Background

Hampton University was recently awarded a grant to establish the Hampton University Regional Transdisciplinary Collaborative Center (HU-TCC), which focuses on a Minority Men’s Health Initiative (MMHI). The Center was established through a U54 grant mechanism from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD). Subsequently, the Center is requesting applications for its Pilot Project Program (PPP). The MMHI Pilot Project Program goal is to cultivate a pool of early career faculty members appointed to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) that are located within US Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) Regions III and IV. In addition, these faculty members must be developing biomedical and behavioral research careers focused on health disparities that adversely affect minority male populations.

The MMHI Pilot Project Program grant mechanism is intended to encourage exploratory and developmental research at HBCUs in Regions III and IV by providing support for the early and conceptual stages of project development. The Pilot Project Program consists of two components: Pilot Project Awards (for projects that need additional development before seeking independent NIH funding) and Seed Project Awards (for projects of limited scope and/or cost that may lead to future Pilot Project Awards).

The vision of the HU-TCC:MMHI is to nurture and leverage research expertise within HBCUs to aid the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in its mission to improve the health of Americans and to cultivate inter-institutional partnerships of HBCU faculty members dedicated to reducing health disparities in minority men, which will culminate in a broader participation of HBCUs in NIH-sponsored biomedical and behavioral research activities. The primary objectives of the HU-TCC:MMHI are to: (1) advance research, education, training and outreach in key areas of minority men’s health disparities (prostate cancer, melanoma in Hispanics, cardiovascular disease, violence prevention, diabetes, and obesity); and (2) develop and provide healthy outcome models that will be both sustainable and transferable across communities in order to reduce health disparities in minority men.

Important Dates

- Release Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2014
- Letter of Intent to Submit Application Due Date (REQUIRED): Wednesday, March 19, 2014 at 6:00 P.M. Eastern Standard Time (EST)
- Full Application Due Date: Wednesday, April 30, 2014 at 6:00 P.M. EST
- Earliest Notification of Funding: July 1, 2014
- Earliest Project Start Date: August 1, 2014

Application Characteristics

Pilot Project Award:
- Pilot Project Awards may request a project period of up to two years.
- The combined budget for total costs for the two year project period may not exceed $150,000. No more than $75,000 in total costs may be requested in any single year.
- The Pilot Project Award cannot be renewed.
- One resubmission is allowed for failed Pilot Project Award applications.
- No preliminary data are required, but may be included if available.
- The Research Strategy may not exceed six pages.

Seed Project Award:
- Seed Project Awards are limited to a project period of one year.
- The budget may not exceed $30,000 in total costs.
- The Seed Project Award cannot be renewed.
- The Seed Project Award may be developed into a future Pilot Project Award application.
- One resubmission is allowed for failed Seed Project Award applications.
- No preliminary data are required, but may be included if available.
- The Research Strategy may not exceed four pages.

Note: All Pilot Project and Seed Project applications will be evaluated on the scientific quality of the proposal and the focus of the proposal on health disparities research among minority men. Applications will also be evaluated based on the applicant’s biomedical and/or behavioral research career plan; the potential for publications related to the proposal; and the potential for future extramural funding.

Scope

- Exploratory, novel studies that break new ground or extend previous discoveries toward new directions or applications that focus on HU-TCC: MMHI research areas of cancer (prostate and melanoma in Hispanics), cardiovascular disease, violence prevention, diabetes, and obesity.
- High risk, high reward studies that may lead to a breakthrough in reducing health disparities in minority men.
- Studies projected to result in novel techniques, agents, methodologies, models or applications that will impact research, education, training, and outreach programs in minority men's health disparities.
• Projects should be distinct from those supported through other funding mechanisms.
• It is expected that pilot research projects supported by the MMHI Pilot Project Program will lead to publications and ultimately to a NIH R21/R01 application or to other extramural funding sources.

