



## **Wisconsin Partnership Program**

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

# **COVID-19 RESPONSE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS AND APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

**MARCH 2020**

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH  
OVERSIGHT AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
PARTNERSHIP EDUCATION AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE

## Background

The Wisconsin Partnership Program at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health is committed to improving health and health equity\* in Wisconsin through investments in research, education and community partnerships. It was established at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health through a generous gift from Blue Cross Blue Shield United of Wisconsin as a result of its conversion to a stock insurance corporation.

In collaboration with faculty and community-based organizations, the Partnership Program supports health improvement and disease prevention initiatives seeking to reduce morbidity, mortality and systemic disparities in health. The Wisconsin Partnership Program's vision, mission and values as well as its goals and grant-making strategies are described in the [2019-2024 Five-Year Plan](#).

**\*Health Equity:** The Wisconsin Partnership Program defines health equity as the attainment of the highest level of health for all people.<sup>1</sup> This requires addressing obstacles to health, such as poverty, discrimination and their consequences (including lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments and health care.)<sup>2</sup>

## Grant Program Goals and Description

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in unprecedented challenges to our communities and healthcare system. The ongoing impact of the virus' widespread transmission throughout the population, including Wisconsin communities and health systems, is expected to continue. The COVID-19 Response funding opportunity is designed to be a strategic, flexible, rapid-response mechanism to support innovative, responsive, high-impact projects that aim to improve the health of the people of Wisconsin by lessening the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic through scientific, medical, or public health approaches and/or by supporting those most at risk or experiencing the greatest disparities in care. Successful proposals will aim to reduce the health impacts of COVID-19 by addressing the impact of the virus from a medical, scientific, public health or social perspective. Priority during this funding cycle will be given to proposals taking **immediate action** to address the COVID-19 pandemic. The Wisconsin Partnership Program will provide up to \$1.5 million, directing \$750,000 to support community-led projects and \$750,000 to support faculty-led projects. Future funding cycles for the COVID-19 Response Request for Proposals will be considered as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves.

## Eligibility

Community organizations and UW-Madison faculty and academic staff with Principal Investigator (PI) status may apply for funding.

### Community-led Projects

The community applicant must be a Wisconsin-based nonprofit, tax exempt, 501(c)(3) organization or a tribal or government entity.

While this grant mechanism does not require an academic partner, working in collaboration with a partner within the UW System or UW-Extension is encouraged. Academic partners can include UW-Madison faculty or academic staff with temporary or full Principal Investigator (PI) status.

Examples of eligible projects include:

- Development of community-based / community-responsive infrastructure to distribute food, medication or other immediate health-related needs to those experiencing the greatest disparities in access as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Developing and implementing outreach mechanisms to provide mental health support to those at greatest risk for suffering from social isolation
- Development and implementation of outreach mechanisms to provide information about basic health resources to communities (e.g., where to find food, how to access enrichment activities for children, and effective risk reduction efforts and models that are used across the state)
- Training for community health workers to provide remote education on COVID-19 infection prevention
- Innovative community-designed responses to the short-term impact of COVID-19 on the social determinants of health with consideration of the expected health-related socio-economic impacts that result from this pandemic

### **Faculty-led Projects**

A principal Investigator (PI) is required and must have an appointment as a UW-Madison faculty member or academic staff with permanent PI status.

Examples of eligible projects include:

- A novel idea or approach to specifically address, contain or understand COVID-19
- Development of novel or improved pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic/device treatment approaches for COVID-19
- Infrastructure development to address challenges such as distribution of personal protective equipment or COVID-19 tests
- Advancing clinical knowledge, improved diagnosis or management of COVID-19
- Advancing knowledge regarding health policy or healthcare delivery issues related to COVID-19
- Innovative training and development of healthcare professionals and/or biomedical scientists to better address statewide needs and healthcare practice to address the COVID-19 pandemic
- Development of innovative models of patient care to improve COVID-19 outcomes

### **Funding Scope and Duration**

The Wisconsin Partnership Program will provide up to \$1.5 million, directing \$750,000 to support community-led projects and \$750,000 to support faculty-led projects. Award amounts will range between \$25,000 and \$150,000 based on proposed budgets for a duration no longer than 12 months. Carry forward of unexpended funds at the end of the project will not be allowed. The exact number of awards and awarded amounts will be determined based upon the merit of the proposals received and the funding amount requested by successful applicants.

### **Submission and Review Dates**

Request for Proposals released	March 30, 2020
Applications due	April 15, 2020
Applications reviewed	April 2020
Notify applicants of award decisions	April 30, 2020
Anticipated award start date	May 1, 2020

## Application Review Criteria and Process

**Review Criteria:** Applications will be reviewed based on the following criteria.

The proposal:

- Shows innovation in **immediately addressing** the COVID-19 pandemic and has outstanding rigor, merit and potential impact
- Describes plans to improve the health of the people of Wisconsin by lessening the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic through scientific, medical, or public health approaches and/or by supporting those most at risk or experiencing the greatest disparities in care
- Includes evidence of engagement with appropriate stakeholders (e.g., such as policymakers, local health service practitioners, community organizations, and those likely to be affected by the virus) and/or the appropriate partners with the necessary experience, influence, and expertise to accomplish project aims or objectives.
- Includes an explicit plan for evaluating and immediately disseminating outcomes or project results throughout Wisconsin
- Is aligned with the Wisconsin Partnership Program 2019-2024 Five-Year Plan and the goals of the COVID-19 Response Request for Proposals.

The applicant(s):

- Has(Have) experience developing, administering or evaluating community-engaged projects or research or education programs, as appropriate for the proposed project

**Technical Review:** Partnership Program staff will review each application to ensure that all application requirements, including nonsupplanting, are met. Applications that do not comply with the submission requirements will not be reviewed, and the applicant will be notified.

