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December 3, 2007

RE: Active Living Research Supplements for Healthy Eating Research (HER) Round 2 Grants

Dear HER Round 2 grantee:

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) is pleased to announce an invitation-only Special Solicitation for research proposals evaluating preschool and child-care physical activity policies and environments. This offering is provided through RWJF's Active Living Research program and is exclusive to Healthy Eating Research Round 2 grantees.

Active Living Research is a national program of RWJF created to stimulate and support research to identify environmental factors and policies that influence physical activity for children and families to inform effective childhood obesity prevention strategies, particularly for low-income and racial/ethnic minority communities and populations.

The purpose of this Special Solicitation is to provide financial supplements to newly funded Healthy Eating Research Round 2 grantees who are collecting new data on preschool and child-care food policies and environments to inform efforts to prevent childhood obesity. Active Living Research expects to fund up to four grants of up to \$35,000 each for projects that span 12 to 24 months and begin on April 1, 2008.

The supplements are specifically intended to support the addition of measures and analyses of physical activity policies and environments in preschool and child-care settings – expanding the scope of Healthy Eating Research grants to include the policy and environmental determinants of physical activity in these settings. The research funded under this supplement is expected to inform RWJF's efforts to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic by 2015.

Applicants for these supplemental grants from Active Living Research should specify the methods by which preschool and child-care physical activity policy and/or environmental measures will be collected, coded and analyzed. Policies may deal with physical activity requirements, scheduling or teacher training. Environmental factors of interest could include the availability and quality of play spaces, play equipment and supplies. Applicants should describe plans for documenting preschool and child-care physical activity policies and/or environments for the same settings where nutrition policies already are being collected for existing Healthy Eating Research projects. Applicants should indicate their willingness to participate in the development of common procedures for coding the content of policies and adopt those procedures for the study. Description of the content of preschool and child-care physical activity policies and/or environments will contribute valuable information, and additional study aims will increase the scientific value of the studies.

Examples of recommended study aims include the following, but we expect that projects will vary in the number and type of aims:

- Examination of correlates of the quality of preschool and child-care physical activity policies and environments, including such variables as preschool and community socioeconomic status and racial/ethnic diversity, prevalence of overweight among children, administrative structure and number of children in the setting.
- Comparative analysis of physical activity and nutrition policies in the same settings.
- Assessment of barriers to improvement of physical activity policies and environments and potential strategies for overcoming those barriers.
- Evaluation of the extent and determinants of implementation of physical activity policies and comparison with implementation of nutrition policies.

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- Examination of the relationship between the quality of preschool or child-care physical activity policies and the degree to which they are implemented to levels of physical activity and/or body mass index (BMI).
- Examination of the impact of preschool and child-care environmental characteristics on children's physical activity in those settings.

Several of the preschool and child-care projects funded by Healthy Eating Research are collecting physical activity policy and/or environmental data. However, supplemental funds may be requested to expand these measures or analyses of correlates of the quality or implementation of policies and/or their outcomes. If supplemental funds are requested to assess children's physical activity, objective measures will be required, such as accelerometers or direct observation. Given the limited scope and short duration of these projects, measures of changes in weight or BMI are not required. It is expected that applications will vary in number of preschools and child-care settings assessed; number of aims addressed; extent of original data collection planned; and need for additional investigators and staff. Thus, budgets need to be well justified and consistent with the scope of the planned project.

Support and technical assistance for these supplements will be provided through the Active Living Research program. Principal investigators will be asked to participate by teleconference and e-mail in the development of common procedures for coding the content of physical activity policies and/or environments and will adopt the common procedures in the study.

Eligibility Criteria

Preference will be given to those applicants that are either public entities or nonprofit organizations that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. For this Special Solicitation, only Healthy Eating Research Round 2 grantees conducting studies in preschool or child-care settings are eligible to apply. The principal investigator of the eligible Healthy Eating Research grant must be the principal investigator or co-principal investigator of the proposed Active Living Research supplemental project.

