

## Request for Proposals (RFP)

# PROMOTING PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING ON HEALTH DISPARITIES ISSUES AT ETHNIC MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS

A small grants program funded by the American Psychological Association (APA)  
Science Directorate's "Academic Enhancement Initiative"  
and administered by the APA Public Interest Directorate's Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs (OEMA)  
in collaboration with the APA Minority Fellowship Program

Promoting Psychological Research and Training on Health Disparities Issues at Ethnic Minority Serving Institutions Grants (ProDIGs) will be awarded to early career faculty for specific, limited, and highly focused activities that are both preliminary and related to the preparation of a federal or foundation funding proposal, and able to be fully implemented during a 12 to 18 month period.

Health disparities issues recently have become a priority among the major federal agencies funding health research and training. Racial disparities in health status and outcomes are dramatic, pointing to the need for more related research and increased numbers of minority health researchers. Ethnic minority serving post-secondary institutions (i.e., Hispanic Serving Institutions [HSIs], Historically Black Colleges and Universities [HBCUs], Tribal Colleges and Universities [TCUs], and those community colleges serving predominantly minority student populations) can significantly contribute to meeting these needs. In addition, by supporting such efforts of psychology faculty at these institutions, the American Psychological Association will be enabled to reach out and strengthen its relationships with faculty and students in this institutional sector.

### Purpose

The proposed project seeks to increase the capacity of ethnic minority serving postsecondary institutions and faculty to engage in health disparities research and to encourage student involvement in health disparities research training at early levels of the educational pipeline. Such enhancement of capacity will take the form of small grants (and a program of professional development activities) targeted to early career faculty at these institutions for the purpose of supporting activities associated with the preparation of an initial research or program/curriculum development application for federal or foundation funding (e.g., from such agencies as Center for Mental Health Services [CMHS], Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education [FIPSE], National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities [NCMHHD], National Institute on Drug Abuse [NIDA], National Institute on Mental Health [NIMH], the National Science Foundation [NSF] and others). It is expected that approximately 5 to 7 grants, each in the approximate amount of \$5000 to \$6500 will be awarded each year. Approximately half of the grants will be for preparation of research applications, and half will be for preparation of program/curriculum development applications. All program/curriculum development application efforts must incorporate provisions for student research training, and whenever possible, research training applications also should include student researchers. All ProDIG applicants (research and program/curriculum development) will be required to submit a detailed concept paper (2 to 4 pages) of their proposed research or program/curriculum development effort.

Awardees may use their small grants for such purposes as: course reduction to free up time for grant preparation; conduct of pilot study; consultation with research/curriculum experts; survey/instrument design; data collection; student assistance; faculty mini-retreats/workshops, etc. All awardees also will be expected to attend a mandatory 5 to 7 day professional development institute in Washington, DC during the summer of 2008 at which concept papers will be critiqued, major trends in health disparities research will be discussed, and opportunities to network with federal funding program directors and federal research institute staff will be provided. Additional funds will be provided for travel costs associated with institute attendance. It is expected that awardees will submit a funding application to a federal agency or private foundation within 24 months after award of the small grant.

## Research and Education/Training Objectives

### ❖Background

Although the diversity of the population in contemporary America is one of its greatest assets, the richness of this social and cultural variability is overshadowed by the reality of the disproportionate burden of disease and illness that is borne by racial and ethnic minority populations and the rural and urban poor. Compelling evidence of the disparate health status of America's racial and ethnic minority populations – especially those who are economically disadvantaged – is documented in the form of shorter life expectancies and higher rates of cancer, birth defects, infant mortality, asthma, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. Other areas in which racial and ethnic minorities and the medically underserved suffer a disproportionate burden of morbidity and mortality include: HIV Infection/AIDS, autoimmune diseases such as lupus and scleroderma, oral health, sexually transmitted diseases, drug use associated mortality, and viral borne diseases such as hepatitis C. In addition, Surgeon General Satcher recently documented racial and ethnic disparities in mental health. In general, data suggest that racial and ethnic differential incidences of disease and health outcomes result from the interaction of a plethora of factors in complex and unsuspecting ways.