Research Topics of Interest

• Projects related to the core research areas of the HU-TCC MMHI: prostate cancer, melanoma in Hispanics, cardiovascular disease, violence prevention, diabetes and obesity.
• Projects addressing research gaps in the determinants of premature morbidity and/or mortality among minority males across the life course in one or more health disparity minority populations.
• Projects examining the dynamics of minority male-specific health issues and challenges faced across the life course and the influences of early events on health outcomes later in life.
• Projects examining the dynamics of minority men's health issues in facilities/settings that are predominantly male and/or segregated by sex (e.g., criminal justice settings, single-sex schools, single sex-treatment facilities, military units) and subsequent impacts on health.
• Projects examining the role of fathers in maternal and child health and child development across health disparity minority populations.
• Studies aimed at the development of collaborative strategies and interventions to better coordinate fragmented minority men's health awareness, disease prevention and/or research efforts at regional, state and/or local levels.
• Studies of sex specific biomarkers for disease risk, prognosis, or benefit of treatment.
• Studies of sex specific biomarkers in response to preventive or therapeutic interventions.
• Assessment of racial and ethnic disparities in prevention and early detection, diagnosis and care management, morbidity, mortality among men and its linkage to social and environmental determinants.
• Projects examining the social and biological influences of mental health, consequences of mental illness and health-seeking behaviors for mental health in young minority men and/or adult minority men.
• Studies of how the relationship between masculinity and health varies by health outcome.
• Studies related to the identification of conception and aspects of masculinity that are most relevant to and associated with specific health behaviors and health outcomes.

Principal Investigator Eligibility Characteristics

• Research and/or teaching faculty members at HBCUs within HHS Regions III and IV may serve as Principal Investigators of Pilot Project and Seed Project Award applications.
- Principal Investigators must meet the NIH New Investigator status criteria (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/new_investigators/), but not the NIH Early Stage Investigator status. New Investigators within ten years of completing their terminal research degree or within ten years of completing their medical residency are designated Early Stage Investigators (ESIs).

- Principal Investigators must have a HU-TCC: MMHI Faculty Sponsor who must provide a Letter of Support, which must be submitted with the Full Application.

- Principal Investigators must include a 1-2 page Career Development Plan (including timeline and describe the specific role played by mentor and/or collaborators in the proposed project).

- Previous MMHI Pilot Project Awardees are not eligible to apply for another MMHI Pilot Project Award as the Principal Investigator (PI). They are eligible to serve as a co-investigator or as a mentor for a new Pilot Project Award application. In addition, they are encouraged to recruit other eligible junior faculty members to apply to the MMHI Pilot Project Program.

- Previous MMHI Seed Project Awardees are eligible to apply for a MMHI Pilot Project Award.

- Previous MMHI Seed Project Awardees are not eligible to apply for another MMHI Seed Project Award as the Principal Investigator (PI). They are eligible to serve as a co-investigator or as a mentor for a new Seed Project Award application. They are encouraged to recruit other eligible junior faculty members to apply to the MMHI Pilot Project Program.

**MMHI Participating HBCUs and Faculty**

**Hampton University**
- Joanne Chan, PhD (joanne.chan@hamptonu.edu; 757-728-6057)
- Bertha Davis, PhD (bertha.davis@hamptonu.edu; 757-727-5672)
- Travis Jordan, PhD (travis.jordan@hamptonu.edu; 757.727.5351)
- Nicholas Kenney, PhD (nicholas.kenney@hamptonu.edu; 757-728-6952)
- John Mably, PhD (john.mably@hamptonu.edu; 757-728-6058)
- Linda Malone-Colon, PhD (linda.malone-colon@hamptonu.edu; 757-727-5301)
- Zina McGee, PhD (zina.mcgee@hamptonu.edu; 757-728-6913)
- Michelle Penn-Marshall, PhD (michelle.pennmarshall@hamptonu.edu; 757-727-5267)
- Raymond Samuel, MD, PhD (raymond.samuel@hamptonu.edu; 757-727-5299)
- Candice Wallace, PhD (candice.wallace@hamptonu.edu; 757-727-5041)

