



All Babies and Children Thrive (ABC Thrive) Request for Proposals for Interdisciplinary Seed Grants

Letters of Intent (strongly encouraged): February 9, 2018

Proposal Deadline: March 9, 2018

OPPORTUNITY

ABC Thrive announces its inaugural request for seed grant proposals to support the early work of interdisciplinary teams exploring innovations in positive early childhood development (prenatal to age 5). Through this RFP, one-year grants of \$20,000 to \$30,000 will be awarded to 3-4 teams which, at the end of a successful pilot project, will be eligible to compete for a larger award of up to \$150,000 per year, for a two-year period.

Teams should include faculty from different disciplines/areas of expertise who are working on a common problem ([contact us](#) at any point during the application process if you are interested in ideas for potential faculty collaborators and/or community partners). Faculty are strongly encouraged to include community partners as key members of the team. Proposals involving international populations should explain the implications of intended research for prenatal and child well-being in the U.S. Funding may cover reasonable research costs such as graduate students and postdocs, research assistants, clinical research coordinators, participant payments, materials and supplies. Faculty salaries are not a coverable expense.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Numerous factors affect a child's growth and development, ranging from genes and biology to family, school, neighborhood and sociopolitical contexts. The purpose of ABC Thrive is to leverage the innovative research, education, clinical care and outreach capabilities of Duke University and Duke Health to promote optimal development in children from prenatal to age 5. ABC Thrive will support interdisciplinary teams of experts who will identify, validate and disseminate best practices for use by parents, educators, health care providers and community stakeholders to ensure that every child has the best possible start in life.

We are especially interested in projects that address at least one of the following three goal areas:

1 – Prenatal and early childhood health and wellness

- Identify factors associated with positive prenatal and early childhood outcomes
- Develop and test new methods or interventions with the potential to: (a) improve prenatal outcomes; (b) improve infants' and young children's socioemotional, language, cognitive and/or physical development; and/or (c) promote positive parenting practices
- Apply validated methods for improving prenatal, infant and/or parenting practices and outcomes with new clinical or community populations

2 – Community outreach

- Leverage existing, or develop new, partnerships to design and test novel interventions
- Develop strategies to ensure the translation of new discoveries into policy and practice
- Conduct research that includes participants from a range of ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds and cultures
- Conduct research that includes participants from obstetric, neonatal or pediatric populations with risks for poor fetal, infant and/or child outcomes

3 – Applied technology to achieve scale

- Develop novel technological approaches to understanding and mitigating multifactorial risks for poor prenatal and early childhood outcomes
- Use technology to simultaneously disseminate best practices in early childhood development and investigate their impact
- Adapt established interventions in early childhood development to digital or other technological formats

ABC Thrive is affiliated with [Bass Connections](#), and housed in the Office of the Vice Provost for Interdisciplinary Studies. Leigh Ann Simmons, Ph.D., M.F.T., Associate Professor of Nursing, is the faculty director for ABC Thrive. For more information: <https://bassconnections.duke.edu/content/all-babies-and-children-thrive>.

KEY DATES

- **Letter of intent (February 9, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. EST):** Interested parties are **strongly encouraged** to submit a brief letter of intent that includes: the problem to be addressed; basic approach to the project; and proposed faculty leaders and community partners. Letters of intent should be emailed to Laura Howes, Director of Bass Connections, at laura.howes@duke.edu and should be no longer than one single-spaced page with 1" margins using 11-point Arial font (no figures or tables; references may be on a separate page). We will provide feedback on all letters of intent within one week. Letters will also be used to identify any unique expertise that needs to be included on the review panel.
- **Proposal submission deadline (March 9, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. EST):** All proposals must be submitted through [MyResearchProposal](#), and responses must abide by the character limits noted below.
- **Final selection (March 30, 2018):** Please note that it's possible that the selection committee will reach out to applicants in early March if additional information is needed.
- **Project planning run-in period (IRB applications, hiring, etc.) (April 2018)**
- **Funding period (May 1, 2018 - April 30, 2019)**

INITIAL PILOT FUNDING (1-YEAR) PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

All proposals must be submitted through [MyResearchProposal](#), and responses must follow the character limits noted below. Please note the character limits below; please also note that when copying and pasting responses into [MyResearchProposal](#), the system does not allow tables or special characters.

- 1 – **Project description:** What problem will the project address and why does it have significant implications for child well-being? What are the anticipated short-term outcomes from this one-year seed grant, and what are the possible long-term outcomes if you are successful?* (2000 characters)

- 2 – Innovative nature of the proposed project:** How will this project add something new to our understanding of child well-being and/or to changes in existing policies, programs, care delivery models, etc.?* (1000 characters)
- 3 – Methodological approach:** Describe how the team will operate and conduct the work. What methods will be used? Include information on sample, recruitment, data collection and data analysis. (5000 characters)
- 4 – Team members (at least 2, no more than 5, excluding community partners):** Provide the name, title, school, department and project role for all team members. Provide the name, title, organization and role of all community partners.*
- 5 – Team members (CVs):** Upload a two-page bio sketch for each key team member, as one PDF file. Note that community partners only require a letter of support.*
- 6 – Team description:** Have the members of this team worked together in the past? If yes, how is the proposed work a new line of inquiry? What makes the team an interdisciplinary team? Are there other individuals who will be involved who are not listed?* (1000 characters)
- 7 – Timeline:** Upload a timeline in table format for key activities and milestones.* (file upload)
- 8 – Prospects for external funding:** What are potential plans for follow-on external funding in the long term, including sources? Provide specific funding opportunities, if relevant.* (1000 characters)
- 9 – Budget:** Upload a **detailed** budget (maximum \$30,000 for one year) including a justification of expenses, in a standard NIH/NSF format. Please also note any other sources of funding that would be applied to this project (e.g., Department or School match, external funds). *Funding may cover reasonable research costs such as graduate students and postdocs, participant payments, materials and supplies. Faculty salaries, including summer salaries, are not a coverable expense.**
- 10 – Letters of support:** Please include a brief letter of support from any community partners in a single PDF file.

MyResearchProposal Submission Instructions

- To apply, visit <http://bit.ly/myresearchproposal>, click on “Create New User” (or log in if you already have an account).
- Enter Access Code **PROVOST** in the upper right-hand corner; then select the “ABC Thrive: Interdisciplinary Seed Grants” opportunity below and follow the instructions.
- For help, view the [step-by-step user’s guide](#); for password or system issues, please contact Anita Grissom or Kara McKelvey at myresearchproposal@duke.edu.

SELECTION CRITERIA

An interdisciplinary review committee will consider the following criteria when reviewing and scoring applications:

- Potential impact (including anticipated short- and long-term outcomes)
- Alignment with the goals of ABC Thrive
- Degree of interdisciplinarity
- Approach and feasibility

Preference will be given to: (a) teams that have not previously collaborated or that are working in an area new to the team; (b) projects that traverse two of the three priority areas (e.g., prenatal and early childhood health and wellness **and** community engagement); and (c) teams that include community partners.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions about the proposal process or requirements, please contact Laura Howes at laura.howes@duke.edu. For questions about ABC Thrive or to discuss an idea for a proposal, please contact Leigh Ann Simmons at leighann.simmons@duke.edu.