

Military Service Knowledge Collaborative Seed Funding Call for Proposals



The Chez Center for Wounded Veterans in Higher Education's Military Service Knowledge Collaborative (MSKC) was founded to advance the creation and application of research that positively impacts well-being and quality of life during and after military service for Service Members, Veterans, and their families. The MSKC is a framework designed to unite Military/Veteran research and services and encompasses:

- *Strategic Partnering* between Military/Veteran organizations and researchers to advance and apply research serving Military/Veteran communities
- *Events* centered on closing the gaps between knowledge and services, programs, and policies applicable to Military/Veteran communities
- *Educational trainings and workshops* tailored to fuse the societal military-civilian divide

The MSKC Seed Funding Program provides support for MSKC researchers to establish partnerships with Military/Veteran communities to create mutually-reciprocal relationships that result in innovative design and implementation of research projects that both positively impact health and well-being of this unique population and facilitate the development of proposals capable of attracting external funding. **Three grants in the amount of \$15,000 plus up to \$5,000 in-kind services will be awarded** in response to this call. Proposals will be rated on potential to attract Military/Veteran community stakeholders (i.e. Veteran Service Organizations and/or DoD components/organizations) for sustainable partnership. Grantees will receive up to \$5,000 of in-kind services of Dr. Jeni Hunnicutt of the MSKC to help identify key community stakeholders as well as assist with initiating and maintaining collaborative relationships with stakeholders throughout the project lifespan. Community partners can be any Veteran Service Organization or DoD military component. Community partnerships will be mutually-beneficial for researchers and stakeholders in that stakeholders will provide access to target sample population and inform development of project recruitment protocol and alternatively, stakeholders will receive identified project deliverables (identified with researcher at project onset) that supports their organizational mission and objectives.

Activity	Deadline
Letters of Intent due	February 15, 2019
Proposal Deadline	March 15, 2019
Award Notification and Start of Funding	March 29, 2019

Program Aims

1. **Build Sustainable Partnerships:** Develop research ideas that are appealing either to Veteran Service Organizations and/or DoD military components to establish reciprocal and sustaining relationships for research development and implementation.
2. **Generate Applicable Research:** Create research projects that result in data translatable to the application of service, program, and/or policy development relevant to the health and well-being of Military Service Members, Veterans, and/or family members.
3. **Facilitate Data Collection:** Employ seed grant funding to pursue the generation of preliminary data to support the development of competitive extramural proposals.
4. **Develop Competitive Proposals:** Garner external funding for interdisciplinary research projects, using MSKC support as a catalyst.

Proposals should identify a problem impacting a Military/Veteran community and articulate in the proposal how the development of research addressing such problem may translate into actionable solutions for the community affected. Proposals that address a high priority problem impacting Military/Veteran (M/V) communities and thus exemplify potential for community partnership will be prioritized. Projects that include interdisciplinary/cross college partnership will be preferred. Proposed projects must address a problem related to the health and well-being of Military Service Members, Veterans, and/or family members. Currently, some of the top health and wellness challenges affecting M/V communities include (but are not limited to): suicide, military to civilian transitions, musculoskeletal injuries and pains, Traumatic Brain Injury, polytrauma, Post Traumatic Stress, Military Sexual Trauma, moral injury, hazardous/chemical exposures, Substance Use Disorders, Veteran employment, media representations of Military/Veteran identities and experiences, and homelessness.

Eligibility

The MSKC Seed Funding Program is open to all ranks of the University of Illinois faculty. Faculty must be a member of the MSKC to apply. Faculty can learn more about the MSKC [here](#) and join the MSKC through completing [this form](#). Previous Chez Center for Wounded Veterans in Higher Education seed grant recipients are eligible and encouraged to apply. Faculty are encouraged to submit a Letter of Intent by February 15, 2019. The aim and organization for this seed grant program is for awarded recipients to use in-kind services to work with Dr. Jeni Hunnicutt of the MSKC to establish sustainable partnerships with M/V stakeholders to develop and implement projects collaboratively upon grant receipt. In-kind services entail Dr. Hunnicutt working with

grantees to identify and initiate relationships with M/V stakeholders aligned with the research proposal.

