Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA):

**FY18 InCHIP Community-Engaged Health Research Seed Grant**

A. **KEY DATES**

- November 1, 2017: FOA posted
- Monday, January 22, 2018: Letters of Intent (required) due by 11:59 PM EST
- Monday, February 5, 2018: Applicants notified of LOI approval decision
- Monday, February 19, 2018: InCHIP Affiliate Application due by 11:59 PM EST
- Monday, March 19, 2018: Full Proposals due by 11:59 PM EST
- May 2018: Applicants notified of award decision
- July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2020: Award period
- December 31, 2020: Deadline for resulting external grant submission

LOI deadline has been extended to Monday, January 29!

B. **PURPOSE**

UConn’s Institute for Collaboration on Health, Intervention, and Policy (InCHIP) is offering a pilot grant program that promotes community-engaged health research with reciprocal benefit to the community and the participating UConn faculty. InCHIP will provide $15,000 in seed grant funding for a community-engaged health research study that meets a need identified by the community. Eligible studies include research in health behavior or health policy conducted in community settings in Connecticut, using a participatory research framework and actively involving community stakeholders in the conceptualization, design, implementation, and/or evaluation. “Community” is defined broadly to include community-based organizations, populations in neighborhoods, healthcare settings, and other entities within communities. Preference will be given to those studies conducted in Hartford-based community settings.

Eligible pilot studies are those that use participatory-based qualitative and/or quantitative methods to collect initial data, analyze secondary data, develop interventions, and/or test research methodologies in order to attract the support of larger, external funding sources. Funded projects must be consistent with InCHIP’s mission and address health through an examination of health behavior or health policy at an individual or population level.

Dual-PI grant proposals are permitted and encouraged when one of the PIs is from a community organization and the UConn PI is an approved InCHIP affiliate by the time the final proposal is submitted. The ultimate goal of the InCHIP Community-Engaged Health Research Seed Grant is to support community-engaged research that addresses important community health issues and leads to strong external grant applications submitted through InCHIP.

C. **FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND REQUIREMENTS**

One award of $15,000 is available for this seed grant competition. All grant funds must be expended within two years of the award date. Unexpended funds will revert to InCHIP.

**Seed grant funds may only be used for direct costs of carrying out approved projects, such as:**

  a. Personnel who are essential for conducting the research project, such as graduate research assistants and student labor. Individuals who are not on the regular state payroll (i.e., consultants and other off-campus assistance) may be hired to perform special research-related tasks as needed.
b. A portion of the salary of an Investigator (PI, Co-I) who is employed by a community-based organization and not by UConn.

c. Resources that require fee-for-services within UConn.

d. Participant incentives for recruitment or study participation.

e. Travel that is necessary to conduct the research, NOT travel to present the results of the research, or travel to explore future funding opportunities.

f. Equipment necessary for conducting the research (“equipment” is defined as an article of tangible, nonexpendable, personal property that costs $5,000 or more).

g. Project supplies, including drugs and services.

h. Other specifically authorized expenses that are essential for carrying out the project.

Seed grant funds may not be used for the following:

a. The salary of the UConn Principal Investigator, UConn Co-Investigator(s), or any UConn faculty member.

b. Living expenses.

c. Laptops or desktop computers, unless used exclusively for the project and not for any other activities.

d. Service/maintenance contracts on equipment.

e. Laboratory renovations or other infrastructure renovations.

f. Institutional and/or individual memberships in professional organizations.

g. Travel to professional meetings to present the results of the research, or any conference attendance.

h. Indirect costs, including clerical and administrative personnel salaries.

i. Costs associated with the publication of results of the research, such as publication fees or purchase of reprints.

j. Investigator training costs, including tuition.

D. PROJECT AND INVESTIGATOR ELIGIBILITY

1. Proposals must be novel and take an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to the study of health and health behavior. The UConn PI and the community partner (who may be a PI) are expected to make appropriate and significant contributions to the proposed research, and to perform new research that could not be achieved without the collaboration and seed grant funding.