**Clark-Atlanta University**
- Kimberly Davis, PhD (kedavis@cau.edu; 404-880-6750)
- Sharif Kahn, PhD (skhan@cau.edu; 404-880-6795)

**Howard University**
- A. Wade Boykin, PhD (aboykin@howard.edu; 202-806-6805)

**Jackson State University**
- Olúgbémiga Ekúndayò, MD, MPH, DrPH (olugbemiga.t.ekundayo@jsums.edu ;601-979-2586/8791)
- Clifton Addison, PhD (clifton.addison@jsums.edu; 601-979-2931)
- David Bandi, PhD (bandi56occupy@gmail.com; 662-648-9115)

**North Carolina A & T State University**
- Goldie Smith-Byrd, PhD (gsbyrd@ncat.edu; 336-334-7907)
- Scott Harrison, PhD (scotth@ncat.edu; 336-285-2179)
- Elimelda Ongeri, PhD (ongeri@ncat.edu; 336-285-2182)
Saint Augustine’s University
Salimah El-Amin, DrPH, MPH, CHES (shelamin@st-aug.edu; 919-516-4151)
Derrick Sauls, MS,PhD (dlsauls@st-aug.edu; 919-516-4284)
Sandra Suther, PhD (sandra.suther@famu.edu; 850-599-3108)

Other Region III and IV HBCUs via Pilot Project Program

Non-Participating HBCUs and Non-HBCU Institutions

Faculty at HBCUs located outside of HHS Regions III and IV and other non-HBCU institutions may collaborate on Pilot Project and Seed Project Awards led by MMHI Participating HBCU Early Career Faculty members. Note that the primary goal of this Pilot Project Program is to further enhance and advance minority men's health disparities research capacity of HBCUs in HHS Regions III and IV.

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Regions

Region III
Delaware; District of Columbia; Maryland; Pennsylvania; Virginia; West Virginia

Region IV
Alabama; Florida; Georgia; Kentucky; Mississippi; North Carolina; South Carolina; Tennessee

NIH New Investigator Criteria
http://grants.nih.gov/grants/new_investigators/

In general, a Program Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) is considered a New Investigator if he/she has not previously competed successfully as PD/PI for a substantial NIH independent research award. Specifically, a PD/PI is identified as a New Investigator if he/she has not previously competed successfully for an NIH-supported research project other than the following early stage or small research grants or for the indicated training, infrastructure, and career awards:

- Pathway to Independence Award-Research Phase (R00)
- Small Grant (R03)
- Academic Research Enhancement Award (R15)
- Exploratory/Developmental Grant (R21)
- Research Education Grants (R25, R90, RL9, RL5)
- Clinical Trial Planning Grant (R34)
- Dissertation Award (R36)
- Small Business Technology Transfer Grant-Phase I (R41)
- Small Business Innovation Research Grant-Phase I (R43)
- Shannon Award (R55)
- NIH High Priority, Short-Term Project Award (R56)
- Competitive Research Pilot Projects (SC2, SC3)
- Resource Access Award (X01)
Additionally, the PD/PI is not excluded from consideration as a “New Investigator” if he/she has been the PD/PI or received an award from any of the following classes of awards:

**Training-Related and Mentored Career Awards**

- All Fellowships (F awards)
- All individual and institutional career awards (K awards)
- Loan repayment contracts (L30, L32, L40, L50, L60)
- All training grants (T32, T34, T35, T90, D43)

**Instrumentation, Construction, Education, Health Disparity Endowment Grants, or Meeting Awards**

- G07, G08, G11, G13, G20
- R13
- S10, S15, S21, S22

**Note regarding grants with Multiple PD/PIs:** In the case of a grant application that involves more than one PI, all PD/PIs must meet the definition of New Investigator in order for the application to have the New Investigator designation.

**Note regarding transitional grants:** Research grants that combine a smaller initial award that transitions without further competition to a second phase supported by a substantial, independent research grant will discontinue the New Investigator status for the PD/PI(s) at the point of transition to the larger award. This includes combined, transitional awards like the R21/R33, R41/R42, R43/R44, U43/U44, UH2/UH3, and the UT1/UT2.

