The San Diego Center for AIDS Research is announcing an open call for applications for a Leadership Trainee for International and Clinical Investigation Cores. One candidate will be selected.

**Application deadline:** September 1, 2021  
**Submit application to:** liz@health.ucsd.edu

**BACKGROUND**

The San Diego Center for AIDS Research (SD CFAR) is one of 18 NIH-funded academic centers providing administrative and shared research support to synergistically enhance and coordinate high-quality HIV/AIDS research projects across the nation. The SD CFAR supports multidisciplinary research to end the HIV epidemic and is recognized as a Tier 3 Center, scoring within the highest quality of research and funding. As one of the largest and longest continually operating CFARs across the country, SD CFAR is designed to be a Center without walls, with members spanning five closely connected institutions: La Jolla Institute for Allergy and Immunology, San Diego State University, Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute, Scripps Research, and the University of California San Diego (including the Veterans Affairs San Diego Healthcare System and the Veterans Medical Research Foundation). Our Center includes 9 service Cores and a Scientific Working Group (SWG) program.

The overall objective of the SD CFAR is to meaningfully impact HIV research by fostering the next generation of HIV researchers and by supporting multidisciplinary research aimed at reducing the burden of HIV in the United States and around the globe. Based on local expertise and research efforts, the four main research priorities for our Center are to: (1) optimize HIV care, (2) remove health disparities, (3) find a cure and (4) develop vaccines. These priorities align with the NIH Office of AIDS Research (OAR) scientific priorities for HIV research and represent areas in which our local members have made significant progress.

SD CFAR provides a foundation of solid scientific expertise, sophisticated technology, and outstanding services to our members across all institutions through services provided by our Core resource units. Our Center is composed of leading investigators whose research work extends from basic molecular virology and cell biology to behavioral approaches to improve HIV prevention and treatment. The SD CFAR is committed to building on our 27-year record of supporting catalytic multidisciplinary research to bring breakthroughs from the laboratory bench to patient bedsides, while fostering a new generation of independent creative investigators.

As part of our commitment to foster the next generation of HIV investigators, our Center has established a Leadership Academy. Supported by both the Administrative and Developmental Cores, the Leadership Academy provides training opportunities for emerging investigators who wish to progress into HIV leadership positions. This program invites promising emerging investigators to apply for a Leadership Trainee role in a Core within our Center. Successful applicants are chosen by the SD CFAR Operations Team and the relevant Core Director(s). Selected trainees partner with a Core Director for approximately 2 years and participate actively in administrative and scientific duties of the Core. During their tenure, Leadership Trainees are expected to develop and hone the skills necessary to direct and lead a Core resource, including: interaction with PIs and their research groups who seek Core services, evaluation of new relevant technologies and/or research proposals (depending on the Core’s mission), personnel management, preparation of NIH progress reports, and annual strategic planning. Leadership Trainees are also expected to identify and lead new initiatives within a Core.
ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL CORE

The mission of the International Core (IC) is to empower emerging foreign investigators to respond to and manage HIV epidemics in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC). The Core’s primary goal is to develop research capacity by maximizing funding and training opportunities in international HIV research for emerging investigators, with an emphasis on 7 LMIC (Mexico, Mozambique, Brazil, India, Kyrgyzstan, South Africa, and Ukraine). We fulfill this goal in part by connecting foreign investigators with an ever-growing cadre of SD CFAR collaborators eager to apply basic, clinical, epidemiologic, and social science in LMIC to prevent HIV transmission and improve treatment access for those already infected. Investigators with CFAR-supported international studies have access to free or heavily discounted training and services from all SD CFAR Cores. To ensure our services remain relevant to our mission, we schedule an annual review of our 7 focus countries, as well as frequent evaluations of policies and procedures. The IC supports critical research in recognized NIH research priorities and our complementary local SD CFAR research priorities through the following Specific Aims:

AIM 1. Evaluation Unit: To enhance the high-impact science associated with our CFAR by reviewing and recommending for funding international projects that are consistent with Office of AIDS Research priorities, well-designed, manageable yet conducive to capacity building, submitted by qualified scientists from our 7 focus countries, and likely to result in future publications and NIH funding.

AIM 2. Regulatory Unit: To ensure international research projects recommended by the Evaluation Unit and the Developmental Core Grant Review Committee meet NIH and UCSD standards for human subjects recruitment and protection; data and specimen collection, shipment, and storage; investigator and research staff training in human research subjects protection; and institutional financial accountability.

AIM 3. Communications Unit: To facilitate scientific discussion between IC users and other SD CFAR Cores and investigators, expedite processes and payments, and apply or update policies involving domestic and international investigators, NIH administrators, SD CFAR member institutions and foreign institutional officials.

AIM 4: Mentoring Unit: To guide and advise emerging international investigators and our CFAR members in best practices of designing and implementing research projects in LMIC, in documenting and publishing results, and in submitting new NIH proposals.

