



Center for Health Economics of Treatment Interventions for
Substance Use Disorder, HCV, and HIV

2025-2026 CHERISH Pilot Grant Funding Opportunity

About CHERISH

The Center for Health Economics of Treatment Interventions for Substance Use Disorders, HCV, and HIV (CHERISH) is a multi-institutional Center of Excellence funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). The Center's mission is to develop and disseminate health economic research on healthcare utilization, health outcomes, and health-related behaviors that informs substance use disorder treatment policy and HCV and HIV care of people who use substances. The Center is a collaboration among Weill Cornell Medicine, Boston Medical Center, Boston University School of Public Health, University of Pennsylvania, and University of Miami Miller School of Medicine.

CHERISH Pilot Grants – Special Topics of Interest

CHERISH seeks to fund health economic research projects on healthcare utilization, health outcomes, and health-related behaviors consistent with our mission.

In this cycle, we particularly encourage health economic research proposals relating to one or more of the following special topics of interest, but we will consider proposals on other topics that are also consistent with our mission:

- Challenges and opportunities in delivering overdose prevention and harm reduction services, substance use care, and/or HIV/HCV care of people who use substances to people who live in rural communities
- Providing long-acting injectable medications for HIV prevention, HIV treatment, and/or opioid use disorder treatment

Examples of research on these special topics of interest include the following, but we encourage applicants to propose additional research areas:

- Collecting pilot data for economic evaluation studies of strategies that address barriers to treatment uptake in rural communities (e.g. medical transportation, telehealth, mobile units) or overdose prevention (e.g., community-wide trainings on recognizing the signs of overdose and administering naloxone, overdose prevention lifeline such as Never Use Alone hotline, etc.)
- Determining the cost of culturally adapted substance use interventions in rural areas (e.g. overdose prevention for American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations)
- Using claims data to investigate the implications of COVID-19 pandemic on medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) regulatory changes for MOUD treatment initiation and retention in rural communities
- Developing tools to evaluate financing alternatives for long-acting HIV treatment medications for people who are actively using drugs (e.g., 340b program, AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), etc.)
- Using simulation modeling to explore the cost-effectiveness of long-acting MOUD as a bridge to substance use disorder treatment after release from carceral settings

Eligibility

Applicants can be located at any US-based institution; however, they must fulfill at least one of the following criteria:

- Postdoctoral fellow or trainee under the mentorship of a [CHERISH investigator](#), [CHERISH Research Affiliate](#), or [CHERISH advisory board member](#)
- An investigator nominated by a CHERISH investigator, CHERISH Research Affiliate, or CHERISH advisory board member
- A CHERISH investigator, CHERISH Research Affiliate, or CHERISH advisory board member

Priority consideration will be given to:

- [New or early stage investigators](#) as defined by NIH
- [Investigators who are from underrepresented populations](#) as defined by NIH
- Investigators new to the field of health economics or substance use disorders

Prospective applicants who need assistance in connecting with a sponsor for nomination or a mentor can email pilot.grants@cherishresearch.org.

Application Timeline & Overview

I.	Letter of Intent Submission:	January 10, 2025
II.	Proposal Submission:	February 21, 2025
III.	Proposal Review:	April 2025
IV.	Funds Awarded:	May 2025

I. Letter of Intent Submission

[Fill out this form to submit a Letter of Intent \(LOI\)](#) no later than Friday, January 10, 2025, to allow time to evaluate the relevance of the topic to the CHERISH mission and to identify appropriate reviewers. The LOI asks for basic information about the applicant as well as an overview of the proposed pilot project and team.

II. Proposal Submission – Required Format

Email the full pilot grant proposal to pilot.grants@cherishresearch.org by Friday, February 21, 2025. Include the following 14 sections detailed below:

Section	Description
1. Research Plan (maximum 4 pages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specific Aim(s) (maximum 1 page)• Significance• Innovation• Approach <p>— (maximum 3 pages)</p> <p>References do not count toward page totals.</p>
2. Timeline (maximum 1 page)	Provide a brief description of the timeline for the proposed project. Pilot projects are expected to be completed within one year of receiving funds.

