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Eligibility:

Which institutions are eligible?

The application must be submitted by an institution that is registered with the U.S. Government to receive funding (see registration section below). For these RFAs, the submitting institution must be an African institution of higher education (public or private). The primary institution may award subcontracts or hire consultants from other types of institutions, so collaborators may be anywhere in the world and may represent different types of organizations such as research institutes. In most circumstances, U.S. government entities may not receive any funding through these awards.

Who is eligible to be a PI/PD?

The PI/PD, or at least one PI/PD on a multi-PI/PD application, must be an established investigator in their field (usually a PhD or MD level scientist) with an appointment at an eligible institution. Furthermore, the primary contact PI/PD must be a legal citizen of an African country in addition to having an appointment at the applicant institution; this individual does not, however, have to be a citizen of the country in which the applicant institution is located.

Who are the “key personnel”?

Senior/Key Personnel are generally the people making the largest intellectual contribution to the project, are driving the direction of the project, and will be involved in high-level decisions about the project. There are many very important contributors to every project who do not need to be listed as Senior/Key personnel. Senior/Key Personnel will need to provide Biosketches and information about their other support in the application. Additionally, if the award is made, some of these individuals may be designated by program staff as “key” in the notice of award (NOA), in which case they will need to provide updates about their activity each year and will need advance permission from program staff to reduce their time on the project by more than 25% of their initial time commitment. Depending on the scope of the project, it may or may not be necessary to include additional senior/key personnel beyond the PI/PD. If there are many Senior/Key Personnel, it is advisable to include a management plan that explains how they will work together to move the project forward.

Who may collaborate?

Anyone who will contribute to the science in a meaningful way may be included as a collaborator. Collaborators may be from anywhere in the world and may be from many different types of institutions. Note that there are some limitations to whom may receive funding through the award, and no one may be paid twice to do the same work.

Can an institution submit multiple applications?

Yes, for most of the RFAs, an institution may submit multiple DISTINCT applications proposing different science or addressing different scientific problems. An institution may also respond to multiple different funding opportunities.

However, *each institution may only submit one application for the H3Africa Global Health Bioinformatics Training Program- U2R (RFA-RM-16-012).*

Can an individual be a PI/PD or named on multiple applications?

Yes, so long as the proposals are scientifically distinct from one another and the total time commitment of an investigator from all sources does not exceed 12 CM. Note that that limitation applies only to awarded grants. Thus, the time commitment proposed for an individual named on multiple applications may exceed 100%, but if and when awards are made, that individual's effort will be adjusted to not exceed 100%.

Application process:

Who needs to be registered prior to submission of the application?

The applicant institution must have all its institutional registrations in order to submit an application (an institution must have: DUNS, NCAGE, SAM, Grants.gov, and ERA Commons account; see <http://www.h3africa.org/component/content/article/26-current-funding-opportunities/275-nih-fundingkw-guidance-2> for additional information). In addition, the PI/PD(s), postdocs and graduate students listed will need to be registered in eRA Commons.

Who needs to be registered prior to an award being made?

All collaborating institutions (i.e. subcontracts) will need to be registered with DUNS, NCAGE, and SAM. It would be a good idea to start this process early so as not to hold up the award, but it does not have to be completed at the time of submitting an application.

What if I did not submit a letter of intent (LOI)? What if I want to change something after submitting an LOI?

An LOI is neither required nor binding. You may submit an application without an LOI or one that is different than what you submitted in your LOI. It is helpful to us if you do let us know about your intent to apply and notify us of any major changes that you are planning to make in your science or collaborators in the actual

application so that we can 1) provide you with the best advice about your application and 2) provide information to the Scientific Review Officers so that they can begin to put together an appropriate review panel. However, whether you chose to submit an LOI is entirely up to you and will not be considered in the review process.

How do I apply?

All applicants must use the electronic process when submitting their application. In “Part 1: Overview Instructions of the RFA”, there is link right above the table of contents to “Apply Online Using ASSIST”. This will take you to a login page for ASSIST where you will use your eRA Commons user name and password to log in. Detailed instructions for using ASSIST can be found here: https://era.nih.gov/files/ASSIST_user_guide.pdf , and you can get additional help here: <https://era.nih.gov/erahelp/assist/>. It is critical that applicants follow the instructions in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide (found here: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide.htm>) and the additional instructions provided in each RFA.

