CTSI Community Engagement and Research Core:
Community Engagement Enhancement Funding Available

Release Date: November 20, 2014


Anticipated Award Date: Within 2 months of receipt of application

Overview
The Penn State Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) Community Engagement and Research Core (CERC) announces the availability of funds from $500 to $10,000 for Penn State investigators to include or enhance an existing health-related research project with community engagement. Projects can be in any area of health care or mental care research including treatment and prevention. This RFA casts a broad net and is intended to increase researcher capacity to utilize and connect with various communities that can facilitate research and its translation to public health change.

Engaging patients and communities not only as consumers of healthcare, but as active partners in the full spectrum of translational research, is integral to clinical and translational science. Community engagement can come at any and all stages of a research project (see below). This funding is intended to be a modest supplement to support one or more processes of community engagement within an existing health-related research project.

If successful, community engagement will help ensure that communities have the capacity to participate as full partners in research; that communities are consulted for their research priorities; that all stakeholders are respected, valued and rewarded for their time and expertise, that more effective implementation and dissemination strategies are developed, and that there is increased public support for research, and ultimately improvements in the health and well-being of communities.

What is considered community engagement in research?
Including or enhancing an existing health-related research project with community engagement could occur at any phase of a research project: (1) enhancing the early development of a project (or an outside research grant application) by initiating community engagement, (2) providing resources relatively early in a project to engage community stakeholders (see possible processes below), and (3) near the completion of project to enhance dissemination of findings and get feedback from community stakeholders on next steps. Examples of how community engagement can occur throughout these stages include (but are not limited to) engaging communities to participate in:

(1) identifying community health needs and priorities  
(2) providing input on relevant research questions  
(3) contributing to appropriate research design and methods  
(4) developing culturally-sensitive and ethical proposals  
(5) enhancing the recruitment and retention of research participants  
(6) implementing and disseminating research findings more effectively
When the study findings are ready for dissemination, funds could be used for community conversations, press releases, marketing results through web or print media, holding meetings with community stakeholder groups (e.g. school districts, patients with a particular disorder, health plans, Head Start Directors, health care professional groups, etc.). However, funds cannot be used to present results at the usual professional research meetings or pay for publication fees for scientific journals.

How are “communities” defined?
Communities may include (but are not limited to) disease advocacy groups, local health providers, patient groups, community-based organizations, culturally defined groups, schools, non-profit or industry entities engaged in translational research, and other national or local communities.

Budget
Funds for each project will be limited to $10,000. Funding of $500-$5000 will likely be sufficient for most projects. Projects above $5000 will be considered when justified; applicants should contact Drs. Chuang and Greenberg for consultation prior to submission for budgets above $5000.

Eligibility Criteria and Review Criteria
1. The Principal Investigator (PI) must hold a Penn State faculty appointment (Hershey or University Park). Cross-campus collaboration among Penn State investigators at Hershey and University Park is strongly encouraged.
2. Commitment to present study results to the CERC and the CTSI's Community Advisory Board (CAB).
3. Commitment to provide regular progress reports to the CTSI and to acknowledge the CTSI in all presentations and publications resulting from the research.

Funds are not intended to support:
- Faculty salaries and fringe benefits
- Student or post-doctoral fellow-initiated research (however, stipend support for students or fellows working on the project is allowed)
- Delivery of outreach programs or services not considered health research
- Funding for activities otherwise supported by departments and colleges (e.g., travel to conferences, software purchases) or for publications not directed toward community engagement (e.g., publication fees for scientific journals)
- Faculty summer salaries (where applicable)

Proposals will be reviewed by the CERC. Funding will be determined based on the potential for proposed community engagement component to enhance the overall research project.

Format of Proposal
Proposals should be submitted in Microsoft Word or PDF format, single-spaced, in Arial 11 font, left-aligned with ½-inch margins. Proposals may not exceed 3 pages for Sections 1 –5 below. Appendices are not allowed. Proposals should be written for a broad audience, avoiding overly technical language as much as possible, and defining key concepts and acronyms clearly.

The proposal should be divided in the following sections (please use these headings):
1. Title of Community Engagement Enhancement Proposal
2. Principal Investigator name, degree(s), department, college
3. **“Parent” Study Abstract** (no more than 300 words): Provide a succinct overview of the parent project.

4. **Specific Engagement Aim or Objective**: Provide a brief explanation of the background and rationale for the community-engaged enhancement and a brief description of the methods and activities that will be used to address this objective. Describe the translational potential of the project for improving the health of the relevant community as well as the level of community engagement there has been to date.

5. **Timeline**: Present a 1-year project timeline to meet the objective.

6. **Budget and Justification**: Provide an itemized budget and budget justification using standard NIH format. No funds may be allocated to faculty salaries and fringe benefits. In the budget justification, describe the roles and expertise of the investigators and community personnel. No indirect costs are provided.

7. **Name and contact information of your department’s budget coordinator**

8. **Investigator/collaborator information**: Provide a list of all Penn State investigators and community collaborators. For each, provide the following information:

   - **Role on Project (e.g., Co-Investigator, Community Collaborator):**
   - Name and Degree(s)
   - Faculty rank/title
   - Department
   - College
   - Phone and email

9. **NIH Biosketch for the Principal Investigator**

**Contact Information**
To express interest in applying for this funding, request assistance from the CTSI’s Community Advisory Board, request assistance with scientific matters, or any other questions about the RFA, contact the CERC/CAB Coordinator:

**Sara A. Baker, MSW**
Department of Public Health Sciences
Penn State College of Medicine
Sbaker7@psu.edu; Phone: 717-531-1175

Additional information about the CERC and CTSI Community Advisory Board (CAB) can be found on the Penn State CTSI website: [http://ctsi.psu.edu/community/](http://ctsi.psu.edu/community/)

Current CERC members are: Cynthia Chuang, MD, MSc, co-leader (College of Medicine); Mark Greenberg, PhD, co-leader (College of Health & Human Development); Brian Bumbarger, MEd (College of Health & Human Development); Jennifer Kraschnewski, MD, MPH (College of Medicine); Eugene Lengerich, VMD (College of Medicine); Ian Paul, MD, MS (College of Medicine); Janice Penrod, PhD (College of Nursing); Dennis Scanlon, PhD (College of Health & Human Development); Steven Zarit, PhD (College of Health & Human Development)

Current CAB members are: Rosemary Browne, co-chair (Alder Health); Patricia Fonzi, MA, co-chair (Family Health Council of Central PA); Leslie Best (PA Department of Health, retired); Barry Denk (Center for Rural PA); Anne Doerr (STEP, Inc., retired); Donna Gority (Blair County Commissioner, retired); Clayton Jacobs (Alzheimer’s Association Greater PA Chapter); Kay Jones, PhD (Schuylkill County VISION); and Sandra Valdez (Spanish American Civic Association)