



## **UW ICTR Collaborative Health Equity Research (CHER) Pilot Award 2021 Request for Applications (RFA)**

### **GOAL OF THE CHER PILOT GRANT PROGRAM**

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**Goal:** To support new community-engaged research projects focused on health disparities/inequities wherein the PI is an early stage investigator, e.g., assistant professor, and a senior co-investigator is engaged to ensure a mentored experience and to connect the research team with relevant stakeholders.

We welcome applications that address contemporary and/or emerging health crises related to COVID-19 and/or racial/ethnic disparities in health.

**Deliverable:** The successful grantee will use pilot data to seek further, external peer-reviewed funding in support of a research career trajectory. This award is not intended to support a project that is independent of an investigator's career path.

**Requirements:** This award targets early stage investigators focused on health disparities/inequities to provide experience in clinical and translational research in support of future career development, and provide preliminary data for subsequent funding mechanisms. Specifically, this pilot award program prioritizes support of **assistant professors** and **requires a mentored junior-senior collaboration** wherein the collaborators embrace an interdisciplinary approach to research and meaningful engagement of community partners & stakeholders.

Proposed research for this RFA must address **health disparities or health inequities** as defined below.

*Differences in the incidence, prevalence, mortality, burden of disease, and other adverse health conditions or outcomes that exist between population groups based on gender, age, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geography, sexual orientation and identification, disability or special health care needs, or other categories. Most **health disparities** are also considered to be **health inequities** – disparities that are avoidable, unfair or unjust and/or are the result of social or economic conditions or policies that occur among groups who have persistently experienced historical trauma, social disadvantage or discrimination, and systematically experience worse health or greater health risks than more advantaged social groups.*

Applications **must cite published evidence** that the health disparity/inequity is recognized by state/federal agencies as significant, and warrants intervention.

Applicants are encouraged to consider the [WCHQ 2019 Wisconsin Health Disparities Report](https://www.hipxchange.org/WCHQDisparities) which identifies statewide racial/ethnic health disparities. Watch for the release of the 2020 report with a focus on rural/urban disparities on November 12, 2020. URL: <https://www.hipxchange.org/WCHQDisparities>





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Successful proposals to this RFA must provide rationale for the current gap in their program of research that precludes a successful extramural application, and how this junior-senior collaboration will alleviate this gap. Examples of activities that would be responsive under this award include:

- Collection of pilot data using sound methodology directed to a topic aligned with this RFA (health disparities) and an external funder's mission, including community/stakeholder engagement methods utilized throughout each phase of the project and, where appropriate, advance understanding about how community/stakeholder engagement can be accomplished in complex research settings.
- Proposed research must be translational in nature. Translational research is broadly defined to include the early steps necessary to develop new therapies from basic discoveries; the steps necessary to establish real world efficacy; and the research needed to implement and disseminate improvements in clinical practice, health services, and/or policy.

**We encourage applications for studies that meet the NIH definition of a clinical trial.** For more guidance on the NIH definition of a clinical trial see here: <https://grants.nih.gov/policy/clinical-trials/definition.htm>

## AWARD

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Each award is for a maximum of **\$50,000 for 12 months** of direct support.

## ELIGIBILITY OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

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- PIs must be a UW-Madison faculty member at the **assistant professor** level (tenure track or CHS) with a sole or joint appointment (e.g., VA Hospital or UW Milwaukee), or a Marshfield Clinic investigator at comparable rank.
- A **senior co-investigator must be engaged** to ensure a mentored research experience and to connect the research team to relevant stakeholders.
- Whereas residents, fellows, and post-doctoral associates are **NOT** eligible to serve as PIs, they are eligible to serve as co-Investigators.
- Include only one Lead Applicant per proposal.
- **PIs or co-PIs can only apply to a single ICTR funding mechanism in a calendar year.** Investigators can be Key Personnel on another submission.
- Previous ICTR grant awardees are **not** eligible to receive a second ICTR award as PI or Co-PI if the previous award is **still active**.
- *If awarded*, research teams may be invited to participate in a facilitated Collaboration Planning process as part of the [ICTR Team Science](#) initiatives.



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**KEY DATES AND DEADLINES**

Letter of Intent Due (mandatory)	November 20, 2020 (by 5 pm)
RFA Workshop (Mandatory)	Asynchronous recording
Full Proposal Due	December 21, 2020 (by 5 pm)
Review Period	December-February, 2021
Awards Announced	March 2021
Earliest Project Start Date*	April 1, 2021

\*UW ICTR Human Subjects Protections Officer [Nichelle Cobb](#) will consult with awardees on regulatory aspects of UW Institutional Review Board (IRB) submission to maximize likelihood of April 1, 2021 start-date.