What additional things should I know about the application process?

Apply early, perhaps one or even two weeks before the submission deadline. It is important to understand (1) that an application must be complete and contain no errors in order to be accepted by the electronic system and (2) that the complete, error-free application must be submitted by the submission deadline. No application will be accepted after the due date. Therefore, if you submit early, it will give you time to get any help you may need if you run into problems or have additional questions, and to correct any errors that may be detected by the electronic processing system. It is also very important to understand that, in the electronic processing system, errors are screened one at a time, sequentially. So, errors can only be corrected one at a time. Thus, if an application has multiple errors, it will need to have those errors corrected sequentially during the process. As this back and forth can take some time, especially with the time differences between the U.S. (where the help desk is located) and Africa, it is in your best interest to give your application enough time to get through the system. Again, no application will be accepted after the stated submission date.

Budget:

How much money may I apply for?

Each RFA indicates the maximum amount that will be awarded and you should always check whether that limit is listed as Direct Costs (DC) or Total Costs (TC). This limit can be found in Part 2, Section II of the RFA in the subsection titled

“Award Budget”. In the case of the H3Africa RFAs, there is a limit to the amount per year and the number of years that you may ask for. The proposed budget must be appropriate to the science proposed, as well as with the RFA. An applicant does not have to ask for the full amount

How much of the budget will go to Facilities and Administration, (F&A, also called indirect costs)?

This amount is set at 8% of the direct costs for all non-U.S. institutions. For example, for an application requesting 1M/year total costs, about \$925,925 would be for direct costs and an additional approximately \$74,075 would be for your institutional F&A. The exact amount may vary a bit depending on the application since some categories of funding, such as equipment and A&R (alterations and renovations) are excluded from F&A calculations.

What about indirect costs for collaborating institutions?

This depends on where the collaborating institutions are geographically located. All non-U.S. institutions will also get 8%. However, institutions within the U.S. have their own, pre-negotiated indirect costs that they are entitled to. If the U.S. collaborating institution requests those indirect costs, NIH must honor those percentages. However, the African applicant may attempt to negotiate lower indirect costs for their subcontract; some U.S. institutions are willing to reduce these charges for subcontracts coming from low and middle-income countries (LMIC). You should inquire with your collaborator about whether this is possible.

Can undergraduate and graduate student salary support be requested? What about their tuition?

Salary support is acceptable for anyone who is responsible for doing the science. Generally undergraduates are paid an hourly rate rather than a salary, but that is up to your institutional policy. Awards to the H3Africa Global Health Bioinformatics Training Program - U2R (RFA-RM-16-012) can support trainee tuition costs, but tuition costs are not generally supported through the other RFAs. Questions about specific RFAs should be addressed to the appropriate contact people (listed below).

Scientific scope:

Must all applications have a genomics focus?

There must be a genomics component for all applications, but not every single aim for a U01 or for a project in a U54 needs to address genomics directly. We also encourage the inclusion of environmental and health condition/disease phenotyping components as part of a genomic sciences application. If environmental measures or risk factors are being analyzed to explain etiology along with genetic risk factors, the project is expected to include robust validated

environmental measures or biomonitoring as well as plans for how any environmental samples might be collected and stored.

Are applications regarding the genomics of cancer acceptable?

Yes.

May we include consideration of the African diaspora?

Yes, but it should be in the context of studies of African populations, environment, and health on the African continent.

What is the difference between a U01 and a U54?

A U01 Research Project is smaller in scope and is generally one, self-contained project, usually with 2-4 related specific aims. A U01 often involves a single investigator, although multiple investigators may collaborate productively to accomplish a U01. Collaborators are not required for a U01 and a U01 project is generally not a large collaborative endeavor. A U54 Collaborative Center must have 3-5 individual but interrelated projects that work together collaboratively to produce a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. The projects should inform each other in some biologically meaningful way, but also be distinct from each other in some way. A U54 application has several component parts; one for each Research Project, one for the overall plan, one for an Administrative Core, and one each for any optional Cores that the applicant chooses to propose. Furthermore, a U54 Collaborative Center must involve at least 3 different African institutions (these can be within the same country or in different African countries), as well as any other collaborating institutions in Africa or outside of Africa that the investigators think would be essential for accomplishing the science. A U54 Collaborative Center will usually, but not necessarily, address a broader scientific question than a U01.