### ❖Topics for Consideration for Research and Program/Curriculum Development

- In proposing the preliminary research or education/training to be supported, applicants may want to consider the following topics.
- Basic, clinical, behavioral and social sciences research knowledge and approaches that will advance understanding of disease/disability development and progression and health promotion in ethnic minority populations and communities.
- Education/training activities that include: Special institutes; the development of multidisciplinary courses and experiences in behavioral sciences research and intervention; research mentorships; establishment or expansion of either community-based practica in community health settings and/or community-based behavioral and health research/evaluation experiences.
- Research or education/training procedures and approaches for improving diagnosis, prevention, and treatment in ethnic minority populations and communities.
- Research or education/training that focus on potential pathways to disparities in health outcomes, including but not limited to environmental exposures, genetic variations and/or other underlying biological, ethnic and familial factors, and social-cultural factors and patterns of behavior.
- Research or education/training related to the development or use of methodological tools for disentangling the impact of biologic factors, cultural factors, and socioeconomic status on health.
- Research or education/training related to assessment of and/or intervention upon: Developmental influences across the life span; specific health behaviors; discrimination in healthcare access and health processes; psychosocial and sociocultural influences upon health, health behaviors and healthcare; and socioeconomic (SES) related factors such as differential access to health care. (Health processes include the technical and interpersonal activities pertaining to disease prevention, diagnosis, and treatment that go on between patient and practitioner).

Brief descriptions of projects of previous recipients of ProDIGS grants are available at:  
[http://www.apa.org/pi/oema/programs/ProDIGs\\_project\\_awardees\\_2002\\_present.pdf](http://www.apa.org/pi/oema/programs/ProDIGs_project_awardees_2002_present.pdf)

## ❖ Grant Award Criteria

Review of applications and award of ProDIGs will be based on the following criteria:

1. Extent to which project rationale/purpose/objectives are clearly related to increasing your department/program's capacity to either engage in minority health/health disparities research and/or effectively recruit, retain, and train students in the area of minority health/health disparities research. (30%)
2. The clarity and excellence of the project's design, procedures, and timeline; the feasibility that the design can be implemented in a 12 to 18 month period and a federal and foundation grant proposal will be prepared and submitted within 24 months after receipt of the small grant. (30%)
3. The extent that the project's focus is explicitly related to those issues and problems of interest to potential federal and foundation funding sources B that is, the fundability of the expected federal/foundation proposal that will result from the small grant project. (15%)
4. The extent of institutional/departmental support for both the proposed project and the expected preparation of a federal/foundation funding proposal. (25%)

## Eligible Applicants

1. Applicants for a research small grant must have a doctorate in either psychology or a discipline that substantially involves psychological knowledge and research; applicants for program/curriculum development grants must have at minimum a master's degree in psychology or a discipline that substantially involves psychological knowledge and research.
2. Applicants must have a faculty or research affiliation of greater than 0.50 FTE at an accredited minority serving institution (i.e., Hispanic Serving Institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and those community colleges serving a predominantly minority student population) /that provides a postsecondary major or minor program of study in either psychology or in area that substantially involves psychological knowledge.
3. Applicants must have completed their highest academic degree within the past 10 years (at the time of submission of their ProDIGs application).
4. Applicants must be U.S. citizens, a non-citizen national, or have permanent residency status. Persons with temporary or student visas are ineligible.
5. Applicants must be APA members at the time awarded funds are disbursed.

## ❖ Application

While there is no formal application to complete, applicants should include the following materials with their submission:

Cover memo and recent curriculum vitae.

Letter(s) of support from your respective academic department/program.

Detailed budget of your proposed research or program/curriculum development effort.

## ❖ Request and Deadline for Applications

Questions should be directed to Sonja Preston of the APA Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs (OEMA) at 202-336-6029 or [spreston@apa.org](mailto:spreston@apa.org).