



2022 George R. Seage, III Early Career Investigator Awards

About George R. Seage, III: George was a beloved Professor of Epidemiology at the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health and one of the founding members of the Pediatric HIV/AIDS Cohort Study (PHACS) network. George was a passionate advocate for research on HIV prevention and treatment using novel epidemiologic methods and was a deeply committed mentor to many Early Career Investigators, in PHACS and beyond. The PHACS Early Career Investigator Award was dedicated to George's memory in the Spring of 2021. To read more about George, his accomplishments, and his legacy, please see the PHACS In Memoriam Page at: <https://phacsstudy.org/About-Us/Memoriam>.

Goal: This year, PHACS plans to award two Early Career Investigators who are interested in maternal/child, adolescent, or young adult HIV research. At least one of the awards will specifically support a Diversity Early Career Investigator. See eligibility criteria below.

All applicants must collaborate with a PHACS-affiliated mentor to propose scientific research that is aligned with the PHACS mission (<https://phacsstudy.org/About-Us/PHACS-Mission>) and the mission of at least one of the PHACS Working Groups or Task Forces (<https://phacsstudy.org/Our-Research/Areas-of-Focus>). Proposals which leverage existing PHACS data and repository samples are highly encouraged. The following are high priority areas for funding:

- Evaluating short and long-term effects of antiretroviral and HIV exposures
- Understanding biological mechanisms of antiretroviral therapy and its adverse outcomes
- The impact of social and structural determinants of disparities and/or inequities on the health of PHACS participants and their families
- Studies that result in actionable findings with the potential for an immediate impact on the community of people living with or affected by HIV



Eligibility Criteria:

All applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Be based at a US institution
- Be within 10 years after completion of advanced training (with a terminal degree or residency/fellowship training). Examples include a postdoctoral fellow, research associate/scientist, instructor/lecturer, assistant professor, or equivalent at their institution. Those at the rank of associate professor or higher are not eligible.
- Not have been a Principal Investigator on a research grant or a mentored research award (NIH R01, R21, K-level award, or equivalent)

Applicants for the Diversity Early Career Investigator award must additionally meet the following diversity eligibility criteria:

- Membership in an Underrepresented Minority (URM) according to the National Institute of Health (NIH) definition: African American, Latinx, Native American, Alaska Native, Pacific Islander, and/or non-US citizen who is member of the diaspora from Africa, Latin America, or the Caribbean

People who are underrepresented due to sexual orientation and/or gender identity or expression (SOGIE) are encouraged to apply.

Funding: Support will be provided in twelve-month periods that align with the PHACS fiscal year. Each of the 12-month awards will be for a total cost (direct + indirect) of up to \$75,000/year for up to 2 years. In addition to the 12 or 24-month period, PHACS will fund an initial 3-month start-up phase from May 1 - July 31. That time should be used to plan and set-up the project and the budget should only include up to 10% effort for the Investigator and not exceed \$10,000. Therefore, the primary funding periods for these awards will be either 15 months (one 3-month and one 12-month award) or 27 months (one 3-month and two 12-month awards), with the dates aligning with the PHACS fiscal year ending on July 31 and starting on August 1. The second 12-month period is contingent upon successful progress during the first 9 months. Progress report and final report are required at the end of Year 1 and Year 2, respectively.

Reporting periods and due dates:

5/1/23 – 1/31/24: 3/30/24 (progress determines optional 3rd period of funding)
2/1/24 – 7/31/24: 9/30/24
8/1/24 – 7/31/25: 9/30/25 (if optional 3rd period is funded)

Funding may be used to cover salary support for the Early Career Investigator and/or other project expenses (e.g., specimen testing, data collection). Awardees are also encouraged to present their research at HIV-related or other relevant research conferences. ECI funding will be provided for one such conference to support the presentation of awardee research. Upon funding of the proposal, the PHACS Data Resources Core (DRC) will provide data management



support and will assign an epidemiologist or statistician to provide input on methods, perform data analyses, and collaborate on and support manuscript preparation.

