



*Center for Environmental Health
and Susceptibility*

THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

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Center for Environmental Health and Susceptibility (CEHS) Rapid Response Funding for Evolving Research Priorities

CEHS leadership recognizes that changing research priorities at National Institutes of Health, EPA, and other federal research agencies have disrupted many successful research projects and careers and are challenging faculty to pivot to new research areas. **This RFA is intended to support planning, analyses, and pilot data accrual in support of rapid resubmission (within <1 year) of a grant application designed to replace a project that has lost federal funding, or allow an investigator to pivot to an area relevant to environmental health research.** Please note that consistent with recent Executive Orders, NIEHS is unable to fund research related to Environmental Justice or Climate Change. However, NIEHS continues to support research that leverages community engaged designs, and that examines the impact of extreme weather. Our Center must follow these guidelines when issuing pilot awards.

Instead of our annual standard pilot call, the CEHS will expand our Rapid Response mechanism (traditionally \$5K - \$15K) to support projects up to \$25K for this specific call to address the following needs:

- Data analysis, investigator effort, or other needs, to pivot to new areas relevant to environmental health.
- New, focused data collection to provide preliminary support for a new research area of emphasis relevant to environmental health.

Although CEHS does not typically provide support for faculty effort toward a pilot study, faculty effort up to 5% may be requested. Applicants should provide a budget justification for their effort on the project and how it relates to their other funded effort. The project and budget period will be through February 28, 2026.

Additional budget items allowable under this RFA include:

- Full or partial support for graduate research assistants (<=1 GRA for 9 months)
- Support for data resources not currently available to investigator
- Support for biospecimen analysis
- Statistical, data science, or biocomputational effort to support preliminary analyses

Budget items not allowable under this RFA include:

- Equipment or travel funding
- Food for participants or community meetings

We ask our membership to ***clearly justify how the expenses will impact grant submission.***

An abbreviated format (designed to support grant resubmission and allow CEHS leadership to offer supportive preliminary peer review of the aims and significance) will be used for this application process.

A complete application will include the following sections:

Section	Page Limit
Cover Page Template	1
Aims Page	1
Significance Statement	1
Research Plan	1-2 pages
Career Impact Statement (optional)	1
NIH Biosketch of PI	Up to 5 pages
PHS398 Budget	
Budget Justification	

The Aims Page and Significance statement will be evaluated for environmental health impact in North Carolina and beyond. The Research Plan should clearly describe the proposed research and grant submission timeline and it will be evaluated for likely success. The Research Plan can also include preliminary data that could be used in the grant resubmission. A Career Impact Statement can be included to convey the impact of any lost federal funding and the benefits of the pilot funds for redirecting the PIs research. All applications should include a PI biosketch tailored to the specific revised research plan and a [PHS398 budget](#) and budget justification. Only UNC Chapel Hill faculty members are eligible to apply as PIs. Submissions will be accepted on a rolling basis and reviewed monthly. Funding decisions are expected within 30 days of receipt.

Applicants should submit a single PDF file. The file should be sent as an email attachment to the CEHS Research Assistant, Georgia Mudd, gmudd@unc.edu.

Sincerely,

Melissa Troester, PhD

Professor of Epidemiology and Pathology & Lab Medicine
Director, Center for Environmental Health and Susceptibility
Member and Program Leader, Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center

Stephanie M. Engel, PhD

Professor of Epidemiology
Director, UNC Center for Early Life Exposures and Neurotoxicity
Deputy Director, Center for Environmental Health and Susceptibility
Associate Director for Population Science, Biomedical Research Imaging Center



Center for Environmental Health and Susceptibility (CEHS) Rapid Response Funding for Evolving Research Priorities 2025-2026

APPLICATION COVER PAGE -

Primary Focus Area	Cardiopulmonary Health	Healthy Development and Aging	Environmental Cancer Prevention	Other
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Project Title	
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Principal Investigator Name	
Title/Academic Rank	
Department/School	
E-mail address	

Names and Departments of Other Significant Contributors - <i>(Last name, First name, Academic Rank, Department)</i>	

Are Human Subjects Involved?	Yes	No
Are Vertebrate Animals Used?	Yes	No

Is this request related to a grant that is currently under submission or recently reviewed?	Yes	No
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If yes above, describe submission status and if relevant, score/percentile of prior submission and major critiques.		

Abstract/Summary - Provide a brief description of your project.		

Please identify three potential reviewers: <i>(Last name, first name, agency, email address)</i>		