APC/Transforming Chaplaincy Pilot Grant Application

Pilot Project Grant: 18 months; up to $15,000, designed to help investigators implement a small study that advances knowledge about chaplaincy care (see Table 1 for suggested topics). Proposals must come from a multi-disciplinary team that includes a Board Certified chaplain (BCCI) and an experienced researcher. Projects can be single or multi-site. Projects from members of APC Special Interest Groups that are designed to strengthen those groups are especially welcome. Proposed projects must be able to be completed in 18 months. Proposed projects should lead to publications, presentations at professional meetings, and further funded research. Funds may be used for investigator salary, project coordinator, research assistant/data collection, data analysis, consultants.

Applications are limited to 6 single spaced pages and should generally follow the NIH proposal format including a clear statement of specific aims, significance, innovation and approach. In addition the application should include biosketches for project team and consultants, budget and budget justification and letter of support from appropriate institutional official.

The experienced investigator who is part of the Pilot Grant application should be an important resource in preparing the application. In addition, check to see if your institution has a grants office where there may be staff who can help with your application.

Application Checklist
The completed application **should be combined into a single PDF** and include:

- **Title Page**: name of project, investigators, institution that will receive the grant, and total grant request
- **Specific Aims**: 1-page (single spaced) description of the specific aims of your project
- **Research Plan**: description of the significant, innovation, approach, and research environment for your project, limit 6 pages single spaced (guidelines below)
- **Biosketches** for the project team and consultants (guidelines **here**)
- **Project Budget**: 1 page, with additional narrative budget justification (guidelines below)
- **Letter of Support** from institutional official

Applications should be sent to Transforming Chaplaincy Communications Director Michael Skaggs at mskaggs@brandeis.edu with the subject line "Pilot Grant Application."

Research Plan
Below is a description of the 5 main areas in a research plan that are used by the NIH for scoring a research proposal (accessible at https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/write-your-application.htm#What Peer Reviewers Look For). Not everything described here is relevant for a spiritual care pilot grant but the main topics are a useful guide to writing your research plan.

Significance. Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field? Is there a strong scientific premise for the project? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved? How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field?

Investigator(s). Are the PIs, collaborators, and other researchers well suited to the project? If Early Stage Investigators or New Investigators, or in the early stages of independent careers, do they have appropriate experience and training? If established, have they demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced their field(s)? If the project is collaborative do the investigators have complementary and integrated expertise; are their leadership approach, governance and organizational structure appropriate for the project?

Innovation. Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions? Are the concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions novel to one field of research or novel in a broad sense? Is a refinement, improvement, or new application of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions proposed?

Approach. Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Have the investigators presented strategies to ensure a robust and unbiased approach, as appropriate for the work proposed? Are potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented? If the project is in the early stages of development, will the strategy establish feasibility and will particularly risky aspects be managed? Have the investigators presented adequate plans to address relevant biological variables, such as sex, for studies in vertebrate animals or human subjects? If the project involves clinical research, are the plans for 1) protection of human subjects from research risks, and 2) inclusion of minorities and members of both sexes/genders, as well as the inclusion of children, justified in terms of the scientific goals and research strategy proposed?

Environment. Will the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Are the institutional support, equipment and other physical resources available to the investigators adequate for the project proposed? Will the project benefit from unique features of the scientific environment, subject populations, or collaborative arrangements?

Budget Template

Adapted from budget guidelines provided by the Louisville Institute: Your line item budget should list all the appropriate accounts where money will be spent (e.g., Personnel, Travel, etc.) and the anticipated costs of project activities in each of these accounts. When appropriate, work with those responsible for accounting in your organization to develop the budget based on your organization's chart of accounts, which will enable your organization's staff to monitor the budget easily.

Category	Item	2019	2020	Total
	Totals			