**Committee Review:** The Oversight and Advisory Committee (OAC) will make a final determination on the community-led awards and the Partnership Education and Research Committee (PERC) Executive Committee will make a final determination of the faculty-led awards. As part of the review process, the OAC and the PERC Executive Committee may consult with one or two academic and/or community representatives with proposal-related expertise. Award decisions will be based on alignment with the above review criteria as well as the goals and objectives of the Wisconsin Partnership program COVID-19 Response Request for Proposals and with Wisconsin Partnership Program's 2019-2024 Five-Year Plan. The committees' decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

## Technical Assistance

The Wisconsin Partnership Program is committed to working with you to address your questions or provide technical assistance to move proposals forward in a timely and efficient manner.

### Wisconsin Partnership Program

4230 Health Sciences Learning Center  
[med.wisc.edu/partnership](http://med.wisc.edu/partnership)  
[wpp@hslc.wisc.edu](mailto:wpp@hslc.wisc.edu)  
608-265-8215

Eileen Smith, Assistant Dean and Director  
[emsmith2@wisc.edu](mailto:emsmith2@wisc.edu) • 608-332-6214

### Questions on community-led projects, contact:

Andrea Dearlove, Senior Program Officer  
[adearlove@wisc.edu](mailto:adearlove@wisc.edu) • 608-265-8146

### Questions on faculty-led projects, contact:

Tonya Mathison, Administrative Manager  
[tonya.mathison@wisc.edu](mailto:tonya.mathison@wisc.edu) • 608-265-6688

### Budget questions, contact:

Jon Thomas, CPA, Assistant Finance Director  
[thomas38@wisc.edu](mailto:thomas38@wisc.edu) • 608-265-2284

## Application Guidelines

Applications are due by **5 pm April 15, 2020**.

**To start an application**, go to [https://www.grantrequest.com/SID\\_5637?SA=SNA&FID=35280](https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_5637?SA=SNA&FID=35280).

**If you've already started an application**, access your application by logging-in via [https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID\\_5637?SA=AM](https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_5637?SA=AM)

In addition to providing general information about the project, the application includes the following components.

**Narrative:** The narrative must describe the overarching goal of the project along with the specific objectives or aims, significance, methods and approach, and expected outcomes. For faculty-led applications, if applicable, the narrative should include details of data analysis that address rigor and reproducibility. The narrative must be uploaded as a PDF not to exceed three single-spaced pages with one-inch margins and a minimum 11-point Arial font. Footnotes, references and up to three tables and/or figures are not included in the page limit. Tables and figures should be inserted after the narrative.

**Project Budget:** Applicants must provide a budget and budget justification clearly indicating how the grant funds will be spent. Expenditures must:

- be fully justified, reasonable and clearly related to the project's goals;
- reflect the activities/tasks listed in the proposal; and
- explain the sources and amounts of any cash match cost sharing funds.

Requests should be made by expense type (salary and fringe benefits, travel, supplies, etc.). Provide sufficient detail for individuals unfamiliar with the project so they can accurately review the proposal. The project budget must include a list of all other sources of internal or external cash-match.

**Budget Justification:** The budget justification describes in detail the major budget line items: salary and fringe benefits, travel, services, and supplies and other expenses. The narrative should provide specific information about why an expense is necessary to achieve the project's goals and objectives. It must also describe the roles and responsibilities of all team members, including the Primary Community Partner (if any), PI, Co-PIs, Collaborators and key personnel, even if uncompensated. The budget narrative must be uploaded as a PDF with one-inch margins and a minimum 11-point Arial font.

**Use of Funds:** Guidelines for [allowable/unallowable expenses](#) are available for review on the Wisconsin Partnership Program website.

**Community-led projects:** The budget must include salary support for the primary contact from the lead community partner organization.

**Faculty-led projects:** The budget should include at least 5 percent of the Principal Investigator's full-time equivalent (FTE) compensation, but it may not include more than 30 percent.

### **All projects:**

The funds must be used for project-related costs, such as:

- Salary support based upon NIH salary limitations (currently \$197,300 for 100% effort)
- Support staff expenses, such as salaries and benefits or graduate student tuition
- Travel

- Services, such as consultant and contractual services
- Supplies and other expenses, such as participant support costs and equipment. Equipment is defined as items costing more than \$5,000 with at least two years useful life. The maximum amount allowed for equipment is \$50,000.

Funds may not be used for:

- Entertainment
- Indirect overhead and administrative costs
- Lobbying
- Institutional Review Board fees (for more information, see [terms and conditions](#))
- Supplanting (for more information, see [terms and conditions](#))

**Nonsupplanting Questionnaire:** Supplanting means to replace, to take the place of, or to supersede. The Wisconsin Partnership Program prohibits any funds from being awarded that will supplant funds or resources otherwise available to applicants from other sources for the proposed project. See the Wisconsin Partnership Program [terms and conditions](#) for more information.

Applicants are required to complete the nonsupplanting questionnaire as part of the application process. The Primary Community Partner or Principal Investigator must complete and sign the Nonsupplanting Questionnaire, then upload as a PDF.

**Designation of Confidential and Proprietary Information:** The Wisconsin Partnership Program is required to operate in accordance with Wisconsin's public records and open meetings laws. See the Wisconsin Partnership Program [terms and conditions](#) for more information.

Using the form provided, indicate whether the application includes proprietary and/or confidential information, and identify and request confidentiality for any trade secrets or proprietary information in the full application.

## Terms and Conditions

By applying for a Wisconsin Partnership Program grant, applicants agree to the Partnership Program's [terms and conditions](#).

