



PROMISING PARTNERSHIPS

Request for Proposals

Boston BRI...DGE (Building Research Infrastructure...Developing Genuine Engagement) is a community-engaged partnered research program of the Center for Community Health Education Research and Service, Inc. (CCHERS). In January 2019, Boston BRI...DGE received its second Engagement Award from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)[®] to support capacity of patients and community members to become fully engaged in research partnerships and governance.

Community-based organizations often struggle to build a significant research and evaluation portfolio and tap into large funding sources. This may occur for a number of reasons, including difficulty finding and forming equitable relationships with research partners, the lack of preliminary data, and unfamiliarity with research oversight regulations. CCHERS' current PCORI[®] Engagement Award presents an opportunity for Boston BRI...DGE to tackle these challenges by providing pilot grant funding and educational support for community-based organizations interested in advancing their community-initiated research partnerships with academia. We call this initiative the **Promising Partnerships**.

The **Promising Partnerships** is the Boston BRI...DGE's pilot grant funding to accelerate partnerships between community-based organizations and academic community-oriented researchers. Through a competitive award process, selected grantees will receive **seed funding** and **training support** to foster a community-academic collaboration and perform preliminary work that will likely lead to a competitive research proposal for larger grant applications at the completion of the project period. Some examples of the larger funding resources are [PCORI](#), [National Institute of Health \(NIH\)](#), [Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality \(AHRQ\)](#), [US Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health \(OMH\)](#), and public health philanthropies or foundations.

KEY INFORMATION

Award Type

Community collaboration grant

Application Deadline

May 15, 2020, 3:00 PM EST

Funds Available Up To

\$5000

Maximum project period

6 months

Click [here](#) to see the electronic version of the RFP on CCHERS' website.

I. SCOPE OF FUNDING

The Boston BRFSS DGE Promising Partnerships offers seed funding in support of community-academic collaborations seeking to develop research proposals for larger grant submissions in the future. The resulting research proposals must focus on **addressing health disparities, achieving health equity, or helping patients, families, and communities make better-informed decisions about their health and healthcare.**

The resulting research proposals should utilize research approaches or methods that **ensure equitable partnerships between community members and academic researchers.** Examples of these approaches are, *but not limited to*, comparative effectiveness research (CER), patient-centered outcomes research (PCOR), community-based participatory research (CBPR), and community-engaged research (CEnR). The definition of each of these approaches are provided in Box 1.

II. AWARD AMOUNT

A total award of \$25,000 is available for 5 selected applicants. **Each awardee will receive up to \$5,000 of funding** that must be expended within six months of the award period (August 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021).

The pilot grant may only be used for building relationships and activities related to developing research plans and/or preliminary data collection or analysis.

The pilot grant should neither be used for the salary of researchers nor project staff from the community.

This is a **one-time** award. Awardees of this cycle of Promising Partnerships are not eligible to apply for the next cycle.

Box 1. Definitions of research approach examples

Comparative effectiveness research (CER) compares the effectiveness of two or more interventions or approaches to health care to assist clinicians, patients, and other stakeholders in making informed decisions that improve health care. Learn more at: <https://www.pcori.org/research-results/about-our-research/research-we-support>

Patient-centered outcomes research (PCOR) is a type of CER that focuses on outcomes that are meaningful to patients and requires engagement of relevant stakeholders—patients, caregivers, clinicians, payers, and others—throughout the research process. Learn more at: <https://www.pcori.org/about-us>

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is a collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings. Learn more at: https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2007/jul/06_0182.htm

Community-engaged research (CEnR) is a collaborative process between researchers and those groups in a community who share design, decision-making, result interpretation, and the drawing of conclusions with the goal of addressing local health issues, influencing systems, policies, programs or practice, etc. Learn more at: <https://www.challiance.org/academic/community-engaged-research-resources>

III. KEY DATES

Release of Request for Proposals	March 1, 2020
Deadline for proposal submission	May 15, 2020, 3:00 PM EST
Award announcement	July 22 – 24, 2020
Award period	August 1, 2020 – January 31, 2021
Deadline for final report submission (for awardees)	January 31, 2021, 3:00 PM EST

IV. WHO CAN APPLY?

Community-based organizations, community health centers, patient advocacy and support groups, Patient-Powered Research Network (PPRN) groups, Patient and Family Advisory Councils (PFACs), and researchers working with community partners or looking to strengthen partnerships with the communities are encouraged to apply.

In order to be eligible, the applying entity must be based in Massachusetts and possess a 501(c)3 status. An organization without a 501(c)3 status must be affiliated with a 501(c)3 organization as a fiscal conduit. In this case, the fiscal conduit becomes the applying entity.

Individuals and for-profit businesses are not eligible.

V. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The application is due **Friday, May 15, 2020 by 3:00 PM EST**.

