

Topic DAT18-03: Epidemiology of Drug Abuse (R01, R03, R21)

Purpose

To encourage the submission of research project applications that enhance our understanding of the nature, extent, distribution, etiology, comorbidities, and consequences of drug use, misuse, and addiction across individuals, families, communities, and diverse population groups. Priority will be given to applications that reflect the breadth of epidemiology research by addressing multiple levels of risk, resilience, and causation across scientific disciplines; by applying novel methods to advance knowledge of the interplay among genetic, environmental, neurobiological, and developmental factors and associated health and disease outcomes; and by building on the research investments of NIH and sister HHS agencies to harness existing data on the epidemiology and etiology of drug misuse to improve public health prevention and treatment programs.

The Program areas noted below should be considered in the context of a number of cross-cutting topics like HIV/HCV/STIs, familial/genetic liability, and physical, psychiatric, and polysubstance comorbidities and interactions. Similarly, secondary analysis of existing data provides unique opportunities to answer innovative questions about the complex nature and course of drug misuse for relatively low cost; therefore, analysis of existing data in all Program areas is strongly encouraged.

Research Objectives

NIDA seeks applications that are transdisciplinary in nature and apply novel methods that allow for the advancement and translation of science, such as utilization of systems science methodologies, as well as those that take advantage of the investments made by NIH and other funders by using existing data to inform our understanding of drug misuse epidemiology and etiology in a creative and cost-efficient manner. Of particular interest are studies that efficiently combine the advantages of epidemiological samples with laboratory-based, behavioral, biological, neurobiological, and genetic measures, and that address gender differences and health disparities, as well as projects that have the ability to identify and rapidly disseminate information about newly emerging drug trends. **Supported research will have substantial public health impact and will inform basic/clinical, prevention, and services research to reduce the burden of drug use, misuse, and addiction on the nation's health.**

Research should be geared towards answering the following questions:

- How do we take current understandings of more general predictors of drug use outcomes and move towards more precise predictors of risk, at the individual or sub-group level?
- How do we determine the unique risk and protective factors of different subpopulations in order to identify foundations for more effective, tailored interventions?
- How do rapidly changing technological advances (i.e. modernization) impact both drug using behaviors and our strategies for assessment, prevention, and treatment?
- How do we best address variation in broad structural factors (e.g. policy context, shifting attitudes toward drug use, drug availability) across the population landscape? What are the real-world implications of these variations in broad structural factors?

The Epidemiology Research Program supports a broad portfolio of research to fill gaps in our knowledge of the continually changing patterns of drug use, associated factors, and consequences in populations across the lifespan. Additional Program priority areas can be found on NIDA's [Epidemiology Research Branch webpage](#).

Relevant Funding Opportunities

Funding opportunities that can be used to pursue these and other research activities include, but are not limited to:

R01 NIH Research Project Grant (Parent R01 Clinical Trial Not Allowed) [PA-18-484](#)

R03 NIH Small Research Grant Program (Parent R03 Clinical Trial Not Allowed) [PA-18-488](#)

R21 NIH Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant Program (Parent R21 Clinical Trial Not Allowed) [PA-18-489](#)

Administrative Supplements to Existing NIH Grants and Cooperative Agreements (Parent Admin Supp Clinical Trial Optional) [PA-18-591](#)

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AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Epidemiology
- Longitudinal Methodology