
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PILOT GRANT PROGRAM

Applications Deadline for Faculty- or Postdoc-Initiated Pilots: January 15, 2026
Applications Deadline for Community Partnership Pilots: February 1, 2026

DATE: November 24, 2025
TO: Faculty, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
FROM: Troy Roepke, PhD, Pilot Program Director
Andrew Gow, PhD, Pilot Program Co-Director
Robert Laumbach, MD, MPH, Community Pilot Program Director
SUBJECT: Request for Proposals for 2026-27 CEED Pilot Grants

The NIEHS Center for Environmental Exposures and Disease (CEED), in collaboration with the Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute (EOHSI), is soliciting applications for its 2026-2027 Pilot Project Program. Pilot funding supports new environmental health research with the potential to improve human health and establish or strengthen community partnerships. CEED is funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS, P30ES005022).

The mission of CEED is to understand how environmental exposures are integrated with social and environmental factors to impact human health. The Pilot Project Program supports research to improve human health through education, outreach, evidence-based interventions and prevention strategies, and to foster and enhance new and existing relationships with community partners. **This year's RFP encourages interdisciplinary and collaborative approaches to problems in the environmental health sciences.** CEED is interested in all aspects of environmental health research and is particularly interested in supporting projects involving partnerships with community groups. Applications originating from community groups are welcomed and encouraged.

Three types of pilot funding are available*: (1) traditional faculty-initiated pilots (maximum \$25,000); (2) community partnership pilots (maximum \$25,000); and (3) postdoctoral fellow-initiated pilots (maximum \$10,000). For all types of pilots, budgetary justification and potential for future NIEHS funding will be significant factors in reviewing these competitive grants. High priority will be given to applications that explore highly relevant environmental exposures and use existing CEED facility cores. The Principal Investigator can be a 1) faculty member at a NJ-based university, 2) current CEED member, 3) member of an organized community group, or a 4) postdoctoral fellow associated with EOHSI, CEED, or Joint Graduate Program in Toxicology labs.

All proposals must include a CEED member. For postdoc-initiated and community partnership applications, a CEED member must be a Co-PI. For proposals from faculty, the CEED member can be PI, co-PI, or co-investigator. This is necessary due to University and Federal regulations regarding transfer of award funds and for formal University Human Subjects (IRB) approval.
Restriction: No foreign component of the proposed research will be allowed this cycle.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES. Each proposal must include the following components:

1. PROJECT NARRATIVE: up to four pages (single-spaced, 11 pt. font, 1" margins):

- A. Title of Project
- B. Investigators (include names, titles, addresses, e-mail, and phone numbers)

- C. Hypothesis (*Research question*)
- D. Background and significance (*Context for the research question*)
- E. Specific Aims, with timeline (*Key steps to answer the research question*)
- F. Methods and data analysis (*How you will answer the research question*)
 - Human subjects: list and attach active IRB protocol that is appropriate or can be easily amended to include projected studies
 - Animal subjects: list relevant IACUC protocol and attach approval letter
- G. Expected Results, Outcomes:
 - Enhance scientific discovery relevant to environmental health
 - Expected publications and future grant applications to NIH, especially NIEHS
 - Relevance to CEED mission (see p. 1)
- H. **All** applications must include a description of how the proposed research can foster the development of community partnerships and/or improve community health. This should be written in layman's terms.
- I. Planned use of CEED Facility Cores

2. PROPOSAL APPENDICES (do not count toward page limits):

- A. Literature references
- B. **Biosketch** or summary of the applicant's qualifications or work in the field is acceptable.
- C. **Budget and Budget Justification**
Budget Considerations:
 - Direct Costs only - Indirect costs are not permissible.
 - Undergraduate stipends up to \$6,000/year (\$3,000/semester) are allowable.
 - No equipment, travel, graduate student stipends, postdoctoral fellow, or faculty salary can be supported.
 - Awards will not be granted to the same investigators for 2 consecutive years.
- D. IRB approval is required for any human subjects research.

Review Process

Review of the Pilot Grant proposals will take place in February/March 2026. The Directors of the Pilot Project Program will first review all applications to confirm that the application meets the basic criteria and will remove from review applications that do not meet the basic criteria. *The CEED Director may be available to assist in fine-tuning applications at their discretion.* All eligible applications will be sent out for review by internal and external reviewers.

Awards and Reporting

Successful applicants will be sent award letters, including instructions regarding expenditure of funds, by April 1, 2026. **All funds must be spent by March 31, 2027.** By 12-18 months post-funding, funded applicants will be required to give an oral presentation of the project outcome at a NIEHS Center members' meeting and provide evidence of grant submission. **With strong justification (such as the need for IRB approval), pilot application budgets can be split over two continuous years. Please reach out to the Pilot Project Program Directors before submitting your application if you would like to propose a 2-year timeline.**

Submission

All applications must be uploaded to <https://form.jotform.com/243245731945157> by **January 15, 2026**. All documents should be merged into a single pdf for the upload. **Community Partnership Applications should be submitted by February 1, 2026.**

Questions

If you have any questions, please contact Kristin Borbely, NIEHS Center Administrator, Phone: (848) 445-0170, E-mail: borbely@eohsi.rutgers.edu, Website: <http://ceed.rutgers.edu/pilot-project-program/>

***Mini-pilots (<\$5000) for faculty- and community-initiated grants are available throughout the year on a rolling basis. For those interested in applying, please reach out to the PPP directors for more info.**