



# THE FOOTBALL PLAYERS HEALTH STUDY AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

## Pilot Funding Opportunity

### Request for Applications: Improving the Health and Safety of Football Players

**Applications Due: October 24, 2014, 5:00pm EDT**

#### I. Key Dates

Pre-proposal RFA Announcement:	October 2, 2014
Pre-proposals Due:	October 24, 2014 at 5:00pm EDT
Pre-proposal Decision Announcement:	November 26, 2014
Full Applications Due:	January 7, 2015 at 5:00pm EDT
Funding Decisions Announced:	Late February 2015
Anticipated Funding Start Date:	May 2015

All applications **must be [submitted online](#)**.

#### II. Award Amount

Pilot grant awards will awarded between \$10,000 and \$150,000 per grant, with a total pool of \$750,000. The grant period is one year. The final amount awarded will be determined at the time of the award.

#### III. Overview and Goals

The Football Players Health Study Pilot Grant Program supports innovative pilot studies that have substantial potential to impact the health of current, former, and future NFL players. In this funding opportunity, we are soliciting research grant applications that include high-impact projects likely to yield findings and actionable results within one year.

Investigators from across Harvard University are encouraged to submit proposals that are likely to contribute to the discovery of new risk factors, prevention strategies, and advanced therapies for injury or disease that may affect professional football players. Proposals that have the potential to affect the health and wellbeing of future, current, and/or former football players will be considered, including:

- I. Sports medicine studies, broadly defined to include all medical topics related to athletes, and specifically to football players, including but not limited to the epidemiology, prevention, diagnosis, and management of sports injuries, the effects of exercise and sports exposure on health, and the effects of medications on athletes
- II. Repetitive brain trauma, including but not limited to the epidemiology, prevention, diagnosis, and management of concussions, sub-concussive blows, chronic traumatic encephalopathy, tauopathy, and catastrophic brain injuries
- III. Wellness, aging, and cardiovascular disease as they relate to athletes, including but not limited to the epidemiology, prevention, diagnosis, and management of the long-term effects of chronic pain and acute pain on a chronic basis, the effects of nutritional supplements and ergogenic aids, the risks of cardiovascular disease, and the effects of exercise and training on aging, the cardiovascular system, or overall health and wellness

#### IV. Medical ethics as it pertains to future, current, and/or former NFL players

Applications in any of these areas are encouraged, but applications outside these areas on additional topics that address common diagnoses observed in professional football players will also be considered, and there is no guarantee that funding will be awarded in each category

#### **IV. Eligibility**

This is a two-part, limited submission competition. The first phase will include the submission of a one-page pre-proposal. This will be followed by a full application phase that will include submission of a longer proposal, as well as standard administrative grant application documents. Only selected applicants will be invited to submit the full application.

This request for pre-proposals encourages applications from investigators at all levels.

#### ***Principal Investigator (PI) Eligibility***

Any faculty member who holds a Harvard University appointment, such as lecturer, instructor, research scientist/associate, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor, irrespective of degree or institutional affiliation, is eligible to be the PI.

Note that investigators are eligible to apply as a PI if approved by and with the support of their department chair. Documentation of departmental support, the investigator's appointment title, and status at Harvard will require a letter from the department chair to be submitted with the full application (not with the pre-proposal).

#### ***Co-Investigator (Co-I) Eligibility***

Trainees (e.g., students, clinical trainees, post-doctoral fellows, clinical fellows) cannot serve as the PI of an application but may serve as a Co-I if they make a substantial contribution to the project. A Co-I contributes to the intellectual development of the project, designs part or all of the study, and is involved with the study throughout the term of funding. Co-Is can be from any institution. However, if a Co-I is from a non-Harvard-affiliated institution, the PI must justify how the Co-Is external expertise adds value to the project.

A Co-I is not required, nor is there a limit to the number of Co-Is that may be listed on an application.

For the pre-proposal round, researchers may submit more than one application as PI, and may be listed as a Co-I on multiple applications.

For questions regarding eligibility, see **Section VII. Contact Information** below.

