The Center for Health and Community in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences announces The Nancy E. Adler Seed Grants Program: Funding to support research on social determinants of health



To strengthen research spanning medicine, public health, and the social sciences at UCSF, the Nancy Adler Seed Grants Program (ASG) will support projects focused on social and behavioral determinants of health. Annual budgets should not exceed $25,000, and total budgets should not exceed $35,000. Proposals are due by September 9, 2026. This opportunity is restricted to UCSF junior faculty and non-faculty academics, such as postdocs.

Dr. Adler was a champion for the social sciences over her 45-year career at UCSF, 1977-2023. During Dr. Adler's career at UCSF, she served as the Lisa and John Pritzker Professor and Vice Chair of Psychology in the Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences and Pediatrics, and Director of the Center for Health and Community. Much of her research explored how social and behavioral determinants "get under the skin" to shape health and health equity. She believed strongly in the importance of transdisciplinary collaboration for scientific advancement and frequently convened scholars from different disciplines to tackle complex problems.

In honor of Dr. Adler's legacy, the ASG program will support research exploring relationships between social and behavioral drivers and health outcomes and/or interventions anticipated to influence those relationships. These funds are intended to help early career scientists from across UCSF to garner extramural funding (e.g., from NIH and other sources) for future research on social and behavioral drivers of health. To that end, applicants should clearly describe why the project is needed to inform the development of future projects.

PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO PROJECTS THAT:

- Involve collaborations across departments and/or disciplines;
- Focus on understanding how social determinants shape health equity and can be part of interventions to improve health equity;
- Are anticipated to lead to extramural funding.

ASG Program Application and Administration

ELIGIBILITY: UCSF-appointed assistant professors from any academic series and postdoctoral fellows with faculty mentorship are eligible to apply for internal funding.

APPLICATION: Proposals should be submitted via email to Dina Dudum Freij (dina.freij@ucsf.edu) by 5pm on September 9, 2026 for consideration. Please combine all proposal documents into one pdf.

BUDGETS & APPROVALS:

- All research activities should be completed between November 1, 2026-October 31, 2028. Annual budgets should not exceed $25,000 and total budgets should not exceed $35,000. Applicants should note that shorter projects / smaller budgets are more likely to be supported due to limited funding.
- Budgets can include personnel costs for UCSF investigators and research staff and/or other research costs.

- In accordance with UCSF policy, all proposals involving human subjects research must undergo IRB review. Proposals that have not undergone such review may be reviewed and support may be awarded, but no funds will be released for empirical research until the proposal receives IRB approval.

AWARDS: Grants will be reviewed by the ASG Program Committee and prioritized based on criteria described above and funding availability. We anticipate awarding 2 proposals in 2026. Award announcements will be made at the Nancy Adler Lectureship in the Fall of 2026.

GRANTEE EXPECTATIONS AND REPORTING:

Awardees are expected to:

- Attend the annual Nancy Adler Lectureship on Oct 16, 2026 and in Oct 2027 (date TBD)
- Present to the Center for Health and Community as part of the Coffee and Science lecture series in Fall 2027
- Attend the CHC grant review working group meeting (held 3 times a year) throughout the award period
- Submit a brief report summarizing project results at the end of the award period.

ADLER SEED GRANT PROPOSAL FORMAT

COVER PAGE

Include the project title as well as the name, title, department, and email address for each investigator.

ABSTRACT

Include a brief one-paragraph abstract suitable for use in public reports.

NARRATIVE

The narrative should describe the plan of work, participants, and relevance to population health research. Research project proposals

should summarize the research question, existing literature, plan for empirical research, and significance of the project that the seed grant will help you develop. Candidates also must specify in the narrative why the grant is likely to facilitate future extramural funding.

LENGTH

1-3 pages (for abstract and narrative). Proposals that are longer will not be reviewed nor returned to be shortened. If the seed grant proposal is related to currently funded or pending projects - including projects supported by internal or external funders - please briefly describe those other projects and describe how the seed grant project is distinct from (and leverages, when relevant) these other projects.

BIOSKETCH

Please include your NIH biosketch.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

The budget should itemize all expenses, indicating where applicable the time commitment of faculty or student research assistants. We recommend budgets include minimal to no faculty effort.

Requests for data or computer hardware or software indicate specifically what the request is for (rather than simply "Software" or "Data") and the justification should briefly describe the need for this item.

Please note this is an internal grant mechanism at UCSF and no indirect costs should be included.