Dean’s Fund for Scientific Advancement
2020 Acceleration Award RFA – General Call for Applications

Notice of Intent (Required): Applicants are required to submit a brief notice of intent to hconrad@hsph.harvard.edu by May 20, 2020 (11:59 PM). NOIs should include a 200-word description of the proposed project and a list of collaborators.

Application Deadline: June 22, 2020 (11:59 PM)
Submission requirements: All applications should be submitted through the Harvard University Funding Portal (HUFP). See below for more information on submission via HUFP.
Contact regarding questions: Heather Conrad at hconrad@hsph.harvard.edu or visit the Frequently Asked Questions section of our website.

The Dean’s Fund for Scientific Advancement expands the School’s internal research funding program and is designed to create a pipeline of support that facilitates the exploration of early ideas, the development of strong interdisciplinary team science, and the creation of new transformative research collaborations that advance the frontiers of science. Acceleration Awards represent a critical component of the funding program and are intended to nurture collaborations in research, develop platforms, and support educational projects.

OVERVIEW AND GOALS OF THE ACCELERATION AWARD
Acceleration Awards are collaboration-focused grants supporting the advancement of research, research-enabling platforms, and pedagogical innovation. Grant applications will require the substantial engagement of at least two Harvard Chan School Departments or Centers and must include collaboration from at least one other Harvard School. Applications will be accepted across three focal areas: Research Grants; Research Platforms; and Public Health Pedagogy. The actual number of awards distributed in each focal area may vary based on School priorities.

Research Grant applications submitted in response to this general call will be accepted in any of the School’s five frontier areas. Please note that a Special COVID-19 Acceleration Award call was announced in mid-April with an expedited application & funding schedule; applicants interested in applying for COVID-19 related research projects are encouraged to respond to that targeted call. Non-COVID-19 related proposals may be submitted in response to this general call and applicants can propose research projects in any of the following frontier areas:

(1) Reimagining Aging
(2) Overcoming Violence
(3) Confronting Climate Change
(4) Cultivating Well-being and Nutrition
(5) Conquering Epidemics

Research Platforms, defined broadly, are adaptable and dynamic resources that can be accessed by multiple faculty to support projects in a variety of disciplines. The goal of these awards is to provide one-time support for the development of research platforms that can be funded in the future by external support mechanisms.

Public Health Pedagogy awards are intended to produce scalable innovations that will improve the quality of teaching and learning at the Harvard Chan School. Special consideration will be given to applications that propose projects that have the potential to be scaled up School-wide to benefit teaching and learning at all levels. The goal is to provide one-time support for the development of pedagogical innovations that can be integrated into our educational programs or funded in the future by external support mechanisms.

AWARD AMOUNT AND DURATION
Awards will be made for up to $100,000 (direct cost) for projects that are designed to be completed in a 12-month project period. An automatic 6-month no-cost extension will be granted if needed, after which no additional extensions will be allowed.
ELIGIBILITY
Principal investigators must be:
• Primary Harvard Chan School faculty whose research operation is based at the Harvard Chan School. Co-
investigators or team members may include individuals with any academic appointment.

Applications must include:
• Coinvestigators from at least two Harvard Chan School Departments or Centers representing interdisciplinary
  collaboration
• Collaboration with at least one other Harvard School (see below for more details)

If you have any questions regarding your eligibility to apply for this award, please contact Heather Conrad at
hconrad@hsph.harvard.edu.

COLLABORATION REQUIREMENT DETAILS
• The grant application will include a required section called “Interdisciplinary Approach and Coordination” for applicants to explicitly describe how the proposed project, research platform, or pedagogical innovation is interdisciplinary in nature.
• In this section, applicants should describe how collaboration across Harvard Chan School departments or centers and at least one other Harvard school will be operationalized. Topics to be addressed include communication, shared decision-making, conflict resolution, personnel decisions, management of changes in study protocol, and authorship. Administrative and technical responsibilities should also be outlined.
• Any rank of researcher (faculty, research scientists, postdocs, students) will meet the requirement for collaboration with another Harvard School.
• An example of a collaborative approach could include a shared student or postdoctoral fellow working with investigators from multiple departments or Schools. Other models for operationalizing collaboration may include provisions for regular co-investigators and team meetings, or agreements for shared resources and equipment, as appropriate.
• In the last three months of the funding period, all co-investigators involved in funded Acceleration Award teams will be expected to participate in a half-day workshop where each team will present on their progress and exchange feedback on project sustainability, scalability, and future development.
• The inclusion of Harvard Chan School junior faculty as part of a research team is strongly encouraged and will be factored into application review and scoring.

