

**Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA):  
FY19 InCHIP-CHCACT Health Research Seed Grant**

A. KEY DATES

- Tuesday, November 13, 2018 FOA posted
- Friday, April 26, 2019 **Letters of Intent (required) due by 11:59 PM EST**
- Friday, May 3, 2019 Applicants notified of LOI approval decision
- Friday, May 17, 2019 *InCHIP Affiliate Application due by 11:59 PM EST*
- Friday, May 31, 2019 **Full Proposals due by 11:59 PM EST**
- June 2019 Applicants notified of award decision
- July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2021 Award period

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 in one or more Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) with reciprocal benefit to the FQHC(s), their patients, and the participating UConn faculty. This represents a unique opportunity for an FQHC(s) and UConn faculty to partner to develop sustainable, collaborative, streamlined, and mutually beneficial efforts to identify and address critical clinical and health systems issues.

InCHIP will provide \$15,000 in seed grant funding for a community-engaged health research study that meets a need identified by one or more FQHCs. Eligible studies include research in health behavior or health policy conducted in an FQHC, using a participatory research framework and actively involving FQHC staff in the conceptualization, design, implementation, and/or evaluation. In order to participate in the study, **the FQHC must be a member of the [Community Health Center Association of Connecticut \(CHCACT\)](#).**

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. **Importantly, this seed grant is designed to fund pilot work that will directly support an external grant application that will be submitted through InCHIP in the area of health behavior or health policy.** The external grant should be submitted *within one year of completing the pilot project*.

Dual-PI grant proposals are *strongly encouraged* when one of the PIs is from an FQHC and the UConn PI is an approved InCHIP affiliate by the time the final proposal is submitted. The ultimate goal of the **InCHIP-CHCACT Health Research Seed Grant** is to fund a pilot project that addresses one or more important community health issues and leads directly to a strong external grant application.

**This pilot grant program is endorsed by the CHCACT-UConn Community Practice-Based Research Collaborative, which fosters equitable and mutually beneficial research partnerships between FQHCs and UConn researchers for the purpose of improving the health and wellness of individuals and their communities.**

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. UConn personnel who are essential for conducting the research project, such as UConn graduate research assistants and student labor. Individuals who are not on the regular UConn state payroll (i.e., FQHC staff, consultants, and other off-campus assistance) may be hired to perform research-related tasks as needed.
- b. A portion of the salary of an Investigator (PI, Co-I) who is employed by an FQHC 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, multidisciplinary approach to the study of health and health behavior, and they must be clearly linked to a planned external grant application.
2. The UConn PI and the FQHC partner(s) 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.
3. 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 participating FQHC (dual PIs are strongly encouraged and preferred). Other individuals may serve as Co-Is or significant contributors, but not as PIs.
4. All members of the UConn-FQHC study team must agree to adhere to the guiding principles of the *CHCACT-UConn Community Practice-Based Research Collaborative*, which are based on the [Community-Campus Partnerships for Health \(CCPH\) Principles of Partnership](#).
5. 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, and research scientists/scholars.
  - b. Ineligible faculty appointments are post-doctoral fellows, lecturers, research assistants and research associates, visiting titles, and adjunct faculty.
  - c. UConn faculty who work at Connecticut Children’s Medical Center (CCMC) are not eligible to be a Principal Investigator (PI) on this seed grant unless they can submit their external grant applications through UConn. If they are required to submit their external grant applications through CCMC, they can serve as a Co-Investigator on this grant but not as a PI.
  - d. Graduate students are not eligible.
  - e. 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.

6. 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.
7. The proposed research must focus on ***health behavior or health policy*** and ***be consistent with InCHIP's mission***:
  - a. "University of Connecticut's Institute for Collaboration on Health, Intervention, and Policy (InCHIP) provides an interdisciplinary nexus for investigators and Centers across the University to stimulate research collaborations and major newly-funded initiatives that create new scientific knowledge and theoretical frameworks in health behavior at multiple levels of analysis (e.g., individual, family, community, policy). 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 is encouraged. InCHIP disseminates its research and cutting-edge health behavior change interventions through publishing, structural change, capacity-building, teaching, mentoring, and collaboration at the University, local, state, national, and international levels." (See [here](#) for more about InCHIP's mission.)
8. The pilot project does not have to involve intervention development, implementation, or evaluation. A wide range of research is permitted, including but not limited to, natural history studies, observational studies, qualitative research, and correlational studies.
9. 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.
10. Changes to the project's objectives and budget will require prior approval from relevant InCHIP staff.
11. 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 within a year of completing the pilot project.
12. If the PI has an InCHIP seed grant from a previous fiscal year (with the exception of an *Interdisciplinary Team Building Grant*), s/he must close out that award prior to the start of the award period for the FY19 InCHIP Seed Grant.
13. Each UConn faculty 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)

InCHIP recorded a webinar on how to effectively structure a seed grant to support a future external grant submission. Applicants are encouraged to watch the [webinar](#) (see the Writing Successful Seed Grants tab) before developing their seed grant proposal. It is essential that the work supported by an InCHIP seed grant is linked to a planned, larger project.