Applicants are encouraged to make use of the existing whole-genome sequencing data available for 379 youth participants who were perinatally exposed to HIV and diagnosed as living with perinatal HIV (PHIV) at birth, and 183 youth participants who were living with perinatal HIV exposure but uninfected (PHEU) from the AMP Up Series study (<https://phacsstudy.org/Our-Research/AMP-Up-Series>). With a letter of support, proposals may also utilize data or samples from other studies in addition to PHACS, e.g., by proposing analysis of data and/or testing of samples from both PHACS *and* another study (e.g., data from the NICHD Data and Specimen Hub (DASH, <https://dash.nichd.nih.gov/>).

For inquiries and requests for PHACS protocol documents, email PHACS@hsph.harvard.edu.

Key Dates:

- Intent to Submit (name and affiliation of Investigator and proposed title of research project): Thursday, December 1, 2022
- Proposal Submission Due Date: Monday, January 9, 2023
- Award Notification Date: Friday, March 10, 2023
- Anticipated Funding Start Date: Monday May 1, 2023

Application Format: The application should utilize NIH proposal formats of margins no less than 0.5 inches and Arial 11 point font. Applications must have the following sections:

I. **Section A. Title Page:**

- Proposal title
- Applicant and Mentor information, including names and contact information (Institution, address, telephone, e-mail)
- Co-investigators if applicable
- A statement on how the proposed research is addressing PHACS priority areas as listed above
- For applications for the Diversity Early Career Investigator award, include a diversity eligibility statement
- Brief description of the proposal in lay terms (maximum 100 words) for public use if funded

II. **Section B. Research Proposal** (maximum 3 single-spaced pages):

Please include the following information:

- Significance, including background literature
- Study objectives
- Study population and data required (and, if applicable, whether new data collection is being proposed)
- Brief description of study design



- Exposure and outcome measures and potential confounders (if necessary for study design)
- Brief analysis plan
- Feasibility assessment (i.e., provide estimated sample size for the analysis and available participant population, however formal power calculations are not required). For Annual Administrative Reports please see: <https://phacsstudy.org/Our-Research/Annual-Administrative-Reports>
- Impact statement on public health. Specifically, how the proposed research will have impact or potential impact on science, clinical guidelines, and/or patient care, as well as on the greater community of people living with or affected by HIV

III. **Section C. Mentoring Plan** (no more than 1000 words): Include timeline and measurable outcomes.

IV. **Section D. Appendices:** The following items should be included.

- Appendix 1: References
- Appendix 2: Applicant's and Mentor's NIH Biosketches
- Appendix 3: Figures (if applicable)
- Appendix 4: Letters of Support (up to 2 total, including one from mentor)
- Appendix 5: Budget and Justification: Please provide a budget and justification for each individual project period: start-up: 5/1/23 – 7/31/23, period 1: 8/1/23 – 7/31/24 and period 2: 8/1/24 – 7/31/25 (optional). Cost for periods 1 and two should not exceed total costs = \$75,000. Cost for the 3-month start-up phase should not exceed \$10,000 total costs. The maximum total annual dollar amounts should include any applicable fringe and indirect costs in accordance with the applicant's institutional approved rate agreements. Please note any outside resources that are available to the Early Career Investigator that may contribute to the success of their project; e.g., institutional support, grant or foundation support. If the application is selected for funding, additional institutional budget and administrative documents will be required.
- Appendix 6 (if applicable): If the applicant is a team leader or member of an already approved PHACS capsule or concept, please describe how the Investigator's time will be divided between the two projects and provide anticipated timelines for each.

Review Criteria:

The following criteria will be utilized in the review of applications:

- Potential of candidate for a successful career in HIV research
- Importance of proposed research
- Potential for impact on science, clinical guidelines, patient care, or the greater community of people living with or affected by HIV
- Alignment with PHACS mission: <https://phacsstudy.org/About-Us/PHACS-Mission>, and the mission of one of the PHACS Working Groups or Task Forces: <https://phacsstudy.org/Our-Research/Areas-of-Focus>.



- Addressing PHACS priority areas as stated above
- Feasibility
- Clarity of presentation
- Strength of the mentor and mentoring plan
- Likelihood of success in the funding period (i.e. delivery of manuscript or other stated end product)

Submission of Proposals: Proposals must be submitted to PHACS@hsph.harvard.edu no later than 5pm ET on Monday, January 9, 2023 with the subject line heading of “PHACS Early Career Investigator Award.”

Please contact PHACS@hsph.harvard.edu with any questions about eligibility or for further information.