ADDITIONAL PROJECT SUPPORT
All awardees will receive additional support from the Office of Research Strategy and Development (ORSD) during the project period. Specifically, ORSD will work with teams to identify and connect with additional resources and collaborators, as needed. There will be periodic check-ins with ORSD staff to identify roadblocks and facilitate solutions. The Acceleration Award mechanism is designed to position faculty for external support mechanisms.

SUBMISSION PROCESS
Proposals are to be submitted through the Harvard University Funding Portal (HUFP). If you are using the application portal for the first time, you must complete a short registration process (see below). Please note, you can search for awards without logging in but you must be registered and logged in with your Harvard Key to submit an application. There is an option to assign a proxy for proposal submission but your grant manager cannot use your Harvard Key to submit your application. Please see below for more information on registering for an account and assigning a proxy.

Registering your HUFP Account: Select “Log-in” in the top right corner of the HUFP webpage, which will bring you to a log-in page with two options. Select the “with Harvard Key” icon, which will prompt you to enter your Harvard Key. You will be led through a short three-question registration process. Once registered, you will be able to log in with your Harvard Key to submit applications.

Assigning a Proxy for Submission: Before beginning an application, both the proxy and the PI must register for individual accounts in HUFP using their Harvard Key credentials. Once the proxy and the PI are registered, the proxy can begin an application on behalf of the PI. The Proxy will indicate that they are a proxy applicant and will be asked to locate their PI
in HUFP. Proxies should never “Add User” in HUFP. Once this is done, both the PI and the proxy will be able to access and edit the application.

Please contact ORSD (hconrad@hsph.harvard.edu) if you have any questions about using HUFP.

PROPOSAL CONTENT AND PAGE LIMITS
You must complete all sections within the application portal before submitting your application. The sections within the application portal are as follows:

1. Applicant Information
2. Collaborators
3. Project Information: In this section, you must complete a 200-word research abstract and upload the following documents as a single PDF:
   a. Project Proposal: Maximum of 4 pages of text, not including items b. – e. listed below. Figures and references are allowable in addition to this page limit. No other appendix material will be accepted.
      o Within the project proposal, please describe any key challenges that may arise during the course of this project and how you will manage them.
   b. Additional Required Forms by Award Type:
      o All Applications: Interdisciplinary Approach & Coordination Form. Maximum of 1 page of text. Use this Downloadable Form as a template.
      o Research Platform Applications: Sustainability Form. Maximum of 1 page of text. Use this Downloadable Form as a template.
      o Public Health Pedagogy Applications: Scalability Form. Maximum of 1 page of text. Use this Downloadable Form as a template.
   c. Biosketch: Current NIH Biosketch for each participating investigator.
   d. Budget Request: Budget estimates should be submitted on NIH PHS 398 detailed budget form with major divisions of funds (personnel, equipment, etc.). PIs may include effort and salary support commensurate with their effort. The full amount of the award may be used for direct costs. PLEASE NOTE: Indirect costs, including indirect costs on sub-contracts, cannot be charged to internally funded awards.
   e. Budget Justification
4. Electronic Signature

REVIEW PROCESS AND CRITERIA
Proposals will be reviewed by a standing committee of faculty with broad representation across the School’s disciplinary clusters (life sciences, quantitative sciences, social & policy sciences, and educational leadership). The purpose of the Acceleration Award is to encourage collaborations and support innovative ideas that capitalize on the strengths of an interdisciplinary perspective. As such, reviewers will evaluate applications based on the following review criteria:

Research Grant Review Criteria:

a. **Overall Impact:** The likelihood of the project to exert a sustained, powerful influence on the research field(s) involved, in consideration of the review criteria below.