**HU-TCC: MMHI Pilot Project Program Letter of Intent to Submit an Application (Required)**

Please note that all applicants to both the Pilot Project Award and the Seed Project Award MUST submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) in order to qualify for the submission of a Full Application. The LOI is due on Wednesday, March 19, 2014 at 6:00 P.M. EST.

The **Letter of Intent (LOI)** package should include:
- PI's Name, Faculty Rank, and Institution
- Co-Investigator(s) and Faculty Rank(s)
- Senior mentor(s) and Faculty Rank(s)
- HU-TCC:MMHI Faculty Sponsor
- Description of how your project will address a research question relevant to the HU-TCC MMHI: prostate cancer, melanoma in Hispanics, cardiovascular disease, violence prevention, diabetes, and obesity.

**Letters of Intent and applications may not be submitted in paper format. Only electronically submitted LOI (in a SINGLE PDF file) will be reviewed.**
Please email your LOI in one PDF file, including all of the above components on or before Wednesday, March 19, 2014, at 6:00 P.M. EST to: cheryl.evans@hamptonu.edu or mmhi-info@hamptonu.edu.

Technical assistance on the development of the LOI may be offered if requested. If you have questions concerning the submission of the LOIs, please contact: Cheryl Gray Evans, Esq. and HU-TCC: MMHI Project Manager: Office: 757-727-5439; Email: cheryl.evans@hamptonu.edu.

HU-TCC: MMHI Pilot Project Program Full Application Guidelines

Application Format and Content
Investigators should submit an NIH-format application on combined PHS 398 forms as ONE PDF file (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html). Investigators should use Arial 11 point font, with one-half-inch margins on the top and bottom of the pages. Investigators should include the following:

- A paragraph in lay language describing how this project will be translated to help improve health disparities in the minority male population.
- A brief description on the HU-TCC Faculty Collaborator’s role and the mentorship plan. Describe plans for preparing papers for peer-reviewed publication and how the proposed Pilot Project or Seed Project will lead to a competitive proposal for submission to the NIMHD.

The format of the grant application is as follows:
- Face Page
- Project Summary/Abstract Relevance (1 page)  
  Describe how the project will be translated to help improve health disparities in minority male populations.
- Project/Performance Sites
- Scientific/Key Personnel
- Other Significant Contributors
- Table of Contents
- Detailed Budget for Each Year and Total Years
- Budget Justification
- NIH Biographical Sketches (4-page format, including research experience)
- Resources (List those currently available for the applicant’s use in the proposed project)
- Research Plan  
  Specific Aims (1 page)  
  Research Strategy (Pilot Project: 6 pages; Seed Project: 4 pages)  
  Significance (emphasizing minority men's health disparities relevance)  
  Innovation  
  Approach  
  Preliminary Studies (if applicable)
- HU-TCC:MMHI Faculty Collaborator’s Letter of Support and the mentorship plan (1-2 pages)
- Principal Investigator's Biomedical and/or Behavioral Research Career Plan (1-2 Pages).
- Human Subjects Research (if applicable)
- Literature Cited
- Other Letters of Support

**HU-TCC:MMHI Pilot Project Program Funding Restrictions**

The following types of expenditures are allowable:
- Research supplies and animal maintenance
- Technical assistance
- Domestic travel when necessary to carry out the proposed research
- Publication costs, including reprints
- Cost of computer time
- Special fees (pathology, photography, etc.)
- Stipends for graduate students and postdoctoral assistants if their role is to promote and sustain the project presented by the junior faculty member
- Equipment costing less than $5,000
- Computers and software for use by research personnel engaged in research project
- Registration fees and routine travel expenses for scientific meetings

Must include travel expenses for all funded research personnel to attend two (Fall and Spring) mandatory HU-TCC: MMHI Retreats at Hampton University during each annual funding period.

