



## **Research Scholar Corps and Pilot Projects**

### **Request for Applications**

*Updated 10/21/22*

## Background

Emotional well-being, which includes life satisfaction, life purpose, and positive emotions, is a key public health target. Although health can influence well-being, only recently has there been attention on how overall well-being can influence health outcomes. Critical knowledge gaps exist in both understanding the research on the role of emotional well-being in health and in measuring well-being outcomes, which constrain valid and rigorous evaluation of intervention strategies. The interdependence of health and well-being within and among family members has not been well-characterized: the health and well-being of a patient affects family members, but the well-being of family members—including informal caregivers or parents—can also directly affect the well-being of the patient. Moreover, these interrelated effects vary across the lifespan and different types of families, from child well-being within a parent/child family to older individuals' well-being between spouses or among intergenerational relatives.

## Opportunity

*FAM-NET*, a research network devoted to studying family well-being across the lifespan and supported by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Medicine, and the National Institutes of Health Office of Disease Prevention (1U24HD107562), seeks to develop and advance new ideas and scalable approaches to contribute to the measurement and foundational knowledge of family well-being. Encompassing a lifespan perspective, eligible topics under this opportunity will range from childhood quality of life through and including older adults' well-being, with an emphasis on family-focused metrics and analytic strategies.

We are requesting applications for our **Research Scholar Corps** and proposals for **Pilot Projects** that address our focal areas. Applications are reviewed on a 4-month cycle until all available annual funds are awarded. We expect to award funds over 4 years, beginning in February 2022.

## Focal areas

Areas of particular interest include:

- Developing or advancing new ideas to contribute to the measurement and foundational knowledge of family well-being
- Developing family-focused metrics and analytic strategies
- Improved methods of measuring family well-being
- Efforts to conceptualize family well-being
- Efforts to define what is included in family well-being
- Efforts to conceptualize family well-being specifically in families that include individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities

- Efforts to adapt/validate adult-designed measures of quality of life/subjective well-being in children
- Efforts to address quality of life measurement in very young children, including identifying lower age limits of age for QoL self-report
- Studies that address the above topics while focusing on key populations of interest:
  - Populations with intellectual and developmental disabilities
  - Pregnant and lactating women
  - Children, adolescents, and the transition to adulthood

Awards will prioritize applications that address these areas but others that address the overall goal of FAM-NET to advance knowledge and specifically measurement of family well-being across the lifespan will be considered. Applicants should consider diversity, equity, and inclusion when planning study methods and participant recruitment plans.

## Research Scholar Corps

The goal of the **Research Scholar Corps** is to support and foster a scholar pipeline for research on family well-being measurement. The program is intended for advanced graduate students, trainees, and junior faculty, and will provide multidisciplinary mentoring and training over the course of one year. Successful applicants will join a network of like-minded researchers and will be trained in peer-mentoring skills to promote peer connections.

Applicants may apply as a mentor-mentee pair or may choose to be matched with a FAM-NET mentor. Mentors are senior-level investigators who will be selected based on their commitment to investing time to mentor, foster, and sustain junior investigators and trainees. Their mentorship may surpass traditional research involvement to include professional development and career planning. Scholar Corps members will also receive cross-mentor feedback at research-in-progress meetings.

Scholars will both access and contribute to the Network's web-based resource repository. They will utilize resources available within the repository such as materials (e.g., datasets, instruments) and educational videos, from both FAM-NET and partner emotional well-being networks, to advance and facilitate their research. They may also use the repository platform and support resources to disseminate their own work (e.g., production assistance, pre-publication work-in-progress, publicity for advances/professional networking/social media).

Projects that include [human subjects](#) will not be considered for Scholar Corps funding.

### Eligibility

Junior faculty/junior investigators (those within 8 years of starting a faculty appointment) and trainees, including advanced graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and clinical fellows. Investigators must be affiliated with an institution that is able to accept NIH research funding.

### Stipend

Scholars will receive a stipend of \$12,000 for a 12-month period to further their research and career development, including mentee, mentor, and research assistant effort, data costs, analysis, research supplies, presentation materials, open access publication costs, books or on-line access to materials related to area of research, travel, conference attendance for research dissemination and/or training,

and any other cost that facilitates a Scholar's research (within costs allowed by NIH; indirect costs are not allowable). The goal of these awards is to enable scholars new to this field to pursue a specific aspect or angle of a project with this support.

