

# Center for Substance Use Research and Related Conditions (CSURRC)

## Pilot Funding Award Guidelines

### Application Submission Date: April 3, 2026

\*\*Recipient(s) will be notified no later than July 1, 2026\*\*

### Purpose of the Grant

The Center for Substance Use Research and Related Conditions (CSURRC) seeks to increase the frequency of high-quality, financially viable external grant submissions from CSURRC affiliates. Therefore, we provide center affiliated faculty with seed funding to obtain pilot data to support external and federal grant proposals. The focus of the grant application should have a clear focus on substance use disorders, mental health, or other related conditions. Funding will be considered for proposals that achieve the goal of a thorough, innovative, and profound pilot research project.

### Eligibility

Eligible applicants for the award include CSURRC faculty affiliates. The applicant must be an early science investigator with less than \$100K in funding as PI. They must also be committed to submitting an external grant proposal upon completion.

CSURRC will fund two Level I awards. The award specifications are as follows:

Level 1:

- \$5,000.00
- 1-year maximum project period.

During any proposal submission period, only one proposal per investigator, either as Principal Investigator (PI) or Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI), will be taken into consideration. Former grant recipients are ineligible to receive new funding for two years following the end of the previous award period.

### Submission Guidelines

Submit an electronic copy of the required materials as **ONE ATTACHMENT** to [csurrc@ua.edu](mailto:csurrc@ua.edu) by April 3, 2026 with the subject line: CSURRC Pilot Grant Application. Electronic submissions are the only accepted format.

### Format and Style

1. All required materials must be submitted as ONE electronic document.
2. Title file as Last Name, First Initial, Term/Year, Dissertation Proposal (ButlerA Spring2026 PilotAwardProposal)
3. Use a Times New Roman, Arial, Helvetica, or Georgia typeface and a font size of 11 pts or larger.
4. Use one-half-inch margins for all pages, including reference pages and appendices.

5. Use page numbers throughout the application. Include reference pages and appendices. Place page numbers in the bottom right-hand corner of each page.

## **Application Guidelines**

Applications for funding should be prepared and submitted as an electronic document. The application should include the following sections:

- 1. Title Page of the proposed project**, title of the project along with the names and current academic ranks of the applicant (PI) and collaborators
- 2. An abstract of no more than 250 words**, this should include a brief description of the purpose and method of the project. Please note that this abstract may be used in publications.
- 3. Specific Aims of the proposed work** – This page format should follow a standard Specific Aims page for an NIH application and should not exceed one page. Be sure to include clear reasoning for the proposal and which data method was used.
- 4. Research Proposal** – Please keep in mind that the proposal may be evaluated by peers who do not have extensive knowledge of the research topic being discussed. The proposed work should be sufficiently detailed for faculty colleagues to assess its significance and potential impact yet remain accessible enough for non-specialists to grasp its importance. The proposal should address the following:
  - a. The significance of the project
  - b. Innovation of the Project
  - c. The expertise of the Principal Investigator and the investigative team as it relates to the proposed research question.
  - d. Approach Section including all methods and procedures for the study.
  - e. Anticipated challenges and plans to resolve challenges.
  - f. Future directions, including identification of specific RFA to which the applicant plans to respond after completing the pilot project.
- 5. Detailed timeline of the project and grant submission process:**
  - a. **Timeline of the project:** The total period of the proposal, covering the pilot project completion and the completion of all elements of the grant submission timeline, should be specified and will be up to 12 months (Level 1). The section can be 1 page single-spaced.
  - b. **Timeline of the grant submission process:** Describe how the pilot project will fit into the larger timeline of submitting a federal/foundation research grant. The funding source will be identified (e.g. a specific NIH Institute, NSF, CDC, IES, DOD, DOE, specific foundation, etc.).
- 6. Appendices**
  - a. References (Use APA or AMA format)
  - b. Budget Sheet

- i. Itemize anticipated expenditures to conduct the project, including supplies and consultants. Indicate whether other funds have been obtained or applied to support the conduct of the proposed research.
- c. Letter of support from collaborators and community partners (as appropriate).
- d. Bio sketch (use NIH template)
- e. Research tools, instruments, or interview guides (if applicable).

## **Review Process and Criteria**

Applications will be evaluated using the NIH scoring system (10-90). Lower scores indicate a greater likelihood of funding. Grant award recipient(s) are selected through a peer review process using the following criteria:

1. Significance to substance use and/or related conditions.
2. Scientific Merit
3. Innovation
4. Appropriateness of methodology given the research question(s)
5. Qualifications of the investigator or research team to conduct study.
6. Adequacy of human subjects/animal protection
7. Appropriate environment, budget, and time frame

## **Reporting Requirements**

An interim report is required every six months of the project period. This report should describe the progress made, any challenges experienced, and the plans to resolve the challenges. A final report is due 90 days after the end of the award period (not to exceed three pages per report). The final report should include the results of the pilot project, any dissemination of the pilot findings, specific plans for and progress made towards submitting the external grant application. Priority should be given to NIH RFAs. CSURRC resources (including grant reviews) will be provided to all pilot awardees developing external grant applications.

## **To become an affiliate of the Center**

[https://universityofalabama.edu/qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_79RZbl8v6Yap8jk](https://universityofalabama.edu/qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_79RZbl8v6Yap8jk)