



## ~ REQUEST FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS ~

**The Connors Center Women's Health Interdisciplinary  
Stress Program of Research (WHISPR)***Investigating physiologic and psychologic stress in women's health and disease*Research Proposal  
Cover Sheet Due:  
**January 31, 2019**Final Proposals Due:  
**February 14, 2019**Symposium and  
Finalists' Pitch Presentations  
**April 3, 2019***Sponsored by the Mary Horrigan Connors Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology  
Funding provided by the Gretchen S. Fish Fund for Women's Health and Stress Research*

The Connors Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology is pleased to announce the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual request for proposals (RFP) from the Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH) research community.

Established in January 2018, the goal of the **Women's Health Interdisciplinary Stress Program of Research (WHISPR)** is to advance our understanding of how physiologic and psychological stress affect women's health and disease, and vice versa, by supporting pilot projects, facilitating interactions among WHISPR investigators and other stress researchers, and hosting an annual scientific symposium for the BWH academic community. The scope of proposed research includes clinical, translational, population, and basic research studies investigating interactions of physiologic indicators of stress (e.g., adrenergic, immune, neural, endocrine) and stress exposures (e.g., trauma, adversity, cognitive, affective) with women's health and disease. WHISPR aims to involve investigators from across BWH to develop new research and foster synergy among investigators in this interdisciplinary and cross-cutting field. Please visit the [News and Events](#) page of the Connors Center website for information about the two 2018 WHISPR awardees.

Two one-year grants, each for \$25,000 direct costs (plus applicable indirect rate of 15%), will be awarded. Application finalists will be required to deliver live pitch presentations of their proposals at the 2nd annual WHISPR Symposium on April 3, 2019, to an audience of reviewers and symposium attendees. This RFP and the Symposium will be repeated annually through 2022.

**Timeline:**

Request for Proposals Announced:	January 4, 2019
Research Proposal Cover Sheet with Project Overview Due:	January 31, 2019
Final Proposal Due:	February 14, 2019
Finalists for Presentations Notified:	March 13, 2019
Symposium with Finalists' Pitch Presentations:	April 3, 2019
Award Recipients Announced:	April 10, 2019
Earliest Start Date:	May 1, 2019

**Eligibility:**

You are invited to apply if you meet the following criteria:

- You have a doctoral degree (MD and/or PhD or equivalent).
- Your primary appointment is at Brigham and Women's Hospital.
- You are a junior investigator (i.e. postdoctoral fellow, Instructor, or an Assistant Professor within 3 years of appointment as of the February 13<sup>th</sup> application deadline) or an established investigator pursuing a new line of research.
- The focus of your research proposal is women's health and stress.
- You have not previously been awarded WHISPR pilot funding.
- **You are available, if selected, to present your work at the WHISPR Symposium on April 3, 2019.**

The program is open to both US and non-US citizens. Each applicant may serve as the Principal Investigator on only **one** proposal. Projects must be ready to commence upon receipt of award.

**Application Materials:****Due January 31, 2019, at 12:00pm:**

1. The Research Proposal Cover Sheet including 100-word Project Overview submitted electronically by 12pm to Natasha Minor, Connors Center Project Manager, [NMinor@bwh.harvard.edu](mailto:NMinor@bwh.harvard.edu)

**Due February 14, 2019, at 5pm:**

1. The Research Proposal Cover Sheet
2. A 2-page research statement with a maximum of 500 words describing the scientific work that you propose to undertake. Figures, tables, images, and a maximum of 10 references may be included within the two pages.
3. Brief description of plans for future grant applications and investigations using these pilot data (150-word max)
4. Completed one-year budget template for a maximum of \$25,000 (direct costs) with budget justification (200-word max)
5. NIH biosketch
6. Junior investigators only: Letter of support from your mentor (1-page max, on letterhead)
7. Established investigators only: Brief statement about how your proposal introduces a new line of research (100-word max).

**Application materials must be submitted electronically to [nminor@bwh.harvard.edu](mailto:nminor@bwh.harvard.edu) by 5pm on February 14, 2019.** An editable Research Proposal Cover Sheet and Budget Template page can be downloaded from the [Connors Center website](#).

Application text must be in Arial, 11-point font. Single-spacing is allowed, and margins must be at least 0.5 inches. All items above must be compiled into a single PDF in the stated order. You may make reasonable edits to your Project Overview when re-submitting the application cover sheet with your full proposal. Incomplete applications, applications submitted in multiple files, or multiple applications submitted by a single PI will not be considered.



Please include a line item budget using the budget template provided. Budgets may not exceed \$25,000 direct costs. Include your effort as PI and indicate whether salary support is being requested. All expenses must be directly project related. Please provide a brief written justification (200-word max) that addresses each requested expense.

**Proposal Review Criteria**

Proposals will be reviewed by a panel of established researchers. Applications will be judged on scientific merit, feasibility, potential for future funding, fit with WHISPR, and ability to contribute to the BWH research community under a collaborative umbrella of women's health and stress. Finalists will be selected and notified by March 13<sup>th</sup> of their eligibility to present their proposals to the panel at the April 3<sup>rd</sup> Symposium. Priority will be given to junior investigators. Decisions from the review committee will be final. No written feedback will be provided.

Finalists must present their proposals at the Symposium on April 3, 2019, in order to be eligible for an award. Presentations will be limited to five minutes and will be followed by a Q&A with the Review Panel.

**Other terms of the program:**

Funding recipients will benefit from their engagement with an interdisciplinary community of BWH researchers studying women's health and stress.

- Attendance at the annual Symposium, one small group meeting with other stress researchers, and the Connors Center annual research retreat is expected.
- All recipients will be required to submit a brief interim and a one-page final written report of research activity.
- A one-time no-cost extension will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Recipients may be asked to present their project at the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual WHISPR Symposium (Spring 2020) and at other Connors Center events.
- Recipients must maintain their primary appointment at BWH for the duration of the funding period. If an awardee leaves the BWH community, all unspent funds will be returned to the Connors Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology.

*For questions about the Connors Center Women's Health Interdisciplinary Stress Program of Research (WHISPR) and associated funding opportunities, please contact Julie Alperen, DrPH, Administrative Director, Connors Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology, at [Jalperen@bwh.harvard.edu](mailto:Jalperen@bwh.harvard.edu)*