

CONCEPT CLEARANCE

CENTERS FOR EXCELLENCE IN ETHICAL, LEGAL, AND SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS (ELSI) RESEARCH (CEERS)

PURPOSE OF THIS RFA

The Ethical, Legal, and Social Implications (ELSI) Research Program of the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) is requesting Council clearance of a proposed funding opportunity for the development or continuation of Centers of Excellence in ELSI Research (CEERS). The ELSI Program promotes research on the ethical, legal, and social implications related to genomic and genetic technologies and information that can be used to develop evidence-based policies in research, health, and society. The CEERS Program is designed to foster enhanced efforts that require or make use of collaborative trans-disciplinary approaches, i.e. that involve a group of investigators from different disciplines and with a variety of expertise who will use multiple methodologies in addressing an important research question or area. CEERS will be expected both to anticipate the important ELSI issues raised by emerging genome technologies and information, and to have the flexibility to respond to important, rapidly emerging issues in a way that will facilitate ethically sound research efforts using genomic approaches to improve human health. Finally, CEERS will make an important contribution to training the next generation of ELSI researchers, with particular emphasis on training researchers from under-represented minority communities.

CEER grants are awarded for a maximum of five years, with an opportunity for one renewal (ten-year maximum). Current CEER grantees who are submitting applications for the competitive continuation phase should present a plan with milestones that addresses how the Center will function after the conclusion of CEER funding.

MECHANISM OF SUPPORT

This RFA will use the Specialized Center (P50) and Exploratory Center (P20) grant mechanisms.

P50 Specialized Center Grants.

Investigators will be able to request up to five years of support. The length of award will be determined through the peer review and Council advisory processes. The total length of support for any P50 Center under this program will not exceed ten years (the initial grant period of up to five years, plus one renewal for up to an additional five years).

The requested budget for a CEER may be up to \$750,000 in direct costs for the first year for continuing operations (e.g., personnel, standard office equipment, supplies, travel and other expenses). Future year budgets may exceed \$750,000 (direct cost) only for inflationary adjustments. To accommodate collaborations that extend beyond single institutions, Facilities & Administrative (F&A) charges on the

subcontracts, which are formally direct costs to the parent institution, will be excluded in considering the \$750,000 direct costs limit.

P20 Exploratory Grants

The planning grant application must explicitly demonstrate how the planning activities will lead to an application for a full-scale Center for Excellence in ELSI Research, and must describe in sufficient detail a vision of the research to be conducted under the subsequent P50 grant. The planning grant budget may request funds for partial salary of key investigators, travel, and some supplies and equipment. Planning grants will be awarded for up to three years and up to \$150,000 direct cost per year. A planning grant is not required as a precursor to a P50 Center application. Funding of a planning grant does not obligate NHGRI to fund a subsequent P50 Center grant.

Because the nature and scope of the proposed research will vary from application to application, it is anticipated that the size and duration of each award will also vary.

FUNDS AVAILABLE

NHGRI intends to commit approximately \$3,900,000 (total costs) in FY 2010 to fund up to 3 Specialized Centers (P50s) and up to 3 Exploratory Grants (P20s) in response to this RFA. Although the financial plans of the NHGRI provide support for this program, awards pursuant to this RFA are contingent upon the availability of funds and the receipt of a sufficient number of meritorious applications.