

RDAR RESEARCH PROJECT LEADER POSITION OPENING
CALL FOR RESEARCH PROJECT LEADER PROPOSALS
OPEN TO ALL DISCIPLINES AND DEPARTMENTS



The Rural Drug Addiction Research (RDAR) Center is pleased to announce an opening for Research Project Leader (RPL) funding. The RPL position is **open to all disciplines** and aims to propel emerging scholars to research independence. While experience in substance use research is not required, the focus of the proposal must be on applying an individual's expertise in areas relevant to substance use and misuse. A successful proposal **must** link the research plan to RDAR's mission and will be required to use the Center's research core, the Longitudinal Networks Core (LNC).

Current full-time faculty at the University of Nebraska are encouraged to apply. Individuals must be eligible to receive NIH funds. Individuals must not have current or past PD/PI funding from another large grant mechanism (R01, MIRA, etc.). RPLs may not be funded by another RDAR or IDeA-mechanism at the time the award is issued. Members of RDAR's Mentoring, Engagement, and Outreach Workgroup cannot receive RPL funding. We encourage interested investigators to contact RDAR's Center Administrator (dcrawford3@unl.edu) with any questions regarding Research Project Leader eligibility.

RPLs may receive up to \$300,000 in direct costs for two-year projects. Budget requests are limited to \$150,000 in direct costs per year. RPLs are required to commit 50% of their effort towards the RPL project during each year of funding. RPLs will receive direct mentoring and access to Center resources for professional development, networking, and project support.

Center Mission and Research Focus Areas

RDAR's ***mission*** is to advance research across the basic and health sciences to understand the etiology, prevention, and treatment of substance use and misuse. The Center's scientific and creative activities span from synapse to society. RDAR links preclinical studies to behavioral, neural, social, clinical, and translational research and dissemination. Towards its mission, the RDAR Center has several notable ***focus areas*** including:

1. Supporting basic inquiry on behavioral, social, and/or biological factors contributing to or protecting against drug use, misuse, and addiction. Research in this focus area should consider the unique factors that impact individuals in Nebraska, the Great Plains, and/or our rural communities.
2. Humanistic and artistic approaches that seek to expand our understanding of drug use, misuse, and addiction. This may include but is not limited to exploring contemporary and historical narratives of community and cultural experiences, or creative representation of voices and experiences.
3. Efforts aimed at improving prevention, treatment, and/or recovery services. Scholarship in this area should consider the unique factors that impact service access, use, and barriers for impacting Nebraska, the Great Plains, and/or our rural communities.
4. Using LNC resources, such as recruitment support or software from RDAR's research core. More information can be found here: <https://rdar.unl.edu/longitudinal-networks-core/lnc-services/>

Proposal Submission and Review Process

To ensure that RPL proposals fit with the funding mechanism, applicants must submit a **curriculum vitae** and a two-page **proposal** expressing interest in applying for RPL funding. The proposal should use standard NIH formatting requirements (½ inch margins, Arial size 11-point font). The curriculum vitae and proposal should be submitted as a **single PDF file** through the RDAR Research Project Leader NURamp module. **Applications must be received by 5:00 pm CDT on January 15, 2026.** Late submissions will not be accepted.

The two-page proposal must include the following sections (in this order):

1. A statement on how your research and scholarly work aligns with RDAR's mission
2. An overview of your proposed research plan and how it leverages RDAR's LNC resources
 - a) Significance, Aims, Innovation, Expertise and Resources
3. A description of how your project will lead to future extramural grant funding (NIH R01 or equivalent) and research independence in addiction science

The RDAR Leadership team will review submissions for relevance to the RDAR mission, use of the LNC resources, and likelihood of the proposal to lead to extramural funding and research independence. **Based on this review, the RDAR Leadership team will select candidate(s) to move forward and develop a full proposal to NIH.** That candidate will be notified by email before April 15, 2026. They will work closely with the RDAR Leadership team and selected mentors to develop a complete NIH R21-style application. Submission of this application to NIH will be no later than December 15, 2026.