ABOUT THE CLINICAL INVESTIGATION CORE

The mission of the Clinical Investigation (CI) Core is to provide expertise and resources for clinical research and research training to SD CFAR investigators. To accomplish this mission, the CI Core serves as the resource for clinical and translational investigators by providing: 1) access to clinical data, specimens, and study participants; 2) expertise in clinical study design and implementation, regulatory affairs, human subject protection, and safety; and 3) mentoring and education in pursuit of our CFAR’s selected research priorities: optimizing HIV care, alleviating health disparities, and advancing discoveries in HIV cure and vaccines. The CI Core leverages relationships with existing infrastructure at the AntiViral Research Center (AVRC) and the UCSD Owen HIV Medicine Clinic and research programs like the AIDS Clinical Trials Group (ACTG), International Maternal Pediatric Adolescent AIDS Clinical Trials (IMPAACT), the California HIV Research Program (CHRP), International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), Center for HIV/AIDS Vaccine Immunology & Immunogen Discovery (CHAVI-ID), etc., to support clinical investigation across our CFAR member institutions. The CI Core supports critical research in the recognized NIH research priorities and our complementary local SD CFAR research priorities through the following Specific Aims:

AIM 1. ACCESS: Assist in study recruitment and provide well-characterized data and specimens to support HIV clinical investigation and translational research.
• Engage and recruit people living with HIV and persons at-risk for HIV for clinical research participation, including expanding partnerships with our CFAR Health Equity Sociobehavioral Science Core.
• Provide access to local (UCSD Owen Clinic) and Primary Infection Resource Consortium (PIRC) databases and facilitate access to CFAR Network of Integrated Clinical Systems (CNICS) and North American AIDS Cohort Collaboration on Research and Design (NA-ACCORD) longitudinal data sets with linked specimens.

AIM 2. FACILITATION OF RESEARCH: Provide consultation for clinical research study design, community review, regulatory services, and data safety and monitoring.
• Provide consultation on study design and implementation.
• Facilitate collaborations between HIV researchers in different disciplines.
• Partner with the AVRC to facilitate community advisory board (CAB) review of study protocols in development and in progress.
• Provide regulatory services to investigators, particularly emerging and international investigators, in collaboration with the International and Administrative (Admin) Cores.
• Provide safety monitoring and Data Safety and Monitoring Board (DSMB) services.
• Provide infrastructure and opportunities for industry collaborations.

AIM 3. MENTORSHIP: Encourage, mentor and train the next generation of HIV clinical investigators and support mentors in the performance of HIV research.
• Provide clinical research opportunities and mentoring for emerging investigators and for investigators expanding into clinical or translational HIV research.
• Support structured research training courses and conferences.
• Promote mentorship and training of international researchers.

GENERAL DUTIES / SCOPE OF WORK
Under the direction of the IC and CI Core Directors and the SD CFAR Operations Team, the IC/CI Core Leadership Trainee actively contributes to building, fostering, and managing operations of the IC and CI Core. The IC/CI Core Leadership Trainee participates as an active member of the leadership team in developing, evaluating, and modifying the overall SD CFAR Strategic Plan, implements decisions of the Operations Team, and drives the action items that support the Strategic Plan. The Leadership Trainee works alongside the IC and CI Core Directors to manage core personnel and service requests. The Leadership Trainee will review protocols for International Pilot grant recipients and others before submission to the NIH Medical Officer. The IC/CI Core Leadership Trainee will focus on co-mentoring and assisting international investigators in the performance of human research protections, clinical research protocol development and other NIH documentation and participate in proposal reviews. They will meet with the IC and CI Core Directors on a biweekly basis to assist with the preparation of Core reports, including: summarization of service utilization and recovery of costs; presentations to the Executive and External CFAR Advisory Committees; video clips and/or webinars to be featured on the SD CFAR website, submission of NIH progress reports, supplemental projects, and competing grant renewals; and any other administrative reporting, as required. The Leadership Trainee will share responsibility for the effective and efficient management of core resources, and for active participation in efforts to increase funding, space, and other resources for the IC and CI Core.

QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS, QUALITIES, AND EXPERTISE
• Faculty appointment at one of the SD CFAR member institutions: UC San Diego, San Diego State University, Scripps Research, Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discover Institute, and the La Jolla Institute for Immunology
• Experience with HIV-related health services as well as clinical and epidemiologic research, including services listed on the CI Core services webpage
• Ability to organize and direct a clinical research program and training in disciplines related to clinical research, including epidemiological methods
• Experience with and interest in international HIV research, including services and programming listed on the IC webpage
• Ability to mentor students, post-docs and faculty
• Experience with research training, education, and curriculum development
• Experience working with NIH
• Ability to prepare noncompeting and competing renewal applications to NIAID, and to respond to collaboratory ad hoc requests
• Innovative and productive researcher
• Collaborative, interdisciplinary mindset and team-oriented
• Diplomatic, strategic, and creative thinker
• Familiarity with SD CFAR
• Available to attend monthly SD CFAR Core Directors’ meetings (currently via Zoom, but traditionally in-person the second Tuesday of the month from 9:00 – 10:00 am PT), participate in SD CFAR strategic planning retreats, and participate in biennial External Advisory Committee meetings

SUPPORT

The SD CFAR may provide up to 10% salary support.

Applicants must provide the following by September 1, 2021:
  • Current NIH biosketch
  • A description of their background and qualifications (2-page maximum)
  • Provide contact information for three references that will be available for a telephone or Zoom consult

Additional information about the SD CFAR can be found on the website.