

# **BUILDING ON OUR STRENGTHS (BOOST) AWARD**

## **CALL FOR SUPPLEMENT LETTERS OF INTENT (LOI)**

### **OPEN TO ALL DISCIPLINES AND DEPARTMENTS**



The Rural Drug Addiction Research (RDAR) Center seeks applications for funding to supplement existing research grants with the potential to support new innovation in or increase knowledge about substance use and related topics. The purpose of these supplement awards is to create synergies with ongoing projects and to leverage resources to promote high-impact work within the scope of RDAR.

**Eligibility.** To be eligible to receive supplemental funding, you must have a faculty appointment in the NU system, have active research funding that can be extended by a supplement award, and be eligible to receive NIH funding. IDeA-funded Research Project Leaders, RDAR Phase 2 Advisory Committee Members, and members of the RDAR's Administrative and Research Core Leadership Teams are not eligible for supplemental funding. Current Pilot Project Leaders and RDAR's Mentoring, Engagement, and Outreach Workgroup (MEOW) members and mentors are eligible as long as they do not also have another role that makes them ineligible.

**Overview.** A wide variety of research funding mechanisms that include internal and external awards may be leveraged. Critically, the proposed supplement award must extend the original work in a way that creates a meaningful opportunity to advance substance use research.

Examples of supplement award projects may include (but are not limited to):

- adding data collection components to an existing project to incorporate substance use and related topics;
- scaling up a project that already focuses on substance use but would benefit from a larger sample;
- improving rigor and innovation of an existing project by incorporating components from the RDAR Research Core, for example the Open Dynamic Interaction Network, ODIN (<https://rdar.unl.edu/lnc-software>) or the Regional Health Cohort, RHC (<https://rdar.unl.edu/regional-health-cohort>).

It is expected that the supplement award will enhance the investigator's ability to pursue external funding in an area within the scope of RDAR. Supplement recipients will be expected to submit an application for external funding within a year of completing the project funded by the supplement.

**Budget.** Total costs for supplement awards are generally expected to range from \$10,000 to \$25,000, although larger requests may be considered. All submissions should justify the requested costs and convey how the supplement would enhance competitiveness for external funding for substance use research.

**Letter of Intent and Submission Process.** To ensure that proposals fit well with the supplement mechanism, applicants must submit a brief (1 page maximum) letter of intent expressing interest in applying for a supplement award. The letter of intent should include: a) a brief overview of the proposed work; b) the existing funding that would be leveraged in the supplement; c) how the supplement would position the applicant to successfully pursue larger external funding; and d) an estimate of the expected total budget. The LOI should be submitted as a PDF file through the RDAR Building on Our Strengths (BOOST) Supplement Letter of Intent module. LOIs will be accepted on a rolling basis.

Investigators submitting a letter of intent that is considered responsive to the call will be invited to a brief meeting with RDAR leadership to further discuss their idea and determine if it is appropriate for this mechanism before submitting a full application. All applicants will receive written feedback. Revised LOIs can be submitted for consideration. If resubmitting a LOI, we recommend discussing the potential revisions with a member of the RDAR Leadership Team.

**Application and Submission Process.** Invited applications will include more detailed versions of the components in the LOI (3 pages), as well as an abbreviated investigator biosketch. Instructions for the full proposal submission will be provided by invitation following the LOI process.

**Additional Requirements.** Given RDAR Center reporting requirements to NIH, investigators receiving supplemental funding must submit a written annual progress report. Continued availability of the funds is contingent upon favorable review by the LNC and RDAR leadership team concerning project progress. BOOST awardees are strongly encouraged to participate in Center sponsored seminars, workshops, symposia, and other professional development opportunities (e.g., summer grant writing workshop).

**Questions.** More information about the RDAR Center can be found at <https://rdar.unl.edu/>. Please reach out to RDAR's Associate Director, Dr. Tim Nelson (tnelson3@unl.edu), with any questions regarding this supplemental funding opportunity.