

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS OF PILOT/SMALL RESEARCH PROJECTS IN OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

The Rocky Mountain Center for Occupational and Environmental Health (RMCOEH), University of Utah, invites applications for pilot research project funding in occupational health and safety for the 2023-2024 academic year. Graduate students, junior investigators, and established investigators with new or innovative interests in occupational health and safety are encouraged to apply. Priority for funding is toward projects with high-impact findings disseminated to the target audience, resulting in pilot data for external funding and/or peer-reviewed publication.

This Pilot/Small Projects Research Program is supported by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the RMCOEH. These projects are to be completed within 12 to 18 months.

The purpose of this program is to enhance worksite occupational safety and health (OSH) and build on the NIOSH “National Occupational Research Agenda” (NORA). Information regarding NORA is available at the NIOSH site: <https://www.cdc.gov/nora/default.html>. Research projects may also support the NIOSH Research to Practice (r2p, <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/r2p/>). The goals of this pilot/small research program are broadly to improve workplace OSH, improve health, reduce and/or prevent workplace injuries, and/or lower workers’ compensation costs. Novel ideas as well as collaborative, interdisciplinary projects are encouraged. Direct linkage to NORA or NIOSH Research to Practice (r2p) is required. Examples of potential projects (see also RFA-OH-22-001 for additional examples) include:

- Provide initial support to develop innovative approaches or lines of investigation in OSH;
- Stimulate investigators from other fields to apply their expertise to OSH issues;
- Develop new partnerships to address emerging safety and health concerns;
- Provide initial support for a translational or research-to-practice projects;
- Obtain preliminary data, mine existing datasets, or pursue critical data gaps; and
- Support trainee research projects (Faculty Mentor for trainees is Required).

Pilot projects are intended to develop improvements in OSH and explore or develop new and creative OSH-related innovations and interventions. Projects may be exploratory, interventional, or investigational. Pilot Project Principal Investigators (PIs) must be full-time faculty or doctoral students. Faculty and students from outside the University of Utah, but in regional states (AZ, ID, NM, NV, CO, MT, SD, ND, WY) are especially encouraged to apply. Collaboration with faculty from the RMCOEH at the University of Utah (<https://rmcoeh.com/>) is encouraged but not required for regional states; collaboration is required for proposals from outside those regional states. Master’s trainees may not serve as principal investigators but are encouraged to apply with their faculty mentor. It is anticipated that successful projects will result in at least one peer-reviewed publication and submission of additional research grants, particularly

resulting in extramural funding. Projects are expected to be one year in duration. Successful applicants are encouraged to present the findings of their project at the annual Regional NORA conference at the University of Utah.

Merit Review of Applications:

Each proposal will be reviewed with the standard NIH review criteria (Significance, Innovation, Approach, Investigator and Environment) and with attention to the following domains when applicable:

1. Relevance to [NIOSH mission](#) NORA ([NORA](#)) or [R2P](#) objectives.
2. Interdisciplinary involvements or potential.
3. Research capacity building for large-scale projects, R21, R01, or similar funding.
5. Innovativeness and scientific merit; adequacy and feasibility of research plans.
6. Appropriateness of budget and budget justification.
7. Participation of multiple stakeholders (employers, employees, academia).
8. Potential impact of a study on OSH with measurable benefits.

For master's and doctoral student projects, the adequacy of supervision and track record of the mentor will be factored into the final funding recommendation.

Additional Information and Application Materials: Please see attachment 1.

Application Deadline: May 9, 2025 **Approximate Award Date:** August 1, 2025¹
Electronic applications should be emailed to: and Maureen.Murtaugh@hsc.utah.edu

Questions may be addressed to Dr. Murtaugh

Maureen Murtaugh, PhD, RDN
Director RMCOEH Pilot Projects Research Training Program
Rocky Mountain Center for Occupational and Environmental Health, U. Utah
250 East 200 South, Suite 100
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
801-585-9216
Maureen.Murtaugh@hsc.utah.edu