**LETTER OF INTENT (mandatory)**

**Due Friday, November 20, 2020 by 5 pm.** Letters of Intent (LOIs) must be submitted as a **single PDF/Word document** to [capgrants@lists.wisc.edu](mailto:capgrants@lists.wisc.edu). The LOI is not used for ranking but will assist staff in identifying proposal reviewers.

**The Letter of Intent - please include the following:**

1. PI Name, contact information, department, and funding program to which you are applying.
2. Title of your proposal.
3. Names and roles of key personnel crucial to the design/conduct of the study.
4. A **brief description** of the proposed research or project activities with enough detail to determine project feasibility, programmatic relevance related to health disparities and equity, and to identify both scientific and design/methods reviewers.
5. Please indicate the stakeholders of this research project and how they will be involved in your research.
6. Letter of support (LOS) from the **research mentor**. The LOS should indicate a commitment to assist in the research and career development of the awardee, and explain the mentor expertise in the topic and/or health disparities research, as well as potential for future funding in the proposed area of research.
7. Letter of support (LOS) from **stakeholders/collaborators** to confirm that the *investigators have been in conversation with collaborators (academic and non-academic)* about the project and are committed to being involved in the project. Note: The letters of support required in the full application stage will require greater detail.





## RFA WORKSHOP (mandatory)

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PIs are REQUIRED to view a recorded workshop by December 1, 2020. Research teams and collaborators are encouraged to view the workshop as well. All those who submit a Letter of Intent will receive a link to the 2021 RFA Workshop.

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

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The full application is due on Monday, December 21, 2020 by 5 pm. Note: Applicants who responded to a previous UW ICTR Pilot Award RFA but were NOT funded, must submit a **NEW** application responsive to this announcement. Please note these application instructions:

- A complete application includes items 1-11 below. Please insert page numbers on the full application
- Narrative: Maximum length of 6 pages, 11-point Arial font with ½" margins.
- Templates for the Face Page, Abstracts and Budget are within the *2021 CHER Application Forms* on the ICTR Funding Opportunities page.
- Submit the full application as a **single PDF/Word document** to [capgrants@lists.wisc.edu](mailto:capgrants@lists.wisc.edu) or [kjudge@wisc.edu](mailto:kjudge@wisc.edu) by 5 pm on December 21, 2020.

### Full Application: Components (1-11)

1. **Face Page**
2. **Scientific Abstract:** Provide a concise description of the proposed research written for scientific audiences. 500-word maximum. Your scientific abstract must include:
  - ✓ Scientific rationale supporting your proposed research, including evidence that this health disparity/inequity is recognized by state/federal agencies as significant and warranting intervention
  - ✓ Specific hypothesis or hypotheses to be tested.
  - ✓ Research aims and project design.
  - ✓ How the project uniquely advances our understanding of the topic being addressed.
  - ✓ Next steps for this stream of research, including potential funders who have identified your research topic as a health priority.
3. **Community Abstract:** The community abstract is an opportunity to express to our *community reviewers* how you anticipate that this project can, in the long-term, impact the health of Wisconsin residents. It should **not** be a reiteration of the Scientific Abstract but **instead** should *tell a story* that addresses the importance of this research, whose lives will ultimately be improved, and why (500 word maximum). **See Video on writing for community reviewers here:** <https://videos.med.wisc.edu/videos/8470>





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Your community abstract must include:

- ✓ Magnitude of the health issue. How many individuals are affected, what is the scope of this issue in the state, how are costs of health care impacted, etc.? Include the rationale for this health disparity/inequity research in Wisconsin
  - ✓ Knowledge gap. What gap will your proposed research address; what will your project results tell us that is not already known?
  - ✓ Community collaborators. Who are the stakeholders of this research project, how will they be involved in your research, what roles will they play? Is the involvement meaningful? Is there evidence that research addressing the health problem is sought by potential end-users? For investigations at the *very* early stages, engagement can be more limited to an initial conversation with a stakeholder about the applicability of the question to daily practice.
  - ✓ Longer-term policy implications of your research. How might your research inform/impact organizational or public policies?
  - ✓ Potential impact of this stream of research. How will this project, in the context of your larger research career, improve health in Wisconsin? Will the study translate new and existing findings into improvements in clinical practice, community health and/or policy?
4. **Biosketches for Key Personnel:** Please use the NIH biosketch format with the “personal statement” section; an example can be found [here](#).
- ✓ For non-academic stakeholders, please submit resumes.
5. **Budget (up to \$50,000 for 12 months of direct support) - Requirements**
- ✓ Use the budget template which is bundled with the face page in the application materials.
  - ✓ *“Months of effort” for each key personnel must be listed*, even if no money is being requested to support their work under this pilot program.
  - ✓ Budget Justification is required (maximum 2 pages).
  - ✓ Signed Non-Supplanting (NS) Questionnaire is required. Download NS form here: <https://ictr.wisc.edu/documents/non-supplanting-questionnaire/>
  - ✓ For more on our supplanting policy see here: <https://www.med.wisc.edu/media/medwiscedu/documents/service/wisconsin-partnership-program/grant-materials/wpp-supplanting-policy-012020.pdf>

