



**Mount Sinai Summer Institute for NeuroAIDS Disparities
MSINAD SCHOLAR GRANT**

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Background:

Racial and ethnic minorities (REM) constitute a disproportionate majority infected by HIV in the United States. There is need for capacity in medical science to study HIV-associated disorders in REM populations, to understand how disease manifests and whether pathogenetic mechanisms are influenced by qualities or conditions associated with race and ethnicity. Highly active anti-retroviral therapy (HAART) has not eradicated HIV-associated nervous system disorders. As life spans of people on HAART increase, the prevalence of HIV-related nervous system diseases is rising. The chronicity of these disorders, and their unique impact on functional ability, renders HIV neurobiology an important area of study. It is imperative that we understand the manifestations and pathogenesis of HIV-associated nervous system disorders in REM communities, as this is where the burden of disease is greatest in the 21st century.

Since psychiatric and cognitive disorders have as their primary output alterations in behaviors, socio-cultural modifications of behavior must be accounted for prior to defining disease entities and measures for their discovery. Once socially- and culturally-appropriate measures and definitions of HIV CNS disease are determined, do race and ethnicity modulate pathogenesis? As host responses to HIV (and more broadly, host immunologic reactivities) show genetically-determined variations, do race and ethnicity play a role in nervous system responses to HIV and neuroimmunologic perturbations? Do co-morbid conditions that segregate along racial and ethnic boundaries have a role in modulating CNS disease manifestations and/or progression?

The intention of this award is to support a junior faculty or pre- or post-doctoral fellow in becoming a successful contributor to the field of NeuroAIDS and health disparities research. The grantee's research proposal must be focused on either behavioral or pathogenetic aspects of HIV-associated nervous system disorders in minority populations. Recipients of the award will be expected to attend a 6 week summer institute at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine focusing on didactic and practical training in neuroAIDS research. Upon graduation from the institute, scholars will be awarded grants of up to \$20,000 to continue pursuit of their research questions at their home institution.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants include individuals who meet one of the following criteria:

- Pre-doctoral applicants: you must be in advanced portions of your program. If you are in a PhD program, you must be ready to undertake your dissertation proposal. If

you are in medical school, you must have completed your basic didactic course work by the time MSINAD begins. You must be prepared to submit some form of application to the NIMH to support your educational studies no later than a year after concluding your MSINAD pilot study (examples: this may be a mechanism such as an F31 or minority supplement; or something that will support your postdoctoral studies such as an F32).

- Post-doctoral applicants: post-doctoral candidates without faculty position may apply at any stage of their career. Again, it is anticipated that MSINAD pilot awards will assist the post-doctoral candidate in generating data pertinent to an NIMH application that is stage appropriate
- Junior faculty applicants: you must be within 5 years of your first faculty appointment. You may not have been the principal investigator on an NIH K-type or R-type award. It is anticipated that MSINAD pilot awards will assist the junior faculty candidate in generating data pertinent to an NIMH application that is stage appropriate.

Minority students and scientists are strongly encouraged to apply.

Summary of Funding

MSINAD will award up to 4 grants annually for periods of up to 2 years. MSINAD Scholar Grants will provide:

- Re-imbursement for all travel expenses related to attendance at the summer institute
- Provision of lodging in Manhattan at the campus of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine.
- A living stipend of \$3000 for the 6 week period.
- A research grant of up to \$20,000, to be awarded upon graduation from the summer institute. Scholars will be required to create their research budgets and justifications as part of the summer training program. Upon submission of these budgets, funds will be released to the scholars through contracts to the institutions at which their research will be conducted.

Application

To apply for these grants, the following material must be received by the application deadline, **Feb. 1, 2012**:

1. An MSINAD Scholar Grant Application Cover Page.
2. A short, single-spaced proposal (five pages maximum), outlining the proposed research project, including:
 1. purpose and benefits to the field of NeuroAIDS as it applies to ethnic minorities
 2. specific objectives and goals
 3. methods for accomplishing the research, including timeline for completion in up to two years

4. how MSINAD can help achieve research and career objectives, with specific reference to NIMH mission and/or mechanisms
- e. A discussion of the NIMH award type (e.g., K or R awards) that the applicant ultimately intends to apply for and an anticipated date of submission.

In this submission, please indicate whether you anticipate accessing the resources of the Manhattan HIV Brain Bank or National NeuroAIDS Tissue Consortium for your proposed research project.

3. A biographical sketch or resume for the applicant.
4. A biosketch/resume for your local research mentor, and a description of the mentor's laboratory and environment.
5. Up to 3 letters of recommendation: one must be from your local research mentor, and must detail how an MSINAD award will impact your ability to undertake neuroAIDS research pertinent to minority populations, and a critical appraisal of your ability to undertake the proposed research. This letter should also outline the mentor's plan to assist with the submission of the identified larger NIMH grant application upon completion of the Institute.
6. A one page personal statement describing your career aspirations and motivation for pursuing neuroAIDS research.

Grantee Expectations:

Awards will be made for one year. In some cases, they may be spent over a 2 year period. Trainees applying for funds must have an engaged research mentor, who must have faculty ranking at the same institution. Grantee will be required to submit an annual progress report and a final report summarizing research activities and results upon completion of funds from this award program. All grantees must return to the MSINAD 2-day summer seminar in the following summer to present an update on their research. Finally, it is expected that grantees will submit a research application to NIMH within several years of completion of the institute.

Criteria Used to Assess Awards

The following criteria will be used in determining these awards:

- Overall scientific merit: The applicant must submit an original and feasible proposal that demonstrates the applicant's understanding of the proposed field of research. Prior research experience is not necessary.
- Purpose: A clear statement and description of the purpose of the research project must be included.
- Specific objectives and goals: Specific goals of the research project must be listed and defined.
- Methods: The methods proposed for carrying out the research must be defined and described clearly, and timeline should be clearly presented for completing the project in one year.

- Feasibility of successful completion of proposed project according to proposed timeline.
- Engaged Research Mentor Letter of Support – this letter should emphasize the mentor’s commitment to serve as the research mentor for the duration of the project.
- Likelihood of continued career success, including funding potential of the applicant from other future resources provided by NIMH.

Send completed application and materials to the attention of: :

**Desiree Byrd, PhD
The Manhattan HIV Brain Bank
Departments of Pathology and Psychiatry
Mount Sinai School of Medicine
One Gustave Levy Place – Box 1034,
Annenberg Building, 15th Floor - Room 15-76
New York, NY 10029**

Applications sent electronically must be emailed to:

Email: desiree.byrd@mssm.edu, and a confirmation copy to: susan.morgello@mssm.edu

For further information or questions, please contact either Drs. Byrd or Morgello, as above.

**Mount Sinai Summer Institute for NeuroAIDS Disparities
Scholar Grant - 2012 - Application Cover Page**

Name		
Department/Division/Center/Other::		
Mailing Address:		
Telephone:	Email:	Ethnicity:
Disability status:	How did you learn of MSINAD?	
Name and Contact information of engaged faculty research mentor:		
Title of Project:		
Have you applied for, or are you receiving other funds for this study? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide the name of the source of funds:		
Has your proposal been submitted to an Institutional Review Board? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
If yes, what is the current status?		
Print Name:	Date:	
Signature:		