



Notice of Intent

Upcoming Funding Opportunity for Opioid Abatement Research and Development

August 8, 2022

Contact

Questions regarding this Notice of Intent should be sent via email to the North Carolina Collaboratory at collaboratory@unc.edu.

Key Dates

Estimated RFP release date	August 31, 2022
Estimated application deadline	October 28, 2022
Estimated award start date	January 1, 2023
Estimated award end date	December 31, 2024

Purpose

This Notice of Intent is to inform researchers within The University of North Carolina (UNC) System that the Collaboratory, in partnership with North Carolina Central University, intends to issue a Request for Proposals titled “**Opioid Abatement Research Program 2022: Supporting Local Efforts to Address the Opioid Crisis in North Carolina**”. This Notice is being provided to allow potential eligible applicants sufficient time to develop competitive proposals.

RFP Details

The purpose of this RFP is to help academic researchers generate practical information, tools or other research products that can be used by local governments and/or communities across North Carolina to aid the State’s opioid abatement and recovery efforts. This includes preventing and addressing the effects of opioids in local communities, treating or mitigating opioid use, and other consequences of the opioid crisis (see **Priority Areas** below for more details).

The RFP is anticipated to prioritize proposals that include **effective engagement with communities (particularly underrepresented or underserved groups) and/or local governments**, as well as scopes and study designs that are acceptable to and directly benefit local communities.

Anticipated Deliverables

Research proposals should seek to generate **practical information, tools or other research products** that can be used by local governments and/or the communities they serve across North Carolina to aid opioid abatement and recovery efforts.

Funding Information

Estimated total funding for program	\$1,900,000
Expected number of awards	TBD based on applications received
Funding tiers	\$95,000 for 12 months \$190,000 for 24 months* \$285,000 for 24 months**

*Community/local government engagement activities are required. **Project team must include community/local government partners as active team members.

Anticipated Eligible Applicants

Any institution of higher education within the UNC System will be eligible to apply. Applications from institutions with a **core mission to serve underrepresented or underserved groups impacted by the opioid crisis and associated health disparities** will be strongly encouraged. The core mission of an institution may be demonstrated by the existence of a dedicated program or activities focused on the unique needs of these groups.

Due to the importance of community and government engagement for this funding opportunity, project teams should include personnel with a **strong track record of engaging with communities and/or local governments** and **established connections to communities** impacted by the opioid crisis, including underrepresented or underserved groups experiencing different types of health disparities.

Funding Restrictions and Requirements

All funds will be appropriated to the Collaboratory by the North Carolina General Assembly (NCGA) and must therefore be used in accordance with State law.

Indirect (F&A) costs will not be permitted by this funding program, as set forth in North Carolina General Statute (NCGS) 116-255(c)(2).

Priority Areas

Funding for this program is part of an NCGA appropriation to the Collaboratory for opioid abatement research and development activities in North Carolina. This appropriation is part of a \$26 billion national opioid agreement with major drug distributors, of which the NCGA has received an initial installment of \$4.4 million, and 65 local governments have received \$16.3 million. Over the next 18 years, subsequent payments to State and local governments in North Carolina will total \$750 million, with the overall goal of addressing the opioid crisis through treatment recovery, harm reduction and other strategies.

As per the settlement language (including Distributors' 3.25.2022 Exhibit Updates; Exhibit E List of Approved Uses; Schedule B Approved Uses; Part 3 Other Strategies; Section L Research; pages E-14 and E-15), the RFP is expected to prioritize areas such as but not limited to the following:

- Monitoring, surveillance, data collection and evaluation of programs and strategies described in this opioid abatement strategy list.

- Research on non-opioid treatment of chronic pain.
- Research on improved service delivery for modalities such as SBIRT [Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment] that demonstrate promising but mixed results in populations vulnerable to opioid use disorders.
- Research on novel harm reduction and prevention efforts such as the provision of fentanyl test strips.
- Research on innovative supply-side enforcement efforts such as improved detection of mail-based delivery of synthetic opioids.
- Expanded research on swift/certain/fair models to reduce and deter opioid misuse within criminal justice populations that build upon promising approaches used to address other substances (*e.g.*, Hawaii HOPE and Dakota 24/7).
- Epidemiological surveillance of OUD-related [Opioid Use Disorder] behaviors in critical populations, including individuals entering the criminal justice system, including, but not limited to approaches modeled on the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (“ADAM”) system.
- Qualitative and quantitative research regarding public health risks and harm reduction opportunities within illicit drug markets, including surveys of market participants who sell or distribute illicit opioids.
- Geospatial analysis of access barriers to MAT [Medication-Assisted Treatment] and their association with treatment engagement and treatment outcomes.