

# Cornell Center for Health Equity

## REQUEST FOR COLLABORATIVE PILOT PROJECT PROPOSALS

August 19, 2019

The Cornell Center for Health Equity is pleased to request applications for one-year pilot project grants. The primary goals of this opportunity are to:

- 1) Support two pilot projects
- 2) Support up to four community partnership building projects

Either type of project must: be collaborative, novel, and innovative; focus on research in health and/or healthcare disparities; and build towards extramural funding. The pilot projects are strongly encouraged to engage a community partner, but a community partnership is not required if the investigators provide a convincing justification (for example, the study involves a large national or international data set).

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to advance the One Cornell strategic objective by forming teams comprised of scientists and scholars from across our Ithaca and New York City campuses with the overall goal of enhancing collaboration to take more complete advantage of Cornell University's considerable talent pool.

*Guidelines:*

### Eligible Applicants

The principal investigator (PI) should have a primary faculty appointment (Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor) in any College of Cornell University, including Cornell Tech; concordant with the collaboration goal, multiple PI projects (involving more than one investigator from complementary areas of other Colleges) are strongly encouraged.

Awardees of a Cornell Center for Health Equity pilot grant, Weill Cornell Medicine Department of Medicine's seed-grant, or Dean's Diversity Awards within the past 3 years are not eligible for this opportunity. For proposals with existing funding support, please explain any cost sharing.

Applicants must be willing to present their work at the Center's bi-campus monthly Health Equity Seminar series as well as at the annual Symposium. If community partners are involved, they should be encouraged to attend and/or present.

### Topics

This opportunity seeks to support the development of novel, innovative research broadly related to health equity. Topics may focus on the entire translational spectrum from basic science to clinical to community- and population-based research. For example, research may focus on:

- Strategies and interventions to address social determinants of health disparities
- Understanding patterns, including geospatial variations, causes and consequences of health disparities using large national databases
- How to engage marginalized populations in counseling on their biologically-mediated risks
- How to modify health system process to better address the needs of marginalized populations
- Underlying genetic or biologic mechanisms that lead to differences in health outcomes in conditions

where minorities or other marginalized/stigmatized populations have worse health outcomes

These topics are only examples, not priorities. Any topic that seeks to understand the sources of health disparities and how to overcome them is relevant. Topics that test strategies to overcome sources of health disparities are preferred, but large database analyses that aim to discover novel observations are also welcome.

Applications must have a clearly defined path to extramural funding. Applications without a clearly defined path to extramural funding will be considered unresponsive to this opportunity. Applications that may lead to extramurally funded Center grants are preferred. Grants can be from the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, or any other extramural funding agency, including foundations, other government agencies, or pharma.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

Applications that demonstrate that they respond to community priorities are preferred but not required for the pilot projects. Proposals that engage stakeholders must demonstrate how stakeholders were engaged in the development of the research question. **Because stakeholder engaged research may be unfamiliar to applicants, we offer up to four smaller awards of up to \$5,000 specifically to develop relationships with a community partner.** Stakeholder engagement is part of the Patient Centered Research Institute's (PCORI) approach to research, thus seeking advice from PCORI-funded researchers on stakeholder engagement is also advisable. Outreach to the Center's Community Engagement Core for advice is encouraged (Erica Phillips Caesar, MD, Associate Director of the NYC Community Engagement Core, erp2001@med.cornell.edu).

### **Funding**

Budgets for pilot awards are limited to \$50,000 total direct costs for the one-year project period, and can be used to support faculty, project personnel, supplies, and costs of patient incentives/honoraria. Subcontracts to community partners are encouraged.

Budgets for community partnership building projects are limited to \$5,000 total direct costs for a 1-year period.

Funds may not be used to support capital equipment, travel to scientific meetings, or indirect costs. The funding period is anticipated to be November 1, 2019 – October 31, 2020. Awardees are expected to provide a short 6-month progress report and a final progress report within 90 days of the conclusion of the funding period.

### **Due Date**

Applications are due on October 1, 2019. Details about the application and how to submit are provided below.

### **Application Instructions & Checklist**

1. Cover Page: use attached cover-page template
2. Abstract: ½ page
3. Lay Summary: ½ page
4. Novel Direction Statement: brief statement (< ½ page) describing how the proposed project is a new direction focused on achieving health equity, and how it is not covered by any existing grant funding.
5. A. For pilot grants: Research Proposal (3 page limit): include the following sections only (NIH format): Specific Aims, Significance, Innovation, and Approach. Preliminary data, if available, should also be included.  
B. For community partnership building grants: Research Proposal (2 page limit): include the following sections only (NIH format): Specific Aims, Significance, Innovation, and Approach. Preliminary data are not required.
6. References (not included in the Research Proposal page limit)

7. Extramural Funding Plan (not included in the Research Proposal page limit): brief plan (~ ½ page) for submission of an application for continued extramural support of the project. Plan should include a timetable for potential submission of project for extramural support. Plan should highlight how seed funding will enhance the likelihood of success for extramural funding.
8. Statement on Collaborations: (1/2 page) include a brief statement on how the proposal reflects collaboration between investigators on the Cornell University Ithaca and New York City campuses, and how they will jointly contribute to the project and collaboratively benefit from the funding. If the project uses the Multiple PI mechanism, please provide a statement of how the project will be led by multiple PIs, and clearly indicate the contact PI.
9. Statement on Stakeholder Engagement (if applicable): (1/2 page) include a brief statement on how stakeholders were engaged in developing the research question, and how they will be engaged in the research team.
10. Budget (itemized)
11. Budget Justification
12. NIH formatted Biosketch for key personnel
13. Other Support Page: include all active research support for all key personnel.

*Please utilize the provided application template, with the set margins/font.*

### **Application Deadline**

Applications should be submitted as a **single PDF** to [centerforhealthequity@med.cornell.edu](mailto:centerforhealthequity@med.cornell.edu) by **October 15, 2019 at 5:00 pm EST**. For additional information on this opportunity please contact Nathaly Rodriguez, Cornell Center for Health Equity coordinator, at [Nathaly Rodriguez, nar7014@med.cornell.edu](mailto:Nathaly.Rodriguez.nar7014@med.cornell.edu).

### **Selection Process**

Awards will be chosen on a competitive basis by the Center for Health Equity pilot grant selection committee. The PI will be notified via e-mail in October if the project is selected for funding. The effective award date is November 1, 2019.

Proposals will be scored in the following categories:

- (1) Innovation and Significance – Is the proposed research innovative? Is the proposed research significant? Does the research focus on overcoming health inequities or is it more descriptive (the former is preferred)?
- (2) Approach – Are the proposed methods scientifically appropriate to answer the research questions? Are the aims too inter-dependent (that is, does a later aim rely on the success of an earlier aim)?
- (3) Extramural Funding Plan – Are potential funding mechanisms clearly identified? Is a timeline for submission of the grant provided? Is the grant a program project grant?
- (4) Participation of faculty from across Cornell University's campus – Does the team include investigators from more than one Cornell campus (Ithaca and New York City)? **Note that failure to include investigators from both campuses will be nonresponsive.** The selection committee will seek to balance PIs from both the Ithaca and New York City campuses.
- (5) Stakeholder Engagement (if applicable) – Are stakeholders part of the research team? Were stakeholders engaged in formulating the research question? Does the research address a community priority (preferred)? What are the plans to engage community members throughout the project period? What are the plans to continue engagement for the grant to follow?