Principal Investigator Salary: Pilot Project Award requires a minimum of 50% effort during academic year. Seed Project Award requires a minimum of 25% effort during academic year). A maximum of 1-month summer salary is annually allowed in project budget.

Indirect costs are applicable to these awards.

The following types of expenditures are NOT allowed:
- Secretarial/administrative personnel
- Student tuition
- Foreign travel
- Honoraria and travel expenses for visiting lecturers
- Per Diem charges for hospital beds
- Non-medical services to patients
- Construction or building maintenance
- Major alterations
- Purchasing and binding of periodicals and books
- Office and laboratory furniture
- Office equipment and supplies
- Rental of office or laboratory space
- Recruiting and relocation expenses
- Dues and membership fees in scientific societies
The Full Application may not be submitted in paper format. Only electronically submitted applications (in a SINGLE PDF file) will be reviewed.

Please email your Full Application (one PDF file), including all components requested above, on or before Wednesday, April 30, 2014, at 6:00 P.M. EST to: cheryl.evans@hamptonu.edu or mmhi-info@hamptonu.edu.

Technical assistance regarding the development of the full application may be offered, if requested. If you have questions concerning the submission of the Pilot Project or Seed Project proposals, please contact: Cheryl Gray Evans, Esq. and HU-TCC: MMHI Project Manager: Office: 757-727-5439; Email: cheryl.evans@hamptonu.edu.

Application Review Criteria and Considerations

The following NIH Standard review Criteria and Considerations will be used to review the projects:

Review Criteria for Research Grants and Cooperative Agreements

The mission of the NIH is to support science in pursuit of knowledge about the biology and behavior of living systems and to apply that knowledge to extend healthy life and reduce illness and disability. As part of this mission, applications submitted to the NIH for grants or cooperative agreements to support biomedical and behavioral research are evaluated for scientific and technical merit through the NIH peer review system.

Overall Impact. Reviewers will provide an overall impact/priority score to reflect their assessment of the likelihood for the project to exert a sustained, powerful influence on the research field(s) involved, in consideration of the following review criteria, and additional review criteria (as applicable for the project proposed).

Scored Review Criteria. Reviewers will consider each of the following review criteria in the determination of scientific and technical merit, and give a separate score for each. An application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have major scientific impact. For example, a project that by its nature is not innovative may be essential to advance a field.

Significance. Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved? How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field?

Investigator(s). Are the PD/PIs, collaborators, and other researchers well suited to the project? If Early Stage Investigators or New Investigators, or in the early stages of independent careers, do they have appropriate experience and training?
If established, have they demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced their field(s)? If the project is collaborative or multi-PD/PI, do the investigators have complementary and integrated expertise? Are their leadership approach, governance and organizational structure appropriate for the project?

**Innovation.** Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions? Are the concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions novel to one field of research or novel in a broad sense? Is a refinement, improvement, or new application of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions proposed?

**Approach.** Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Are potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented? If the project is in the early stages of development, will the strategy establish feasibility and will particularly risky aspects be managed? If the project involves clinical research, are the plans for 1) protection of human subjects from research risks, and 2) inclusion of minorities and members of both sexes/genders, as well as the inclusion of children, justified in terms of the scientific goals and research strategy proposed?

**Environment.** Will the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Are the institutional support, equipment and other physical resources available to the investigators adequate for the project proposed? Will the project benefit from unique features of the scientific environment, subject populations, or collaborative arrangements?

**Additional Review Criteria.** As applicable for the project proposed, reviewers will evaluate the following additional items while determining scientific and technical merit and in providing an overall impact/priority score, but will not give separate scores for these items.

- Protections for Human Subjects
- Inclusion of Women, Minorities, and Children
- Vertebrate Animals
- Biohazards
- Resubmission
- Renewal
- Revision

**Additional Review Considerations.** As applicable for the project proposed, reviewers will consider each of the following items, but will not give scores for these items and should not consider them in providing an overall impact/priority score.

- Applications from Foreign Organizations
- Select Agent
- Resource Sharing Plans
- Budget and Period Support