

CSRD October Newsletter

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**CLINICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT**

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Office of Research & Development

TERRI TALKS

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Message from the Director

As we turn into October, it is always an exciting time tied to a new fiscal year and opportunities to look forward to new and expanded goals and opportunities. The latest set of Requests for Applications (RFAs) were posted on the VA intranet on October 1, and they offer a glimpse into new directions that will be available in the Spring CSRD review cycle. Specifically, to highlight:

- targeted career development opportunities at the CDA1 level for applicants associated with [HBCUs](#) and [U.S. military Veteran scientists](#)
- collaborative Merit awards (RFA# [CX-20-007](#)) to facilitate translation work between BLRD and CSRD
- a new phased clinical trial award (RFA# [CX-20-005](#)) that will permit early signal detection proof of concept testing prior to launching a clinical interventional trial

All of these mechanisms require a Letter of Intent to be submitted by November 1 for our review prior to submitting an application. The directional emphasis evident in the collaborative Merit and the phased clinical trial is a strong focus on translational work that will lead to new clinical advances. Please connect with your scientific portfolio manager to learn more and ensure your proposals will be well aligned with these new mechanisms.

Notes on Review

CSRD had the unfortunate task of turning back a record number of applications submitted for Fall round review. The majority of reasons might best be described to as administrative in nature wherein the wrong RFA, wrong budget, or missing required elements occurred as major issues. Please, make sure the requirements for an RFA are being met in the future!

Our RFAs between BLRD and CSRD are varying more as we define parameters for our resources and directions. We hope this was a one-time issue for the round as we are highly invested in making sure our investigators do get their important applications for funding reviewed.

Research Strategy

As one of the highest priorities for the Department, CSRD and others within ORD, are working on the complex requirements for research to be conducted and advanced to prevent suicide with

a strong focus on evidence-based interventions that can be implemented system-wide. Simultaneously, a national task force has been assembled under [Executive Order 13861](#) to develop a National Research Strategy which we expect to share widely in early spring 2020. This will also generate new directions and opportunities for the field to come together under this specific important priority.

Infectious Diseases Society of America IDWeek

We recently attended the IDWeek annual meeting held in Washington DC. It was exciting to have the opportunity in a pre-meeting session to present our VA career development opportunities to the assembled infectious disease scientists. We did notice that while the vast majority of attendees had indeed been trained at a VA facility, very few indicated plans to apply to a VA career development opportunity. This stood in contrast to the vast majority indicating they would be applying for NIH funding. We hope we can continue to successfully spread the message at all important specialty scientific meetings that our research program holds competitive and robust mentored training opportunities for all.

Meet Us

- Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, October 19-23, 2019 Meet us at Booth 2130!
 - Prostate Cancer Foundation Scientific Retreat, Carlsbad, CA, October 23-26, 2019
 - San Antonio Combat PTSD Conference, San Antonio, TX, October 23-24, 2019
 - ISTSS (International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies) 35th Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, November 14-16, 2019
 - PRIM&R (Public Responsibility in Medicine and Research) Conference, Boston, MA, November 17-20, 2019
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CSRD Staff Highlight: Kristina Nord

We wanted to take the opportunity to highlight staff in this newsletter: Kristina Nord has been with CSRD since 2016, bringing her social work education and study coordinator experience to managing our clinical trials portfolio. Most recently, she has conducted outreach with every new clinical trial approved for funding so that investigators understand our structure and have the chance to be introduced to all of CSRD supporting their work.

Helpful Links

[CSRD Home](#)

[Scientific Portfolio Managers' Contacts](#)

[RFAs and Program Announcements](#) (Can only be accessed on a VA computer)

[ORD Field Conference Call Minutes](#)

If you have any questions about this Newsletter, please email VHABLRD-CSR@va.gov.