b. **Significance:** The extent to which the application addresses an important problem or a critical barrier in one of the identified priority areas or other important public health problem central to the mission of the School.

c. **Innovation:** The extent to which the application seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.

d. **Feasibility:** The extent to which the application demonstrates that measurable results are achievable within an 18-month timeframe and the potential for the project to be scaled-up.
Interdisciplinary Approach: The extent to which the application provides evidence of the ability of the team of investigators to work together in an interdisciplinary fashion and the likelihood that the proposed interdisciplinary approach will yield new insights into the problem being addressed. Research Platform Review Criteria:

a. Overall Impact: The likelihood for the project to exert a sustained, powerful influence on the research field(s) involved and the likelihood that the platform will fill a critical gap in the intellectual infrastructure of the Harvard Chan School, in consideration of the review criteria below.

b. Significance: The extent to which the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field?

c. Innovation: The extent to which the application seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.

d. Feasibility & Sustainability: The extent to which the application demonstrates that measurable results are achievable within an 18-month and includes a well-defined and appropriate plan to ensure the long-term sustainability of the research platform.

e. Interdisciplinary Approach: The extent to which the application provides evidence of the ability of the team of investigators to work together in an interdisciplinary fashion and the likelihood that the proposed interdisciplinary approach will yield new insights into the problem being addressed.

Public Health Pedagogy Review Criteria:

a. Overall Impact: The likelihood for the project to exert a sustained, powerful influence on research education and teaching at the Harvard Chan School, in consideration of the review criteria below.

b. Innovation: The extent to which the application seeks to develop or utilize innovative approaches to improve the knowledge/skills of the intended audience, as well as the extent to which the proposal challenges current research education paradigms.

c. Feasibility: The extent to which the application demonstrates that implementation is achievable within an 18-month timeframe.

d. Scalability: The extent to which the project has the potential to be scaled up School-wide to benefit teaching and learning at all levels and the likelihood that it will be integrated into existing educational structures after 1 year.

e. Interdisciplinary Approach: The extent to which the application provides evidence of the ability of the team of investigators to work together in an interdisciplinary fashion.

Other considerations include:

- Applications in the selected topic areas will be given special consideration; however, any faculty member who has a novel approach or innovative idea that is in need of funding is encouraged to apply.
- Successful applications will make a compelling case that articulates the public health, research platform or pedagogical need to be addressed and specific goals/impact to be achieved with the aid of the grant.
- Measurable results must be achievable within an 18-month timeframe.
- Project goals should emphasize not only the significance and innovation of the project, but also demonstrate how an interdisciplinary approach will maximize the potential impact of the work – the potential to create new
scientific paradigms, develop transformative technologies and platforms, or establish entirely new and improved pedagogical approaches.

- For Research Platforms: Particular attention will be given to the likelihood of long-term sustainability.
- For Public Health Pedagogy: Particular attention will be given to the scalability of the pedagogical approach.
- The inclusion of Harvard Chan School junior faculty as part of a research team is strongly encouraged and will be factored into application review.

Additional Budget Guidelines:

- **Subcontracts:** External collaboration is permitted in cases where there is a clear scientific rationale for why the work needs to be done externally. A letter describing the subcontractor’s commitment to the work outlined in the proposal and the scope of their contribution should be submitted at the time of application. All other paperwork needed to set up the subcontract can be submitted if and when the project is funded.
- **Outside spending/salary support:** Funds may be used for project-related expenses at other Harvard Schools, though they cannot provide salary support for faculty outside of the Harvard Chan School whose salaries are already fully covered by institutional funds.
- **Indirect costs:** Indirect costs should not be included. The full award should be used to support direct project costs.

**REPORTING**
A final report will be due 30 calendar days after the end of the 18-month funding period that summarizes the impact of the project and progress towards broader dissemination of knowledge. A final report template will be sent to awardees one-month prior to the close of the award.

**ADDITIONAL TERMS OF THE AWARD**

- Should the PI leave the Harvard Chan School, the remainder of the award will be forfeited (i.e., may not be transferred to another institution).
- Awarded projects will receive additional development support from ORSD.