Selection Criteria

Proposals should demonstrate the potential to produce high-quality, scientifically sound research that could be used to inform policy-makers about the policy and environmental changes that could increase levels of physical activity among children in preschool and child-care settings. Active Living Research will assess each proposal based on the degree to which it:

- Is responsive to guidelines for this supplemental grant funding opportunity.
- Substantially expands, but does not duplicate, activities funded by the Healthy Eating Research program grant.
- Produces results that are relevant to assessing physical activity-related policies and/or environments in preschool and child-care settings, especially those in low-income communities or those serving ethnic/racial minority populations at high risk for childhood obesity.
- Confirms willingness to take part by teleconference and e-mail in the development of common procedures for coding the content of physical activity policies and/or environments and to adopt the common procedures in the study.
- Documents the experience, qualifications and time commitment of the investigator(s) and key project staff are adequate for conducting the proposed project.
- Justifies the reasonableness of the budget request and feasibility of the timeline.

Accelerometer Loan Program

To facilitate wider use of high-quality objective physical activity measures, Active Living Research is offering extended loans of Actigraph accelerometers. The loan program is available to grantees and non-grantees. For more information, please contact Chad Spoon at cspoon@projects.sdsu.edu.

Evaluation and Monitoring

Grantees will be expected to meet RWJF requirements for the submission of narrative and financial reports. Grantees also will be required to submit periodic information needed for overall project performance monitoring and management. Principal investigators may be asked to attend periodic meetings and to give progress reports on their grants. Active Living Research

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national program office staff or consultants will be available to provide technical assistance when needed to ensure the success of the project. At the close of each grant, the grantee is expected to provide a written report on the project and its findings, suitable for wide dissemination. Grantees also will be expected to participate in the program's evaluation by responding to periodic surveys during and after the actual grant period.

Use of Grant Funds

Funding will be commensurate with the size and scope of the proposed activity. Grant funds may be used for project staff salaries, consultant fees, data collection and analysis, meeting costs, project-related travel, supplies, computer software and other direct expenses essential to the proposed project, including a limited amount of equipment. In keeping with RWJF policy, grant funds may not be used to subsidize individuals for the costs of their health care, to support clinical trials of unapproved drugs or devices, to construct or renovate facilities, for lobbying, or as a substitute for funds currently being used to support similar activities. Active Living Research grant funds may not be used to advocate for, implement or promote environmental or policy changes.

Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to include funds for at least one investigator to attend the Active Living Research Annual Grantee Meeting and Conference. Funds may be used to travel to one other relevant scientific meeting.

In some instances, applicants may be asked to participate in media and policy briefings and other forums that will help communicate research results to a wide audience.

Timetable

December 17, 2007 (12 p.m. PST). Optional teleconference for potential applicants. For details and pre-registration information, send e-mail to cspoon@projects.sdsu.edu or call (619) 260-5539. Applicants will have an opportunity to ask questions during the teleconference about the Special Solicitation and proposal process.

January 4, 2008 (1 p.m. PST)
Deadline for receipt of proposals.

February 4, 2008
Notification of awards.

April 1, 2008
Funding initiated.

How to Apply

Proposals must be submitted to Active Living Research no later than January 4, 2008 (1 p.m. PST). Decisions about awards will be announced on February 4, 2008.

Active Living Research will host one applicant conference call on December 17, 2007 to answer questions about the program, as well as the application and selection processes. Participation in this call is strongly encouraged, but not required.

All interested applicants must request a formal proposal packet from Active Living Research. To do so, please contact the program by e-mail (cspoon@projects.sdsu.edu) or by calling (619) 260-5539. Complete instructions will be enclosed with the packet, including forms for signature by applicant institutions.

Select guidelines for proposals (more detailed information in the proposal packet):

- Provide abstract of the study funded under Healthy Eating Research Round 2.
- Provide number and description of preschools or child-care settings, including socioeconomic status and racial/ethnic ethnic composition.

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- Submit a narrative of the proposal for supplemental funding from Active Living Research (maximum of five pages, single-spaced).
- Include in budget justification assurance that the supplemental grant will not duplicate or interfere with efforts funded by the Healthy Eating Research grant.

RWJF does not provide individual critiques of proposals submitted.

Proposals should be submitted via email, courier or certified mail to the contact listed below and received by Active Living Research no later than January 4, 2008 (1 p.m. PST).

Chad Spoon, MRP
Research Coordinator
Active Living Research
San Diego State University
3900 Fifth Avenue, Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92103
(619) 260-5539
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The Active Living Research team is excited to be able to offer these supplemental grants. We hope they will provide productive opportunities to enhance your Healthy Eating Research projects and make them even more valuable in finding ways to prevent childhood obesity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Sallis".

James F. Sallis
Director