For a U2R, where should the training take place?

Most of the training should occur at African institutions. However, if there is a need to get training elsewhere, that is acceptable if the trainee(s) will then return to the applicant institution.

H3Africa questions:

Are people who are/are not currently funded able to apply for these new funding opportunities?

Yes, both currently funded and new applicants are eligible to apply.

Are renewal and new applications applying for the same pool of money and does that provide an advantage for renewing applicants?

Yes, they are both applying for the same pool of money. However, it does not provide an advantage to one group or the other for several reasons. First, renewal applications will need to include a progress report and will be judged, in part, on the progress that was made during the first round of funding. New applications should have some preliminary data and provide some evidence that the research goals put forth in the application can be accomplished. Ultimately, new applications are measured against different expectations since they have not yet been funded for the proposed project. Second, during the review process, each application is considered and scored independently, and not compared to other applications. Third, the NIH staff is hoping to expand the H3Africa program by funding a mix of new and renewing projects. Finally, the pool of available funds is not fixed, and applications that score well in areas of interest to NIH institutes and centers may attract additional funding.

Are we required to use the H3Africa Informatics Network and Biorepositories?

Yes, at a minimum, genetic/genomic and associated phenotypic data produced must be submitted to the H3Africa Informatics Network, which will coordinate deposition in EGA so that the data may be publically available. Similarly, an aliquot of DNA used in production of data must be deposited in an H3Africa Biorepository. Details of the data and sample sharing policy can be found at h3africa.org. Exceptions to this policy must be well-justified and negotiated with NIH program staff. In addition to these required uses of the H3Africa Informatics Network and Biorepositories, other services may be provided as fee-for-service or as collaborative efforts. Negotiations for these additional uses should be made directly with the providers.

How should ELSI U01s plan to interact with the ELSI U54?

ELSI U01s and all H3Africa projects should be prepared to work with funded ELSI U54 awardees, as well as with the appropriate H3Africa Working Groups, to address new or ongoing ethical, legal or social issues related to their research.

What are the expectations for a community engagement plan?

A Community Engagement Plan should address how the community will be engaged both prior to, during, and after the study is complete. Thought should be given to how the community will benefit from the research project, what education and resources will be provided to the broader community, and how results from the project will be communicated to participants and/or their community. Do not forget to include a budget for your proposed community engagement activities.

General:

Is there anything else that I should know?

When in doubt, read the RFA and if you do not find the answer that you need there, please do not hesitate to ask questions. Here are the links to each of the RFAs and the contact information for your primary source of information:

RFA-RM-16-011: [Human Heredity and Health in Africa \(H3Africa\): Informatics Network \(U24\)](#)

Dr. Ken Wiley, Jr. (ken.wiley@nih.gov)

RFA-RM-16-012: [Human Heredity and Health in Africa \(H3Africa\): Global Health Bioinformatics Research Training Program \(U2R\)](#)

Dr. Laura Povlich (laura.povlich@nih.gov)

RFA-RM-16-013: [Human Heredity and Health in Africa \(H3Africa\): Ethical, Legal, and Societal Issues \(ELSI\) Research Program \(U01\)](#)

Dr. Ebony Madden (ebony.madden@nih.gov)

RFA-RM-16-014: [Human Heredity and Health in Africa \(H3Africa\): Ethical, Legal, and Societal Issues \(ELSI\) Collaborative Centers \(U54\)](#)

Dr. Ebony Madden (ebony.madden@nih.gov)

RFA-RM-16-015: [Human Heredity and Health in Africa \(H3Africa\): Research Projects \(U01\)](#)

Dr. Jennifer Troyer (troyerj@mail.nih.gov)

RFA-RM-16-016: [Human Heredity and Health in Africa \(H3 Africa\): Collaborative Centers \(U54\)](#)

Dr. Jennifer Troyer (troyerj@mail.nih.gov)

RFA-RM-16-017: [Human Heredity and Health in Africa \(H3Africa\): Coordinating Center \(U24\)](#)

Dr. Jennifer Troyer (troyerj@mail.nih.gov)

Additional contacts:

Grants Management questions: Deanna Ingersoll (Deanna.Ingersoll@nih.gov)

Peer Review questions: Rudy Pozzatti (rudy.pozatti@nih.hhs.gov)

Other questions: Laura Skow (laura.skow@nih.gov)