

## NCCAM Research and Training Grants

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) is 1 of the 27 institutes and centers that make up the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Like most institutes and centers at NIH, NCCAM supports research projects and research training through the grant process. Specifically, we fund:

- Scientific research on complementary and alternative medicine (CAM)
- Training in the design and conduct of CAM research.

### **Getting Started**

#### **Research**

Please visit [nccam.nih.gov/research/](http://nccam.nih.gov/research/) for:

- An applicant checklist for new researchers
- Current funding opportunities
- Details about our priorities and application process, including grantwriting tips and sample applications
- Contact information for our program officers.

#### **Training**

For training and career development opportunities, see [nccam.nih.gov/training/](http://nccam.nih.gov/training/).

### **How NCCAM Prioritizes Its Research**

We prioritize our research through a formal planning process that draws on:

- Our strategic plan *Expanding Horizons of Health Care* ([nccam.nih.gov/about/plans/2005/](http://nccam.nih.gov/about/plans/2005/))
- An analysis of our existing grants portfolio
- The expertise of our extramural program staff
- Extensive interactions with experts and stakeholders in research and CAM practice at other NIH institutes and centers and at institutions around the world
- Recommendations of our principal advisory body, the National Advisory Council for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, as well as numerous other expert panels.

We regularly reexamine and redefine our research priorities to fill gaps in our portfolio, address specific needs of the field, and capitalize on emerging opportunities that can advance CAM research. Visit our Web site for details and current priorities.

## **Types of Research Projects Funded by NCCAM**

Our strategic plan for 2005 to 2009 calls for us to substantially increase funding of basic and preclinical studies. We encourage applications for projects that aim to determine the biological effects and mechanisms of action of CAM modalities.

NCCAM funds both:

- Investigator-initiated research
- Projects developed in response to specific solicitations.

We also set aside funding specifically for research and development carried out in small businesses.

### **Examples of Currently Funded Research**

A few examples illustrate the broad array of basic, preclinical, and clinical research projects—related to various health conditions and CAM modalities—supported by NCCAM:

- Randomized study of tai chi in the management of chronic heart failure
- Clinical trial to test S-adenosyl-L-methionine (SAME) for the treatment of depression in patients with Parkinson's disease
- Randomized study of the effects of massage on the immune system of preterm infants
- Analysis of U.S. health surveys to examine CAM use among racial and ethnic minorities
- Exploratory study of the effects of pulsed electromagnetic fields on rheumatoid arthritis symptoms
- Study of the neurochemical mechanisms in the placebo response
- Study to measure the effects of Reiki on stress-induced intestinal damage using an animal model
- Research center grants to support basic and clinical research on botanicals
- Research center on the neurobiology of acupuncture
- Developmental center on chiropractic manipulation.

### ***Investigator-Initiated Research/R01s***

A common funding mechanism for investigator-initiated research is the R01 grant, which supports a discrete research project. R01 applications follow the NIH-wide guidelines provided in the SF424 electronic grant application instructions. Descriptions of other funding mechanisms for research projects can be found on our Web site.

### ***Solicitations/RFAs, RFPs, and PAs***

We also solicit applications for research projects and research center grants and contracts through:

- Requests for applications (RFAs)
- Requests for proposals (RFPs)
- Program announcements (PAs).

Visit the Research section of our Web site for active RFAs, RFPs, and PAs (the link appears under “Funding Opportunities”).

### ***Small Business Opportunities/SBIR and STTR Programs***

We provide funding opportunities to small business concerns through our:

- Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program
- Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program.

Innovation and the potential for commercialization are among the important factors in the review criteria used to evaluate SBIR and STTR applications.

### **Types of Research Training and Career Development Supported by NCCAM**

In order to increase the number, quality, and diversity of CAM investigators, we are committed to supporting high-quality research training and career development opportunities. Since its inception, NCCAM has steadily increased funding in these areas.

We have programs aimed at assisting:

- Predoctoral and postdoctoral students interested in pursuing a CAM research career
- CAM practitioners who wish to gain knowledge and experience in the conduct of rigorous research in their field
- Conventional medical researchers and practitioners who would like to increase their knowledge and experience in specific CAM research areas
- Members of populations who are underrepresented in the scientific research community and interested in careers in CAM.

NCCAM also participates in the NIH Loan Repayment Program, which supports doctoral-level researchers who seek to exchange 2 or 3 years of research service at eligible institutions for the repayment of educational debt.

Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs) for specific research training and career development awards are listed on our Web site.

## Eligibility for NCCAM Funding

Individuals and organizations based inside or outside the United States may be eligible to apply for funding. All awards are made through a competitive peer review process. Applicants must be able to comply with all relevant NIH and NCCAM requirements and policies. It is important to consult the relevant FOA or contact an NCCAM program officer for more detailed information on eligibility requirements.

## Answering Specific Questions

If you have questions, NCCAM staff is available and eager to help. For questions about:

- **A specific announcement**, contact the NCCAM staff member listed in the “Agency Contacts” section of the announcement.
- **NCCAM-supported research or the NCCAM application process**, contact the NCCAM Division of Extramural Research program officer who covers your area of research. Go to [nccam.nih.gov/research/contact/index.htm](http://nccam.nih.gov/research/contact/index.htm) to find a list of NCCAM program officers and their contact information.
- **NCCAM-supported international research or collaborative research with significant international components**, contact NCCAM’s Office of International Health Research. Go to [nccam.nih.gov/research/oibr/](http://nccam.nih.gov/research/oibr/) to find contact information.
- **CAM or NCCAM in general**, contact the NCCAM Clearinghouse toll-free at 1-888-644-6226 (301-519-3153 from outside the United States) or at [info@nccam.nih.gov](mailto:info@nccam.nih.gov).

**Please visit  
[nccam.nih.gov/research/](http://nccam.nih.gov/research/)  
[nccam.nih.gov/training/](http://nccam.nih.gov/training/)**

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