When creating your budget, please note the following parameters:

- All activity under this award is subject to the University and Wisconsin Partnership Program (WPP) policies, **please see WPP policy on allowable-unallowable costs here:** <https://www.med.wisc.edu/media/medwiscedu/documents/service/wisconsin-partnership-program/grant-materials/allowable-unallowable-expenses-policy-1-1-20.pdf>
- Funds are available for personnel, supplies and other allowable expenses including payments to your community collaborators and/or stakeholders. Because ICTR is a NIH-funded Institute, pilot budgets must follow the same rules/spending limitations as federal grants.



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- Investigator salary support is allowed, but *clear justification* of why it is necessary should be provided
    - Requested funds should be limited and used principally to directly support the research.
    - Effort must be reported even when salary is donated.
    - PIs proposing effort without salary support must provide documentation from your Department Chair attesting to dedicated research time for the proposed research.
  - **Indirect costs are *not* allowed.**
  - Funding of education per se is *not* allowed under this program. However, tuition remission can be included for students who are budgeted to be paid as UW research or project assistants, whose efforts are integral to the research endeavor.
  - 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.
  - Matching resources are encouraged and can be monetary or non-monetary. A letter of support is *required* that details matching resources.
6. **Narrative:** The narrative should not exceed 6 pages and should address each of the following components (items a-k below).
- a) **Specific Aims.** Describe concisely and realistically the goals of the proposed project and summarize the expected outcome(s), including the impact the proposed research will exert on the research fields involved. Include broad, long-term goals; specific objectives and hypotheses to be tested; summarize expected outcomes; and describe impact on the research field. If the proposed work is part of a larger project, describe how the proposed work relates to the larger project.
  - b) **Rationale for Funding.** Please explain how this award will facilitate the career development of the early investigator and increase the likelihood of submitting a highly competitive grant application for external funding on the topic of health disparities/health inequities. Describe briefly (2-4 sentences) the relationship of the anticipated work outcomes to the applicant's future career development.
  - c) **Significance.** Even with "preliminary studies" there should be a strong statement regarding how the project will directly help the population involved and how that will happen. Describe the involvement of the community/stakeholders in developing the research question. Describe the state of existing knowledge, including literature citations and highlights of relevant data; provide a rationale for the proposed research; explain gaps the project intends to fill; and the potential contribution to the scientific field(s) and public health. Describe how the proposed work specifically addresses the mechanism of the health disparity or how the work will impact the health of the specific population group experiencing the inequity in Wisconsin. **APPLICATIONS MUST CITE PUBLISHED EVIDENCE THAT THE HEALTH DISPARITY/INEQUITY IS RECOGNIZED BY STATE/FEDERAL AGENCIES AS SIGNIFICANT, AND WARRANTS INTERVENTION.**



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- d) **Investigator.** Explain how the PI and research team are especially suited to this project. Explain how you and your research team have the appropriate experience, training and **mentoring capacity**. Describe the mentor's pertinent record of accomplishments in this field (i.e., publications, external peer-reviewed funding, and/or other impact).
- e) **Environment.** Will the environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probably of success? Will the project benefit from unique features of the scientific environment, subject populations, or collaborative arrangements?
- f) **Approach.** Describe how the proposed project will be carried out. Describe the mentoring plan for the junior-senior collaboration. Research design and methods should include preliminary studies, data and experience relevant to the application and design, a description of methods and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Discuss the way in which the data will be collected, analyzed and interpreted. If proposing a new methodology, explain why it represents an improvement over existing ones. Discuss potential difficulties and limitations, how these will be overcome or mitigated, and next steps. Are plans for the following justified in terms of the scientific goals and research strategy proposed: 1) protection of human subjects from research risks, and 2) inclusion of minorities and members of both sexes/genders, as well as the inclusion of children? Please provide sufficient detail for review as outlined by *ICTR Scientific Review Committee* here: <https://kb.wisc.edu/hsirbs/18844>.
- g) **Plans for Collaboration/Engagement.** Who are the stakeholders who will ultimately benefit from, or be affected by your research? Describe the involvement of the community/stakeholders in developing the research question. Please describe how your stakeholders/ community partners are involved in your research, and what role they will play. **This funding opportunity requires meaningful engagement of relevant stakeholders and/or community partners.** ICTR offers many resources for investigators related to planning stakeholder engagement (see [Stakeholder Engagement Resources](#) on the ICTR web portal). **For definitions and key terms**, see the side-bar of the ICTR Funding Opportunities page.
- h) **Dissemination plan.** Please include a plan that addresses how and when your project results will be disseminated to/with your stakeholder/community partner and/or other specific clinical practice, community or policy audiences. Note: the sophistication of this plan should match the scope of your project and care should be taken for careful interpretation of results. This plan should be developed early in the process with your stakeholders. Consider a consultation with the [ICTR D&I Launchpad](#) on how you might get input from potential adopters at this stage in your research, and/or potential purveyors, implementers and end-users. For definitions and key terms, see the side-bar of the ICTR Funding Opportunities page.
- i) **Next Steps.** What is the next step in your research project trajectory and what are your plans for acquiring funding? Please note that an expectation of this program is that the research team must have plans to apply for external, peer-reviewed funding.





