2016 Request for Applications

Community Engagement Research Pilot Awards

Release Date: January 22, 2016
Mandatory Letter of Intent Due: February 29, 2016
Invitation for Full Applications: March 9, 2016
Applications Due: April 18, 2016
Awards Announced: May 4, 2016
Funding Available: July 1, 2016

The SYNERGY Community Engagement Core, in collaboration with SYNERGY's Translational Pilot Program, is issuing a call for proposals for pilot projects on community engagement research. The projects must be translational, leading to useful, generalizable knowledge on community engagement; they also require collaboration with a community partner. We expect to fund two to four one-year pilot projects at a funding level of $25,000 to $50,000. The deadline for submission of the mandatory Letter of Intent (LOI) is Feb. 29, 2016.

The goal of this RFA is to support community engagement research that emphasizes the community's role in developing and translating knowledge into improvements in clinical practice, community programs, and health policy. The pilots are not for demonstration projects (i.e. providing new services through a grant without a research question, hypothesis and research methods). If you are uncertain about the goals of community engagement research the SYNERGY office is happy to arrange a mentor consult (please contact community.pilots@dartmouth.edu). In addition, we will offer a one hour information session on community engagement research to provide definitions and answer questions to interested applicants on February 3, 2016, 12:00-1:00pm. (Borwell 658W)

Deliverables: The successful applicant must complete the pilot project and submit results for publication within 12 months. The intent of these grants are to fund initial pilots that will provide data for further, external, peer-reviewed funding; successful applicants are expected to seek such funding. This award is not intended to support a project that is independent of an investigator's career path.

Eligibility of the Principal Investigator:

Investigators at Dartmouth College, Geisel School of Medicine, Thayer School of Engineering, Tuck School of Business, and Dartmouth-Hitchcock and its affiliated sites, including the White River Junction, Manchester and Togus VAs, who meet the requirements below are eligible to apply.

– Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor (tenure track, CHS, or clinical). Senior investigators must show a history of securing external, peer-reviewed funding.
– The contact PI must have a faculty appointment OR collaborating as a co-investigator with appointed faculty
Should the contact PI be a junior faculty member, the applicant should identify his/her research mentor(s) in the letter of intent (LOI).

To foster community engagement, the application must also list the name of the community-based collaborator / organization that will be substantially involved in aspects of study design, execution, interpretation and dissemination.

Have well-developed plans for a research career. The results of this pilot should form a significant part of a subsequent, externally funded, peer-reviewed research project.

**Important Dates**

- **Letter of intent due:** February 29, 2016
- **Notification of Invitation to submit full app:** March 9, 2016
- **Application due:** April 18, 2016
- **Awards Announced:** May 4, 2016
- **Start Date:** July 1, 2016

**LOI submission** (mandatory):

A two-page LOI, accompanied by a Biosketch (NEW 2015 NIH format [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/faq_biosketches.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/faq_biosketches.htm)) for the PI(s), must be submitted to: community.pilots@dartmouth.edu by 5:00pm on February 29, 2016.

Please include the following information in your letter:

1. PI or Co-PIs name(s), contact information, department, and funding program you are applying to.
2. Name and contact information of community-based collaborator/organization.
3. Mentor(s) for proposed project, if contact PI is junior faculty at the rank of instructor or assistant professor.
4. Names and roles of key personnel.
5. Title of your proposal.
6. Specific aims, brief overview of research design and methods and description of the community engagement and translational aspects of your research.
7. Please indicate how the community-based collaborator/organization of this research project will be substantially involved in your research.
9. Biosketch (contact PI)

Receipt of your LOI will be acknowledged within one business day by SYNERGY administrative staff. The LOI will be reviewed by the Community Pilot application review committee, and **those invited to submit a full application will be notified by March 9, 2016.**

**Application Requirements:**

All invited full applications should be submitted as a single PDF to community.pilots@dartmouth.edu by 5:00pm on April 18, 2016. The narrative section of the application should be written in 11 point Cambria font with 1/2-inch margins.

1. **Face Page:**
   a. Title
   b. PI, all investigators, affiliations
2. **Scientific Abstract:** Provide a concise description of the proposed research written for scientific audiences. **250-word maximum.** Your scientific abstract must include:
   a. Background: what is the question and why is it important?
   b. Method: how does the design and method involve rigorous science?
   c. Results: when and where will the results be reported?
   d. Conclusions: How will this project change practice?
   e. Next steps: Where and when will you apply for external funding on this topic?

