Request for Applications of Mini-Grants for Fall 2015

Background

The overall goal of the SF BUILD project is to transform education, research, training, and mentoring at San Francisco State University (SFSU) by creating an intellectually safe and affirming environment in which students who are typically underrepresented in science and their faculty mentors can thrive (http://sfbuild.sfsu.edu). One of our specific aims is to enable these individuals to succeed as part of the NIH-funded workforce, and in particular, to offer competitive mini-grants for funding of faculty research to generate preliminary data. This Request for Applications announces that in the second year of SF BUILD, we will be awarding three mini-grants of $20,000 each to successful applicants. In subsequent years 3-5, the same level of mini-grant support will be offered, but focused on additional objectives.

In this first year, we seek SFSU faculty applicants who will investigate the obstacles and opportunities for providing safe environments for students underrepresented in the sciences, utilizing the Signaling Affirmation of Equity (SAFE) model, a theoretical framework that grounds the SF BUILD project. It includes a multilevel approach targeting students, faculty and institutional practices to create an environment that reduces stereotype threat and increases sense of belonging (http://sfbuild.sfsu.edu/about-build). In this first year of the Mini-Grants, we seek applications that increase understanding of the underlying social, psychological, and biological mechanisms that contribute to or decrease stereotype threat (or stigma) that can have adverse effects on educational outcomes and well-being.

We invite applications that examine both the process(es) of systematic/unconscious bias against success by individuals who are underrepresented in science, as well as in-depth exploration of the social, psychological, and biological mechanisms that play into either promoting or inhibiting scientific aspirations of undergraduate students. Our focus in this first year is specifically on studies that will inform implementation of the SAFE model and how to make it work in favor of underrepresented groups in science. However, applications could investigate the mechanisms and outcomes of stereotype threat/stigma on human health.

Request for Applications

Release date: July 15, 2015

Due date: October 1, 2015

Funding to Start: November 1, 2015 for one-year.

Funding level: $20,000 total costs. Allowable costs include reimbursed release time, student stipends, and supplies.

Application Format:

(1) Submit the PHS 398 Face Page (Form Pages 1-2), budget forms (Form Pages 4-5), and research strategy section (see below), not to exceed six pages. Budget should include personnel and other costs. Include all investigators in the project and their expertise or
(2) Bibliography and References cited section, Biosketches, Letters of Support

Length of Application: No more than six pages and where applicable, single space, 0.5 inch margins, including figures and tables but not references, Biosketches and any Letters of Support.

Font: Arial 11.

Research Strategy Section:
Organize the Research Strategy in the specified order and using the instructions provided. Start each section with the appropriate section heading – Significance, Innovation, Approach. Cite references in a “Bibliography and References Cited” section.

(1) Significance. Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses. Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad fields. Describe how concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field will be changed if the proposed aims are achieved.

(2) Innovation. Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms. Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or intervention(s) to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation or intervention(s).

(3) Approach. Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims in this project. Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve the aims.

Other notes:
(1) Expected product. What is the expected product of the project (a publication, pilot data for a larger grant, an evaluation, etc.)?

(2) Methods. Population, dataset or materials to be used, data collection and analytic methods. Where will research be conducted, and will student trainees be involved? If so, how will the students participate? PIs are encouraged to include information about the mentoring approach/strategy and their experience with mentoring students from diverse backgrounds and/or in the relevant area of science (1-3 paragraphs).

Biosketches: For all investigators. Use new NIH format (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/index.htm#biosketch)

Review:Applications will be peer-reviewed by a four-person panel of faculty, two from SFSU and two from UCSF. Criteria will be based on standard assessments of significance, approach, innovation, investigators and environment, but funding will be prioritized to those projects that provide research training opportunities for students, that have an existing and/or pending IRB approval, that leverage core research facilities (http://sfbuild.sfsu.edu/content/core-facilities), and that otherwise advance the goals of the SF BUILD project. In fact, success in advancing these goals will be measured by the SF BUILD evaluation team using relevant project metrics that include student, faculty, and institutional level measures.
Each publication, press release, or other document about research supported by an NIH award must include an acknowledgment of NIH award support and a disclaimer such as “Research reported in this publication was supported by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health under Award Number 8UL1GM118985-02. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.” Prior to issuing a press release concerning the outcome of this research, please notify the NIH awarding IC in advance to allow for coordination.

Questions: Address questions by email to:

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Submit applications to: (no applications will be accepted if received after midnight of October 1, 2015)

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