Scholar Corps applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. **Impact.** The significance of the topic and the potential to advance the science of family well-being and/or pediatric quality of life measurement.
2. **Theme.** The degree to which the topic of the proposal addresses a topic relevant to the research gaps and focal areas outlined above.
3. **Investigators.** The qualifications of the research scholar and mentor (if included). The mentor's role in advancing training of Scholar.
4. **Methods.** The suitability of the proposed methods to address the research question.

## How to apply

Applications can be submitted via our [online portal](#).

Statement of Interest (up to two pages, single-spaced, 11-point font minimum) which contains the following information:

- Statement of the project's overall objectives (approx. 1 paragraph)
- Description of the research plan and methodologies to be employed (approx. 3 paragraphs)
- Description of anticipated impact on the science of family well-being measurement or child quality of life (approx. 3 paragraphs)
- Description of the mentor/mentorship plan—with identification of a specific mentor or with request for a FAM-NET assigned mentor (approx. 1 paragraph)

Proposed Project Budget and Budget Justification: Budget requests may include costs up to a maximum of \$12,000 in direct costs.

The budget and justification should contain the following information (up to one page, 11-point font minimum):

- Table listing expense categories and budgeted amounts
- A budget justification clearly describing the specific items to be funded by the grant and their contribution to the proposed research.

After review, projects with fundable scores that include key personnel receiving effort support will be asked to provide other support documents

Biosketch(es): Submit an NIH biosketch or equivalent (5 page maximum for each investigator) for the applicant and mentor (if applying as a mentor-mentee pair)

Letter of recommendation: From your proposed mentor or an existing advisor/mentor (1 page limit).

Mentor description: If requesting a FAM-NET assigned mentor: a brief description (approx. 1 paragraph) of what you are looking for in a mentor

## Pilot projects

The Pilot Projects program will provide seed funding for projects related to measurement of family well-being across the lifespan, from childhood quality of life through and including older adults' well-being, with an emphasis on family-focused metrics and analytic strategies. Pilot project funding will advance the science of measurement and will provide networking, training opportunities, and dissemination avenues for grantees.

Eligible projects may take many forms, as long as they advance the science of measuring family well-being—including pilot studies, both qualitative and quantitative, using primary or secondary data or both; literature reviews (scoping, systematic, etc.); conceptual, methodological, or applications-focused work. Due to regulatory constraints and the short study timeline, [clinical trials](#) will not be funded. Disciplinary focus can be broad and transdisciplinary work is encouraged. Projects need not encompass the full lifespan but could focus on one (or a limited number of) specific age groups.

### Eligibility

Faculty and trainee investigators at any stage (including advanced graduate students) affiliated with an institution that is able to accept NIH research funding.

### Funding

Awards of up to \$25,000 in direct costs per project will be made. Projects must be completed in 12 months (with no-cost extension available for an additional 6 months).

Funds may be used for all costs directly associated with completion of the research project (within NIH allowable expenses), including applicant and research staff (if proposed) salaries and fringe benefits, project-related research costs (e.g., participant incentives, survey recruitment and administration, printing), database access, small equipment, travel (for data collection and/or conference attendance), conference registration, and publication fees.

Funds **cannot** be used for tuition, large equipment, administrative support, honoraria, any care-related patient services, and indirect costs, including construction/building maintenance, furniture and office equipment, rental of office or laboratory space.

### Pilot Project applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. **Impact.** The significance of the topic and the potential to advance the science of family well-being and/or pediatric quality of life measurement.
2. **Theme.** The degree to which the topic of the proposal addresses a topic relevant to the research gaps and focal areas outlined above.
3. **Investigators.** The qualifications of the investigator(s) to conduct the proposed project.
4. **Methods.** The appropriateness and methodological rigor of the scientific plan.
5. **Likelihood of leading to subsequent project.** The likelihood that the pilot project will lead to a future project in the field (i.e., that it is a “pilot” for future work).

## How to apply

Applications can be submitted via our [online portal](#).