Funding Guidelines

Proposed projects will be for a one-year period, March 29, 2019 to March 29, 2020. Project budgets may request up to \$15,000 in direct costs to support activities that directly relates to the successful conduct of the project. Additionally, recipients will receive up to \$5,000 of in-kind services of the MSKC to facilitate and support the development of community partnerships to complete study design and implementation. There are no indirect costs paid on the MSKC seed grants. Budget items may include support for recruitment, data entry, interviews, data acquisition, access to restricted-use data, travel costs related to data collection or meetings with collaborators, and graduate research assistance. Unspent funding at the end of the one-year project period will revert back to the MSKC Seed Grant pool unless a request for a time extension is approved through the MSKC by January 13, 2020.

The following expenses are not allowed:

- Salaries for faculty, post-doctoral research associates, research technicians, or computer programmers are not supported.
- Full-time appointments of any kind
- Graduate research assistantship appointments for greater than 50% time, more than two months in the summer session, or persons not currently enrolled as graduate students at the University of Illinois
- Dissertation project research costs which are not clearly also faculty research costs
- Construction and remodeling of facilities
- Equipment purchases
- Non-research costs
- Travel to scientific meetings/conferences

Proposal Presentation & Submission

Letter of Intent

Letter of Intent should not exceed one page in length and should include a brief abstract/description of the idea. **Letters of intent are required.** Submit to Jeni Hunnicutt at jeni@illinois.edu by February 15, 2019.

Proposal Format

Proposals should not exceed seven pages (single space, 0.5-inch margins, Arial 11-point font, including figures and tables).

Proposal Content

Coversheet/Title Page: This page must include the study title, names, contact information and unit affiliations of the research team members, indication of the lead PI, and keywords/terms that indicate area/topic to attract Military/Veteran community stakeholders.

Project Abstract (1 page): Must not exceed half a page of text. Must include brief descriptions of project rationale/justification, aims, research design and methodology, and ideas for final project deliverables that could benefit Military/Veteran community stakeholders. Abstract should be written in plain language so that individuals/stakeholders outside of academia can understand the significance and importance of the project.

Project Narrative (3-4 pages): Considering the review criteria listed below, the project narrative should describe the research project and its potential for broad impact. Of note, this section should explicitly describe how this project has potential to positively impact the health and well-being on Military/Veteran population as to exemplify potential for community partnership.

References Cited (1 page)

Budget and Budget Justification (1 page): Provide a budget estimate that does not exceed \$15,000 over a 1-year duration. Indirect costs are not permitted.

Proposal Submission

Please email completed proposal to Jeni Hunnicutt at jeni@illinois.edu. For questions, please email or call at (217) 300-2814.

Review Criteria

Reviewers will evaluate each criterion on a scale of 1-9 as done for NIH applications.

- a. **Potential for Community Partnership:** Does the project address a problem of high importance to Military/Veteran communities? Does project have potential to attract Military/Veteran stakeholders? Does the proposal identify potential community partners of interest? Does the project outline what potential benefit and deliverables could be outcomes for involved community stakeholders? Does the project exemplify adaptability for Military/Veteran stakeholder input?
- b. **Significance:** Does the project address an important problem or address a critical barrier related to Military/Veteran health and well-being? Is there a strong rationale established for the project? If project outcomes are achieved, is there likely to be a lasting and applicable impact for M/V health and well-being and for the community stakeholder(s)?
- c. **External Funding Potential:** Based on project topic and projected outcomes, how likely is it this project will facilitate the creation and submission of a project application to a funding agency? Is there potential for development of funding applications to limited or multiple sources?
- d. **Cross Campus Collaboration:** Does the project involve multiple PIs from various disciplines? Does the project involve cross-campus and interdisciplinary collaboration? Are the PIs well suited for the project topic? Does the study encompass more than one area of study?
- e. **Quality of Research Project:** Does the study outline innovative and appropriate strategy and methodology to accomplish aims of the study? Does the study exemplify potential for outcomes both in theory and application?

Monitoring and Grantee Obligations

Grantees must agree in the proposal to attend a workshop on *Best Practices for Engaging Military/Veteran Communities in Research* upon receipt of the grant award (if not previously attended one); workshop will be scheduled in accordance with recipients' availabilities. Grantees will be expected to submit a six-month progress report on the development of the study as well as a final progress report at the end of the one-year funding term.

Stay Tuned

The MSKC is also planning an announcement for an undergraduate student research competition centered on Military/Veteran-related research. Anticipated date of announcement is March 2019.

Contact

For questions or inquiries, contact: Jeni Hunnicutt at jeni@illinois.edu or (217) 300-2814.