- j) **Future considerations–policy implications.** If applicable, please address how your research might inform/impact organizational or public policies. If you'd like assistance assessing the policy implications of your research, please contact UW Pop Health policy consultant Victoria Faust ([vnfaust@wisc.edu](mailto:vnfaust@wisc.edu)). For definitions and key terms, see the side-bar of the ICTR Funding Opportunities page.
- k) **Special Criteria.** This application automatically meets two ICTR-CAP Special Criteria (health disparities/inequities and junior-senior mentorship).

**The required application components below do not count against your 6-page narrative.**

- 7. **Impact Statement.** Please respond to **ONE of the three** following questions regarding impact that is best aligned with your research question:
  - 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.
- 8. **Timeline:** Project must be completed within 12 months of start date. Please include a depiction of tasks to 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.** A 6-month no-cost extension is available if warranted and well-justified.
- 9. **Literature citations:** Please attach.
- 10. **Letters of collaboration/support:** Please include *signed* (can be electronic) letters of support (LOS) 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. If you are collaborating with an **ICTR-CAP Program or Affiliate** – *you must have a letter of support from the Director of that program.*
  - Provide a LOS from **community partners** outlining their commitment to the research and their specific, meaningful role in the project. For guidance on letters of support from community partners, and planning for stakeholder engagement, see this [guide](#) developed by the Wisconsin Network for Research Support (WINRS).





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- **Mentor LOS:** A letter of commitment from the mentor directing the proposed research describing mentoring, support, and collaboration. (Letter must include explicit plans for mentor-mentee interactions, and manuscript assistance and review; mentors must also briefly describe accordance of their research portfolio with the proposed research, and a brief description of their mentoring history).

## 11. Do not include/attach appendices.



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## RESOURCES FOR APPLICANTS

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### 1. Grant Writing Group: Health Innovation Program (HIP)

- Numerous previous awardees have utilized the [HIP Grant Writing Group](#) (GWG)
- Applicants are encouraged to start the group as early as the Letter of Intent stage and continue with monthly feedback through full proposal submission.
- For more information on joining the group, please email [gwg@hip.wisc.edu](mailto:gwg@hip.wisc.edu)
- For more information about how the HIP GWG works, see <https://hip.wisc.edu/GrantWritingGroup>

### 2. Reference Articles: Pilot Studies

- Thabane et al. (2010). [A tutorial on pilot studies: the what, why and how](#). *BMC Medical Research Methodology*. 10(1):1-10.
- Arain et al. (2010). [What is a pilot or feasibility study? A review of current practice and editorial policy](#). *BMC Medical Research Methodology*. 10(67):1-7.
- Kistin & Silverstein. (2010). [Pilot studies: A critical but potentially misused component of interventional research](#). *JAMA*. 314(15):1561-1562.

### 3. Projects Funded in Previous Rounds

- Descriptions of previous awards are available on the ICTR Funding Opportunities page
- URL: [https://d1ugitzsuwlnsf.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/163/2019/11/CHER\\_ICTR-Pilots\\_2017-2019.pdf](https://d1ugitzsuwlnsf.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/163/2019/11/CHER_ICTR-Pilots_2017-2019.pdf)

### 4. ICTR-CAP Review Process and Criteria

- Information about the ICTR-CAP Review Process and Review Criteria are available [here](#).

### 5. Definitions and Key Terms

- For Definitions and Key Terms see the side-bar of the ICTR Funding Opportunities page
- Also see definitions per the Wisconsin Partnership Program: <https://www.med.wisc.edu/media/medwiscedu/documents/service/wisconsin-partnership-program/grant-materials/wpp-definitions.pdf>

### 6. Directory of ICTR-CAP Programs/Affiliate Programs

- For a *Directory of ICTR-CAP Programs/Affiliate Programs* see the side-bar of the ICTR Funding Opportunities page (Additional Requirements and Information)
- URL: <https://ictr.wisc.edu/documents/cap-program-affiliates/>

If you have questions about the RFA, please contact ICTR-CAP Pilot Awards Manager:  
Kate Judge at [kjudge@wisc.edu](mailto:kjudge@wisc.edu)