2. A UConn PI is required and must meet the following eligibility requirements:

a. The UConn PI must have an eligible faculty appointment at UConn, and s/he must be eligible to submit grants through InCHIP. Eligible faculty appointments are tenured or tenure-track faculty, in-residence research faculty, clinical faculty, other research faculty, research scientists/scholars, and adjunct faculty. Eligible faculty are not restricted to junior faculty.

b. Ineligible faculty appointments are post-doctoral fellows, lecturers, research assistants and research associates, visiting titles, and extension titles.

c. The UConn PI must be an approved InCHIP affiliate by the time the final proposal is submitted. The InCHIP Affiliate application form and instructions are available here. Please allow at least two weeks for approval.

3. Graduate students are not eligible.

4. Seed grant proposals must be predominantly the work of the PIs and for the benefit of the PIs’ research programs. Proposals written primarily by graduate students or others in the PIs’ names are not permitted.

5. Two PIs are permitted on the seed grant, if and only if, one PI is a UConn faculty member and the second PI is from a community organization (dual PIs are strongly encouraged). Other individuals may serve as Co-Is or significant contributors, but not as PIs.

6. The proposed research must be consistent with InCHIP’s mission:

a. “InCHIP engages in research to create new scientific knowledge, theoretical frameworks, health behavior change interventions, and methodological advances associated with health and health behavior at multiple levels of analysis (e.g., individual, family, community, policy). InCHIP research focuses on understanding the dynamics of health behavior and related systems, on the science of health behavior change, on research to inform policy,
and on the science and practice of developing, implementing, evaluating, and disseminating effective health behavior change interventions. Health is broadly defined and includes physical and mental health, and outcomes with critical implications for health. Work at the intersection of behavior and biology, and at the intersection of science and public policy are encouraged.” (See here for more about InCHIP’s mission.)

7. The proposed seed grant project should address a novel research question, not a research question that is already being explored as part of an existing, externally-funded project.

8. Changes to the project’s objectives and budget will require prior approval from relevant InCHIP staff.

9. The PI(s) must commit in good faith to using the seed grant funds to obtain pilot data to support an external grant proposal that will be submitted through InCHIP by December 31, 2020.

10. If the PI has an InCHIP seed grant from a previous fiscal year, s/he must close out that award prior to the start of the award period for the FY18 InCHIP Seed Grant.

11. Each individual may only submit one LOI/proposal for this competition as a Principal Investigator (PI).

E. APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

Note: InCHIP staff will answer questions about the seed grant application (including the budget), but will not assist applicants with development of the actual budget or budget justification, or with writing the seed grant LOI or proposal.

Stage 1: Proposal Development (Optional)
Applicants are encouraged (but not required) to utilize resources offered by InCHIP’s Cores when developing their research ideas and proposals. Seed grant-related services available through the InCHIP Cores include:

- **Community-Engaged Health Research Core**: This Core can help UConn researchers make linkages to community researchers and community-based organizations. For assistance with identifying possible community partners, email boundaryspanners@chip.uconn.edu. For information about this Core, click here.

- **Training and Development Core**: Individual consultations are available by appointment with InCHIP Training and Development Core staff. Additionally, a Grant Proposal Incubator is offered that gives applicants the opportunity to meet with a panel of InCHIP investigators to receive feedback on their research ideas. More information about this Core can be found here.

- **Intervention Core**: This Core can help researchers identify and develop collaborations with experts who can assist with theory-based intervention development, implementation and rigorous outcome evaluation and dissemination. To request assistance finding a collaborator with intervention expertise, visit the Intervention Core webpage here.

InCHIP Cores offer more extensive services for those applying for external funding, including pre- and post-award services, as well as assistance with the design, development, implementation, and dissemination of research. A complete description of the Core services can be found on their respective webpages (see links above). Please look for announcements from InCHIP about Core trainings, workshops, and events in the coming months.