3. Relevance to the CHERISH mission and NIH priorities for health economics research (maximum 100 words)	Provide a brief statement describing how the proposal fits with the CHERISH mission and NIH priorities for health economics research described in NOT-OD-16-025 .
4. Relevance to special topics of interest (maximum 100 words)	If the proposed project involves one or more of the topics listed above, please indicate here. If the proposed project does <u>not</u> include research related to one or more of these topics, please note for this section, “Not Applicable.”
5. Relevance to health disparities, minority health, and/or health equity (maximum 100 words)	If the proposed research considers or focuses on health disparities, minority health, and/or health equity, please describe here. If the proposed project does not consider these topics, please note for this section, “Not Applicable.”
6. Relevance to NIH priorities for HIV/AIDS research (maximum 100 words)	If the project includes HIV/AIDS populations, please indicate whether and how the project aligns with NIH HIV/AIDS priorities described in NOT-OD-20-018 . If the proposed project does <u>not</u> include HIV/AIDS populations, please note for this section, “Not Applicable.”
7. Relevance to dissemination and implementation research (maximum 100 words)	If the proposed research considers or focuses on dissemination and implementation research - how evidence-based practices, interventions, and policies are effectively translated to and used in real-world settings like hospitals, schools, and communities – please describe here. If the proposed project does not consider these topics, please note for this section, “Not Applicable.”
No page limits for sections 8 through 14	
8. Budget	The target range for each award will be \$10,000 to \$20,000 in total costs. We recommend that indirect cost be waived by the applicant’s institution given the limited availability of funds. Submit a breakdown of cost using the supplemental spreadsheet template. See Budget Pilot Grants . All pilot project awards are subject to the terms and conditions, cost principles, and other considerations described in the NIH Grants Policy Statement .
9. Budget Justification	Provide brief justification of each line item in the accompanying budget. Please describe other funding, awarded or pending, available for the proposed project that will supplement the funds being requested. Effort levels here must match the budget; if a person is offering their time in-kind, list that individual on the budget at 0 calendar months (salary info may be left blank). See Budget Justification Template Pilot Grants .
10. Human Subjects	Follow the NIH guidelines to describe procedures for ensuring the protection of human subjects . Note, if the project proposal is awarded and involves human subjects research, funding will not be disbursed until proof of human subjects oversight is provided.
11. Dissemination Plan	Include a preliminary plan for disseminating study results. All projects should result in at least one publication submission. Presentations at a scientific conference are encouraged. Pilot grant

	recipients will be expected to consult with the CHERISH Dissemination and Policy Core to further develop and execute the dissemination plan to enhance the policy impact of the research project.
12. Project Relevance to Career Plans and Future Funding	Describe how this project will fit into your long-term career plans. If the project results will be used to support future grants applications or other funding opportunities, please specify the prospective funding opportunity, funding agency, and timeline in detail.
13. Biosketch	Submit a biosketch in NIH format. Refer to the NIH page for instructions for “Biographical Sketch Format Page (non-fellowship)” approved through 01/31/2026. Biosketches from collaborators are optional but encouraged.
14. Letter(s) of Support	For eligible postdoctoral fellows and trainees, please include a letter from your mentor that details the support the mentor will provide during the project period. Letters of Support from other collaborators are optional but encouraged.

III. Proposal Review – Our Process

The CHERISH Pilot Grant, Training & Mentoring Core will select reviewers with expertise related to pilot project proposals. Reviewers will include CHERISH advisory board members, CHERISH leadership and investigators, CHERISH Research Affiliates, and/or relevant experts identified by these individuals.

Review criteria and the associated scoring system are similar to those employed by the NIH. Pilot project applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Significance
- Investigator (includes consideration of the PI’s biographical sketch and career plan)
- Innovation
- Approach
- Environment (review of this criterion will include consideration of the mentor’s letter of support for postdoctoral fellows and trainees)

Applicants will receive written feedback from reviewers on the strengths and weaknesses of their proposal on each of the above-mentioned criteria, as well as Human Subjects and Budget sections. In addition, reviewers will provide feedback to applicants on strategies for external funding beyond the proposed pilot grant and ways to improve the research proposed to increase the likelihood of obtaining this external funding.

IV. Funds Awarded – Pilot Grant Activities

Funded investigators will receive support and guidance from the Pilot Grant, Training & Mentoring Core and CHERISH leadership. Support includes access to training activities, consultation with the Dissemination & Policy Core, and opportunities to connect with additional mentors.

Pilot grant recipients are expected to present their preliminary results and future plans to CHERISH leadership in-person and/or virtually at least once during the grant period.

Principal Investigators of the pilot project grants are required to meet quarterly with the Pilot Grant, Training & Mentoring Core leadership and staff.

Connect with Us

We invite prospective applicants to join an informational webinar on **Tuesday, December 3, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. EDT** (sign-up [here](#)) to learn more about the eligibility requirements, application process, and program experience, and to hear from the Pilot Grant, Training & Mentoring Core Co-director and former pilot grant recipients.

For questions, please contact pilot.grants@cherishresearch.org.