Project Description (up to two pages, single-spaced, 11-point font minimum) which contains the following information:

- Statement of the project’s overall objectives (approx. 1 paragraph)
- Description of the research plan and methodologies to be employed (approx. 3 paragraphs)
- Description of anticipated impact on the science of family well-being measurement or child quality of life (approx. 3 paragraphs)

Proposed Project Budget and Budget Justification: Budget requests may include costs up to a maximum of \$25,000 in direct costs. Indirect costs are not allowable.

The budget and justification should contain the following information (up to two pages, 11-point font minimum):

- Table listing expense categories and budgeted amounts
- A budget justification clearly describing the specific items to be funded by the grant and their contribution to the proposed research.

Biosketches: Submit an NIH biosketch or equivalent (5 page maximum for each investigator) for the Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators (if included)

After review, projects with fundable scores that include a human subjects’ component will receive a request to provide additional information on their proposed work including a recruitment and retention plan, inclusion enrollment report, and a data safety and monitoring plan. Projects that include key personnel receiving effort support will also be asked to provide other support documents.

## Dual Applicants

Applications for both Research Scholar Corp and Pilot Projects will not be considered.

## Timeline

Cycle end date	Award notification date
December 15, 2022	January 31, 2023
April 1, 2023	May 1, 2023

Just-in-time requests

After review, awardees with projects that include a human subjects’ component will receive a request to provide additional information on their proposed work including a recruitment and retention plan, inclusion enrollment report, and a data safety and monitoring plan. Awards will be contingent on satisfactory provision of this documentation and IRB approval from the awardee’s home

institution. Projects that include key personnel receiving effort support will also be asked to provide other support documents.

Interim reports

Zoom retreats for grantees to present their progress to the FAM-NET Executive Committee and other grantees will be held twice per year, in March and October. Progress will differ across awardees depending on date of award.

End of Project report

Structured project summary and recorded video presentation to FAM-NET is required 30 days after conclusion of the award period (or no cost extension if granted). The final video will be posted on the FAM-NET website.

## Frequently asked questions

Can I apply to both the Research Scholar Corps and the pilot program grant?

*No, applicants eligible for both programs must select the funding mechanism that best meets their project needs and career goals.*

Can I submit more than one application for a pilot grant?

*No, you may submit only one application for pilot grant funding per cycle (June-May). Research Scholars can only be awarded once, though may apply for pilot grants in a different cycle.*

Can I apply for a pilot grant if I have previously received one?

*Yes, prior grantees remain eligible for future awards although projects must be distinct.*

Can I apply for a Research Scholar award if I have previously received one?

*No, Scholars are not eligible for additional Scholar funding.*

Would a larger project with a timeline longer than 1 year be eligible for funding?

*Maybe. In your application you would need to identify the discrete portion of the larger project that aligns with FAM-NET goals, and how it qualifies as a pilot project leading to a larger/subsequent study or piece of work.*

Do pilot projects need to be a completely new project, or could they be an addendum to an existing project?

*Pilot projects can be an extension of an existing project. It may be beneficial to leverage and build on what you've already done, as long as the pilot project proposes work that builds the field of family well-being measurement and will lead to additional, subsequent work.*

How are FAM-NET Scholar Corps mentors assigned?

*If you choose to be matched with a FAM-NET mentor, you will be paired with an experienced researcher selected from our FAM-NET Investigators and others in the network. Choosing to be matched with a FAM-NET mentor is an opportunity to expand your existing professional network as you build your career in the field of well-being measurement.*

If I choose to apply for the Scholar Corps as a mentor-mentee pair, do I need to be at the same institution as my mentor?

*No, you do not need to be at the same institution or in the same geographic area as your mentor but plans to connect remotely should be detailed in the description of your mentor/mentorship plan.*

Will feedback be provided on my application?

*Yes, if an application is promising but not fundable in a particular cycle, a request for a revised resubmission with suggested improvements may be made.*

Do I need IRB approval for submission of my proposal?

*No, but IRB approval and additional human subjects documentation including a recruitment and retention plan, inclusion enrollment report, and a data safety and monitoring plan must be received before funding is awarded.*

Whom should I contact with additional questions?

*Please visit [fam-net.org](http://fam-net.org) for additional information or email [contact@fam-net.org](mailto:contact@fam-net.org) with any questions.*