Stage 2: Letter of Intent
1. All applicants must submit an online Letter of Intent (LOI) form, available on our seed grant website, by the above specified due date/time. A budget is not required at the time of LOI submission. LOIs do not require routing through grants offices.

2. LOIs will be reviewed by relevant staff from InCHIP to determine the eligibility of the proposed research and applicant team.

3. Applicants must receive written approval of their LOI prior to submitting a full proposal.

Stage 3: Full Proposal
1. Full proposals must be submitted online here by the above specified due date/time. The application must include the following:
a. Project Title (maximum 81 characters)
b. PI(s) Contact Information
c. Community partner(s)
d. Abstract/Project Summary (maximum 3000 characters)
e. Research Plan (maximum 3 pages)
   i. Specific Aims
   ii. Research Strategy – brief description of significance, innovation, and approach
f. References (not included in the page limit for the Research Plan)
g. Roles and functions of project personnel, and the individual responsibilities of the PI(s) (maximum 1 page)
h. Budget with justification for each item (maximum 1 page)
i. Biographical sketch of PI(s), in NIH or NSF format
j. Other Sources of Support for the proposed project (e.g., additional funding, in-kind services, equipment)
k. Brief discussion of how proposal is related to any current projects being conducted by the PI(s)
l. Letter(s) of Support from collaborating community organization(s)
m. Optional: Other Letters of Support

2. Proposals must include:
   a. An identified community partner based in Connecticut. Preference will be given to proposals with a community partner who serves as a second PI.
   b. The community-defined need the proposal is addressing.

3. Full proposals will undergo a rigorous review process, with reviewers from InCHIP and the community. Individuals who are Senior/Key Personnel or Other Significant Contributors on a seed grant proposal will be excluded from participation in the review process. Reviewers and InCHIP staff may request additional information from applicants to better evaluate the scientific merit of the application, to clarify any aspect of the proposal, or to assess how the application fits within the strategic priorities of InCHIP.

4. Each PI will be notified via email whether or not his/her proposal has been awarded funding.

F. REVIEW CRITERIA
Priority for funding will be based on the following review criteria, in no particular order:

• Scientific merit of the research plan.
• Extent to which the project is novel or innovative, especially a proposal testing a new methodology, new theory, or new area in need of pilot data.
• An identified community partner based in Connecticut, with preference given to proposals in which the community partner is based in Hartford. Preference will also be given to proposals in which the community partner serves as a second PI.
• Specification of the community-defined need the proposal is addressing.
• Relevance of the study to InCHIP’s research mission.
• Importance of the research question to external funders.
• Feasibility of plans to submit a subsequent proposal to external funders no later than December 31, 2020.
• Appropriate and significant scientific contributions by the UConn PI and the community partner(s) towards completing the aims of the study.
• Composition of the research team (preference will be given to diverse teams that include multiple community partners and/or multiple academic disciplines).

G. AWARDEE REQUIREMENTS
If awarded, the PI(s) is not required to route her/his seed grant proposal through Sponsored Programs Services (SPS).
The awarded PI(s) is responsible for obtaining all required approvals for her/his research. Please visit the UConn IRB website for more information about the IRB approval process for research conducted at the UConn-Storrs Campus, the five regional campuses, the School of Law, and the School of Social Work. For information about the IRB approval process for research conducted at UConn Health, please visit the UConn Health IRB website.

Awardees will be required to submit a brief summary report of their progress annually and a final report at the conclusion of the project or award period. Changes to the project’s objectives, PI(s), and budget will require prior approval from relevant InCHIP staff.

Detailed awardee instructions/requirements will be distributed to seed grant winners when they are notified of the award decisions. All awardee requirements described above are subject to change in accordance with updated institutional procedures (e.g., routing requirements).

H. CONTACT

For questions not addressed in this FOA or on our seed grant website, please contact seedgrants@chip.uconn.edu.