3. **Community Abstract:** Describe to a community-audience how you anticipate that this project can, in the long-term, impact the health of community residents. Do not reiterate the Scientific Abstract; instead tell a story that addresses the importance of this research, whose lives will ultimately be improved, and why. **250 word maximum.** Your community abstract must include:
   a. Magnitude of the health issue: How many people are affected, what is the scope of this issue in the area, how are costs of health care impacted, etc.?
   b. Knowledge gap: What gap will your proposed research address, what will your results tell us that is not already known?
   c. Community collaborators / organizations: Who are the stakeholders of this research project and how will they be involved in your research, what roles will they play?
   d. Long-term policy implications of your research: How will your research inform/impact health in the community and organizational or public policies?


5. **Narrative:** The narrative should not exceed 5 double-spaced pages and should address each of the following components. (If you are re-submitting a proposal, please include a 1-page introduction responding to previous critiques; this will increase your allowed page limit to 7 maximum pages.)
   a. **Specific Aims:** Be concise and realistic.
   b. **Investigator:** Explain how the PI, community collaborator/organization, and research team are especially suited to this project. If you are a junior investigator, explain how you and your research team have the appropriate experience, training and mentoring. If you are a more established PI, describe an ongoing record of accomplishments that has advanced your field (i.e., publications, external peer-reviewed funding).
   c. **Environment:** Will the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Will the project benefit from unique features of the scientific environment, subject populations, or collaborative arrangements?
   d. **Background and Significance:** Why is this project important to the field of community engagement research? Describe what is known, what will be new information, and any preliminary studies.
   e. **Methods:** Discuss research design, measures, procedures, analyses, potential problems, and alternative strategies.
   f. **Plans for Collaboration / Engagement:** Who are the stakeholders who will benefit from your research? Please describe how the community collaborator/organization and other stakeholders will be involved in your research and what role they will play. Describe how you will be engaging patients/consumers in the design, delivery, and interpretation of study results (ideally incorporate person-centered design principles).
   g. **Dissemination plan:** Please include a plan that addresses how and when your project results will be disseminated to/with your community collaborator/organization and/or other specific clinical practice, community stakeholders or policy audiences. This plan should be developed early in the process with your community collaborator/organization. Note: the sophistication of this plan
should match the scope of your project and care should be taken for careful interpretation of results.

h. **Next Steps:** What are the next steps in your research project trajectory and what are your plans for acquiring funding?

i. **Future considerations—policy implications:** Address how your research will inform/impact community engagement, translational research, and organizational or public policies.

6. **Impact Statement:** Please respond to one of the three following:
   a. Identify the specific metrics that you will use to identify the effects of your research on health outcomes (including physical, mental, and/or social), or the effects of your research on specific, well-established determinants of health (PI must be able to justify determinants chosen).
   
   b. If specific metrics will not be measured in your pilot, describe the metrics that you will use to identify the effects of your subsequent research on health outcomes or on specific, well-established determinants of health.
   
   c. If you are not be able to measure specific health outcomes directly, describe other possible impacts of this pilot or subsequent research, where impact is defined as: any permanent new or revised structures, policies, or processes in the delivery of health care services or community health programs that are the result of this project/collaboration.

7. **Timeline:** Project must be completed within 12 months of start date. Please include a depiction of what tasks will be completed during which months and a narrative that addresses how you will address timeline and deadline issues/potential challenges with your community and faculty collaborators. This timeline and description does not count against your 5-page narrative described above. We will require progress reports at 6 month intervals.

8. **Literature citations:** Please attach.

9. **Letters of collaboration/support:** Please include signed (can be electronic) letters of support from your collaborators—including those associated with the special criteria that you choose. Collaborator letters should both indicate support for the project, and should fully describe the role that they will play in the research and how they intend to use the results of this project towards practice, program or policy change. Your application **MUST include** a letter from your Chair indicating support for this independent area of investigation AND a letter of support from your collaborating community / organization entity.

10. **Budget (up to $50,000 for 12-months of direct support):**
    a. Budget page (must use SYNERGY Budget Template), including % effort for all personnel noted, even if no money is being requested to support their work under this pilot program.
    b. Budget justification (maximum 1 page).
    c. Matching resources: A letter of support is required for details of matching resources.
    d. Signatures: Please scan necessary signatures.

When creating your budget, please note the following:

- Funds are available for personnel, supplies and other allowable expenses. Because SYNERGY is a NIH-funded Institute, pilot budgets must follow the same rules/spending limitations as federal grants.
- Funding of education per se is **not** allowed under this program.
- Indirect costs are not allowed.
- Investigator salary is allowed, but should be used principally to support the research. Effort must be reported even when salary is donated.
- Only travel funds necessary for study conduct (e.g., participant travel) are allowed.
- Equipment that is essential for the study, and is not otherwise available, may be requested, but large equipment expenditures are strongly discouraged.
11. Do not include/attach appendices.

Please direct any questions about Community Pilot LOI or application to:

community.pilots@dartmouth.edu