
BEA Award in Support of Conferences and Workshop

2018

Grant ID: 71794

Workshop or Conference name: “Spit Camp” at the UC Irvine Institute for Interdisciplinary Salivary Bioscience Research

Sponsoring Organization: University of California, Irvine, ,

Contact Name: Michael Hoyt, PhD

Goals and objectives

The clarity and nature of the conference or workshop goals and objectives and how they will enhance the training of faculty and supervisors of graduate students, interns, and/or postdoctoral fellows in psychology.

Facilitated by advances in salivary bioscience, psychological science has integrated advanced clinical and laboratory assessments of relevant immune system and neuroendocrine markers in saliva to identify mechanisms, stress processes, and evaluate the impact of clinical intervention on physiological systems. The Institute for Interdisciplinary Salivary Bioscience Research (IISBR) at the University of California, Irvine is a hub for innovative research and professional training for the use of salivary bioscience methods in psychological research. This proposal outlines a plan to support psychologists directly involved in the training of graduate students and other trainees to attend the IISBR Salivary Analyte Basics & Lab Training or what is referred to as “Spit Camp”. This two-day training combines both lecture/didactic and hands-on laboratory training. Lecture components cover theoretical perspectives; use of oral fluid as biological specimen; practical aspects of sample handling, collection, and study design; basics of immunoassay used for assaying saliva; and strategies for writing papers, presentations, and proposals. The laboratory component includes hands-on, supervised training on sample processing, salivary immunoassay and kinetic reaction assays. Samples will be collected and assayed, then data will be generated for group discussion and analysis. Workshop attendance is limited to ten participants to allow for in-depth, individualized discussion and instruction.

Leadership

The qualifications of the person(s) identified to plan and lead the conference or workshop, relative to the topic of focus. Included in the qualifications should be evidence of national or regional leadership (e.g., publication of scholarly works related to education and training, participation in past workshops, etc.).

The program is led by Dr. Douglas Granger and the IISBR Core Faculty, as well as the IISBR Laboratory staff. Dr. Granger is a psychologist and psychoneuroendocrinology researcher who is well known for his development of methods related to saliva collection and analysis and the theoretical and statistical integration of salivary measures into developmental research. The core faculty group is comprised of psychologists and public health faculty at UC Irvine with research expertise in the use of salivary bioscience. They include: • Michael Hoyt: a clinical health psychologist who studies biobehavioral processes related to psychological adjustment and coping across cancer survivorship. • Alyson Zalta: a clinical psychologist who studies the mental health burden of trauma and the development of trauma-related psychopathology including novel preventive and treatment interventions for vulnerable populations. • Kate Kuhlman: a clinical psychologist focused on how childhood adversity confers risk for poor health outcomes throughout the lifespan, and the neurobiological processes underlying depression in adolescence. • Kristina Uban: a neuroscientist whose research focuses on the

impact of prenatal exposure to alcohol on neurobiological propensity for cognitive and mental health problems.

- Jenna Riis: a behavioral scientist focused on early life adversity; stress; neuroendocrine-immune relations; and program implementation and evaluation.

Participants

The qualifications of conference or workshop participants relative to the topic of focus, including their potential for implementing outcomes of the conference or workshop toward enhancing graduate education.

The UC Irvine Institute for Interdisciplinary Salivary Bioscience Research has a strong track record and proven commitment to training both graduate students and those who train them. This includes special training seminars and academic courses for graduate students at UC Irvine. Typical Spit Camp participants are psychologists and other behavioral science researchers working in academic and academic medicine settings. The majority of past participants are actively engaged in direct mentorship roles. Most participants have active programs of research that include a focus on biological aspects of various phenomenon, yet most psychologists receive little or no training in the collection, processing, storage, and analysis of biological samples. This can lead to methodological flaws, poor quality research, or inaccurate findings. Moreover, mentors can feel ill prepared to train graduate students eager to learn proper procedures and strong study designs involving salivary markers. The IISBR faculty have specific experience in translating salivary bioscience into effective mentoring of future psychologists. In our advertising, we will highly encourage mentor-mentee attendance. This has seemingly worked well for prior participants to promote team building, planning for return to their institution, and relationship strengthening.

Impact

The estimated or potential impact of the conference or workshop in terms of the diffusion of new ideas resulting from its outcomes in the education community appropriate to the proposal's focus.

Great strides have been made in understanding how psychological processes influence health and disease via biological pathways. However, opportunities for psychologists to receive hands-on laboratory training is rare. The minimally-invasive nature of saliva sample collection, and the broad range of potential measurements, enables oral fluids to be employed in a wide range of psychological research. These features open a window of opportunity for researchers from traditionally non-biologically oriented fields. Spit Camp provides an open forum, scientific lectures, and carefully constructed hands-on lab experiments, in which attendees learn both basic and advanced strategies for incorporating saliva into research. They will gain practical knowledge/experience in salivary bioscience, while building relationships, collaborations, sharing ideas and getting valuable feedback. Functional scientific teams need to be composed of individuals who have interdisciplinary and specialized knowledge, but also speak some common language to facilitate collaboration and innovation. The IISBR strongly values collaborations and creates an environment where participants can learn from prior experiences of others. In fact, many past participants access our network of investigators from around the globe. Finally, Spit Camp is uniquely positioned to enhance an attendees' ability to act as an effective mentor by providing training in salivary bioscience research and associate laboratory training.

Budget

The clarity and completeness of the conference or workshop budget, how realistic it is, and how the grant funds are to be used to offset expenses incurred (e.g., travel, registration, speaker fees).

Spit Camp registration provides IISBR revenue. The \$1300 registration fee covers costs associated with small group training by a team of researchers and laboratory technicians, as well as all laboratory supplies and equipment use, including salivary assay kits and saliva collection supplies. The relatively high cost of Spit Camp can be prohibitive for some researchers, particularly early career psychologists. We request \$2000 in this request to be used to create four \$500 travel awards to offset the cost of attendance for attendees who meet the selection criteria outlined above. Selection of participants will be based on submission of a brief application. Participants with a clear role in mentorship of psychology trainees, reported financial need, and relevant program of research will receive the highest priority. Moreover, mentors from underrepresented backgrounds or directly involved in the mentorship of underrepresented students will be highly encouraged.