** Per Section III. Eligibility Information 5. Responsiveness “Time periods for significant breaks in employment or employment in areas unrelated to substance use and overdose prevention should be clearly documented. Only the years where any substance use and overdose prevention research was conducted after the completion of the qualifying degree will count towards the limit of five years of research experience. Research conducted during undergraduate or pre-graduate training does not count towards the five-year research time - even if the applicant contact PD/PI authored or co-authored a paper relevant to the research prior to completion of the qualifying degree.”

The Executive Summary section of the NOFO also states that “This funding opportunity may support individuals who propose to train in a new field or individuals who have had a hiatus in their research career because of illness or pressing family circumstances. Applicant contact PD/PIs who are changing their career trajectory to the substance use and overdose prevention field must clearly document the start date of their post-graduate emphasis in substance use and overdose prevention in their SF-424 Biographical Sketch and must clearly demonstrate that they have less than five years of post-graduate experience as a researcher in the substance use and overdose prevention field.”

Please note, it will be incumbent on the applicant to clearly describe their research experience in the SF-424 Biographical Sketch and clearly document any years, after the completion of the qualifying degree, where no research was conducted in the areas of substance use and overdose prevention, it will also be important to clearly document the start date of their post-graduate emphasis in substance use and overdose prevention. Applications from contact PD/PIs who completed their qualifying degree prior to January 12, 2017 and do not clearly document their relevant postgraduate research experience in substance use and overdose prevention (including breaks in employment or research in other areas) will be considered nonresponsive to the NOFO and will not be forwarded for peer review.

- 4) **Question:** There seems to be a problem in creating an account on grants.gov

- a) **Answer:** Per Section VII. Agency Contacts, please contact grants.gov technical support for assistance with submitting an application. Please refer to “Grants.gov Customer Support (Questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission, downloading or navigating forms) Contact Center Phone: 800-518-4726 Email: support@grants.gov Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; closed on Federal holidays”

- 5) **Question:** Can the application date for RFA-CE-20-001 be extended past the listed due date?

- a) **Answer:** The application due date for RFA-CE-22-001 is January 12, 2022 at 5PM EST. In order for CDC to complete the review process within the required funding deadlines, the application due date cannot be extended beyond January 12, 2022.

Please note that per Section I. Funding Opportunity Description “Applicants should propose a research project that addresses **at least one aspect of one key research question related to NCIPC’s priority** to identify risk and protective factors for polydrug overdose included in

NCIPC's Overdose Prevention Research Priorities" listed here: "(1) How do risk and protective factors and trajectories for use, misuse, substance use disorder, and/or overdose differ for prescription opioids, illicit opioids, and other emerging drug threats such as resurging methamphetamine and cocaine use?; (2) What are risk and protective factors and trajectories related to polydrug use and overdose, including co-use of opioid and non-opioid drugs, with a focus on methamphetamine, cocaine, and benzodiazepines?; (3) How do these risk and protective factors and trajectories vary by sociodemographic and geographic characteristics at all levels of the social ecology (described in the Background section of this NOFO)?; (4) What are risk and protective factors for early drug use initiation (i.e., particularly during youth and adolescence as described in the Background section of this NOFO) and escalation of use?; (5) What are the associations among ACEs, prescription opioid misuse and/or illicit drug use, and chronic pain, as well as moderators of these associations?; (6) What are norms and behaviors surrounding prescription opioid misuse, illicit drug use, overdose, and related health and behavioral outcomes? What are the best strategies to communicate about risk for these outcomes to the public?"

6) **Question:** Can an application that is not entirely complete be submitted by the application due date, and additional documents such as letters of support be submitted at a later time?

a) **Answer:** The complete application to RFA-CE-22-001 must be submitted by the due date of January 12, 2022 at 5PM EST. The CDC does not accept any application materials, including letters of support, after the application due date has closed.

For this K-01 NOFO only, the only application material that may be submitted after the application due date is a voluntarily provided Candidate Eligibility Statement for applications in which the contact eligible PD/PI is from an under-represented population and wishes to be considered for funding during the second level of review. Per *Section V. Application Review Information 4. Review and Selection Process*: "Applications that meet scientific and technical merit as determined by scientific peer review may also undergo consideration at the second level of review for: Consideration for applications in which the contact eligible PD/PI is from an under-represented population, as defined in the [NIH Diversity Statement](#) and as verified by the applicant institution, to broaden distribution of awards in order to support career development in overdose prevention research for PD/PIs from under-represented populations. If the applicant institution wishes to be considered for this secondary review consideration, the applicant institution must submit, after scientific and technical merit peer review has concluded, a Candidate Eligibility Statement to the CDC which attests that the contact eligible PD/PI is from an under-represented population as defined in the [NIH Diversity Statement](#) and which is signed by the Authorized Representative named on the SF-424 (R&R) application eSubmission Face Page. The Candidate Eligibility Statement should not be included as part of the application package but instead should be submitted as a stand alone document to the Financial/Grants Management or Scientific Program Official Contact named in this announcement (see Section VII. Agency Contacts) after scientific and technical merit peer review has concluded. An applicant institution is not

required to submit a Candidate Eligibility Statement in order to be considered for funding under this announcement.”