Applicants are also 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 the following:

- **Community-Engaged Health Research Core:** This Core can help UConn researchers make linkages to one or more FQHCs as well as to other community researchers and community-based organizations. For assistance with identifying possible community partners, email [boundaryspanners@chip.uconn.edu](mailto: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 being offered (**on November 28 and March 6**) that provides applicants the opportunity to meet with a panel of InCHIP investigators to receive feedback on their research ideas and proposal. 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 webpage](#), by the above specified due date/time. The LOI must describe the concept for the future external grant application and how the InCHIP seed grant will support work that will ultimately make the external grant application more competitive. The LOI must also list specific agencies (e.g., NIH, NSF, Foundations) that fund the type of work proposed, and if available, links to relevant funding announcements. In addition, the LOI must briefly describe how the UConn researcher and FQHC partner(s) will work together on this pilot project. If assistance is needed in identifying funding agencies and mechanisms or an FQHC partner(s), please contact InCHIP Boundary Spanning at [boundaryspanners@chip.uconn.edu](mailto:boundaryspanners@chip.uconn.edu).
1. A budget is not required at the time of LOI submission. LOIs do not require routing through grants offices at UConn Storrs or UConn Health.
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. Biographical sketch of PI(s), in NIH or NSF format.
  - d. FQHC partner(s).
  - e. Brief discussion of how the FQHC partner(s) will be engaged in the design and implementation of the proposed research project.
  - f. Roles and functions of project personnel, and the individual responsibilities of the PI(s) (**maximum 1 page**).
  - g. Abstract/Project Summary (**maximum 3,000 characters including spaces**) - This section should describe the concept for the future external grant application and explicitly state how the proposed seed grant will help the research team develop a more competitive external grant.
  - h. Research Plan (**maximum 4 pages**).
    - i. Specific Aims – In addition to information about the proposed pilot project, this section should include information about the planned future external grant application. Include an explanation of how the proposed pilot project will lead to a new externally-funded research project.
    - ii. Research Strategy – Provide a brief description of significance, innovation, and approach. Be sure to include information about the larger research question(s) that will be addressed by the future external grant application. The approach portion of the Research Strategy should focus on the pilot project that is being funded by the seed grant.
  - i. References (not included in the 4-page limit for the Research Plan).
  - j. Budget with justification for each item (**maximum 1 page**).
  - k. Other Sources of Support for the proposed project (e.g., additional funding, in-kind services, equipment).
  - l. Brief discussion of how the proposed pilot project is related to any current projects being conducted by the PI(s).
  - m. Letter(s) of Support from the collaborating FQHC(s).
  - n. *Optional*: Other Letters of Support.
2. Proposals must include:
  - a. An identified FQHC partner that is a member of CHCACT. Preference will be given to proposals that include a second PI who is employed by the partnering FQHC.
  - b. The FQHC-defined need the proposal is addressing.

3. Proposals are **not** required to be routed through InCHIP or Sponsored Program Services (SPS).
4. Full proposals will undergo a rigorous review process, with reviewers from InCHIP and CHCACT. 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.
5. 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 planned external grant application and the extent to which it is novel or innovative (e.g., testing a new methodology, theory, or understudied research area).
- Scientific premise and rigor of the pilot work to be supported by the seed grant.
- An identified FQHC partner that is a member of CHCACT, with preference given to proposals in which an FQHC staff member serves as a second PI.
- Specification of the FQHC-defined need the proposal is addressing.
- Relevance of the study to InCHIP's research mission and strategic priorities.
- Feasibility of plans to submit an external grant proposal to external funders no later than one year following completion of the pilot project.
- Appropriate and significant scientific contributions by the UConn PI and the partnering FQHC(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 PIs are not required to route their seed grant proposal through Sponsored Programs Services (SPS).

The awarded PIs are responsible for obtaining all required approvals for their research from the relevant IRB(s). Please visit the [UConn IRB website](#) for more information about the IRB approval process for research conducted by faculty at the UConn Storrs campus, the four regional campuses, and the School of Law. For information about the IRB approval process for research conducted by faculty 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](mailto:seedgrants@chip.uconn.edu).