#### **V. Letter of Intent Submission Information**

The online application form in Apply Hub requires login via Harvard Medical School eCommons username and password, or via Harvard University ID number and PIN (<http://catalyst.harvard.edu/services/loginfaq.html>). If you have forgotten either of these, click on "Forgot your PIN / Password?" on the login page. If you do not have either of these, please contact Liz Carew at [pilotstudies@footballplayershealth.harvard.edu](mailto:pilotstudies@footballplayershealth.harvard.edu) for assistance.

If you have not used Apply Hub before, you will be asked to register on a "My Account" page with your name and your e-mail address.

The online application itself is a two-part form. Please provide the following information.

#### ***Part 1 – The Pre-Proposal and Supporting Documents***

- Full name of the submitter
- E-mail address of the submitter
- Principal Investigator (PI information):
  - Full name (if different from the submitter)
  - E-mail address (if different from the submitter)
  - Degree(s)
  - Faculty rank/position
  - Institution
  - Department
  - Division (optional)
  - Phone number
  - Gender, ethnicity, race (all optional)
  - Optional administrative contact name, phone number, and e-mail address
- Team information:
  - Co-Investigator(s) (Co-I information):
    - Full name
    - E-mail address
    - Degree(s)
    - Faculty rank/position
    - Institution
    - Department
    - Division (optional)
    - Phone number
    - Gender, ethnicity, race (all optional)

Note: A Co-I is not required, nor is there a limit to the number of Co-Is that may be listed on an application.
- Administrative questions:
  - Does your study require IRB approval? If so, do you have it?
  - Does your study require IACUC approval? If so, do you have it?
  - Have you ever applied for funding or published with any of your Co-Is? If so, please describe.
- Supporting documents:
  - PI's NIH Biosketch (to be uploaded as a PDF)
  - Scientific Pre-Proposal (to be uploaded as a PDF): Use Arial font, 11-point size only. The **one-page** pre-proposal (covering items 1–3 below) should be single-spaced, with 0.5-inch margins. Pre-proposal text beyond one page will not be read by reviewers. Include the following:
    1. Title of project
    2. PI's name and institution
    3. Scientific rationale and significance:
      - a. The background and significance of the proposed research
      - b. How the results of the proposed research will impact the health and wellbeing of football players
      - c. How the proposed research is important to the goals of the Football Players Health Study
    4. References: Please list references cited on a separate page, and keep the length of the reference list to one page only.

## **Part 2 – Confirmation**

A confirmation page will display all the information you have entered. You will then be able to submit the application. All application materials can be reopened and resubmitted before the deadline.

Paper copies of the application or any other accompanying documentation will not be accepted. All application materials must be submitted no later than 5:00pm EDT on October 24, 2014.

Successful submissions will result in an automated e-mail response sent to the submitter of the application. This e-mail acknowledgement will contain an application ID number that should be used in all future correspondence regarding the pre-proposal. It will also include a URL that allows you to access the application within Apply Hub.

## **VI. Review Process and Criteria**

Completed pre-proposals submitted by **5:00pm EDT October 24, 2014**, will be put forward for review for scientific merit, feasibility, and relevance to the health and wellbeing of football players by a Scientific Review Committee. Selected applicants will be invited to submit full applications. Feedback will not be provided to applicants. Reviewers will evaluate the proposals on the following considerations:

- Is the project feasible and achievable in the funding period?
- Do the investigators have the requisite skills and experience to execute the project within the funding period?
- Is the proposed research innovative?
- Does the project have a high potential to lead to future funding?
- Does the proposal have the potential to affect the health of athletes in general or NFL players specifically, including future, current, and former players?

All applicants will be notified of the results of the review by November 26, 2014. Selected applicants will be invited to submit full applications.

## **VII. Contact Information**

All inquiries related to the application process, eligibility, and/or scientific research areas should be directed to Liz Carew, Pilot Studies Project Manager, Football Players Health Study at Harvard University (617-432-3106); [pilotstudies@footballplayershealth.harvard.edu](mailto:pilotstudies@footballplayershealth.harvard.edu).

Inquiries relating to financial or grants management areas should be directed to Lucy Kolessin, Director of Finance and Research Administration, Football Players Health Study at Harvard University (617-432-7804); [lucy\\_kolessin@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:lucy_kolessin@hms.harvard.edu).