- A complete application must include items 1-6 under V.1. Application Components below.
- Please use the [Application Form](#) and templates for the [Abstract](#), [Narrative](#), [Biosketch](#), and [Budget](#) provided in **Appendix A**. Click [here](#) to download the forms and templates from CCHERS' website.
- The Abstract and Narrative must be written in 11-point Calibri font with 1" margins and 1.5 lines spacing.
 - The Abstract should not exceed 500 words.
 - The Narrative should not exceed 4 pages and should address the items listed under the **3. Narrative** subheading below.
- All documents should be submitted as a **single PDF or Microsoft Word document**. Name your document with "**Promising Partnerships_[name of the applying entity]**", for example: "Promising Partnerships_Organization ABCD".
- Email the document as an attachment to a.oendari@northeastern.edu by **Friday, May 15, 2020, 3:00 PM EST**. The name of your document must also be your email subject line, i.e. "**Promising Partnerships_[name of the applying entity]**".

V.1. Application Components

1. Application Form

Please use the Application Form provided in Appendix A.

2. Abstract

In no more than 500 words, please provide a concise description of (1) the significance of the issue that your partnership wants to address, (2) potential impact of the resulting research, (3) outcomes your partnership hopes to accomplish within this seed funding period, (4) who will be engaged in the partnership and the role they will play, and (5) plans for seeking further funding. The abstract should be suitable for a general audience. Please use the Abstract template provided in Appendix A.

3. Narrative

The narrative should not exceed 4 pages and should be written in 11-point Calibri font with 1" margins and 1.5 lines spacing. It should address the following items:

- ✓ Issue of interest:
 - Describe the significance of the issue
 - Describe the burden to the community
- ✓ Nature of partnership:
 - Identify the project lead(s), partners, and their roles
 - Identify the applying entity and its relationship to the project lead/co-leads
 - Identify past funding experience (if any)
 - Identify experience with partnerships and strengths brought to partnerships
- ✓ Engagement plan:
 - Identify staff or community members who will be engaged in the partnership
 - Identify strategies to ensure/strengthen equitable partnerships
- ✓ Project activities within the pilot grant period:
 - Describe how the research plan will be developed
 - Describe plans for preliminary data collection or analysis
- ✓ Outcomes:
 - Identify what the partnership hopes to accomplish
 - Identify the partnership's next goals
 - Identify potential grant applications

Please use the Narrative template provided in Appendix A.

4. Biosketch

Please use the Biosketch template provided in Appendix A. Provide the biosketch of the project lead and all individuals listed on the Application Form.

5. Budget

The pilot grant may only be used for building relationships and activities related to developing research plans and/or preliminary data collection or analysis. These activities must be done within the 6-month of the funding period, i.e. August 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021. The pilot grant should neither be used for the salary of researchers nor project staff from the community.

Please use the Budget template provided in Appendix A.

6. Letters of support (LOS)

Please include signed letters of support from partners/collaborators involved in your partnership. Electronic signatures are acceptable. The LOS should indicate the collaborator's commitment to the project, specific roles in the project, and support for the partnership. Enclose the letters of support with the other abovementioned components as the last attachments.

VI. POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS

- **A final report** due by January 31, 2021 that includes:
 - ✓ Lessons learned: What works, what matters, what's different
 - ✓ A research plan
 - ✓ A list of potential funders to pursue
 - ✓ Goals after the Promising Partnerships funding

- Mandatory participation in the **BRI...DGE Learning Community training** series held between September – November 2020 (dates to be determined).

VII. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

1. **What is PCORI?**

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)[®] is a United States-based non-profit institution that funds research and project that offers patients and caregivers the information they need to make important healthcare decisions. PCORI is funded through the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Trust Fund (PCOR Trust Fund), which was established by Congress through the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010. In December 2019, the Congress reauthorized PCORI's funding for the next 10 years and the bipartisan legislation has been signed into law. To learn more, visit <https://www.pcori.org/>.

2. **What is an equitable partnership?**

An equitable partnership is one that values the following principles: (1) reciprocal, where roles and authority of all partners are defined collaboratively and clearly, (2) co-learning, where the experience and expertise of all partners are valued, (3) respect for partners' commitment, time, and diversity, and (4) transparency, honesty, and trusts. These are PCORI Engagement Principles that key to promote equitable relationship and genuine engagement in a research partnership. To learn more, please visit or download the full material here: <https://www.pcori.org/sites/default/files/Engagement-Rubric.pdf>.

3. **How many people or organizations should be in the partnerships?**

There is no limit on the size of the partnership.

4. **What are allowed activities?**

The Promising Partnerships seed funding will support activities related to building relationships, developing research plans, and/or preliminary data collection/analysis. Some examples of these activities are convening meetings with community partners, focus group discussions with community constituents, key informant interviews, travel support for community partners. The seed funding cannot be used for the salary of researchers or project staff from the community. Overhead costs will not be funded.

5. **Who should be the project lead?**

As the idea of the Promising Partnerships is to foster community-academic collaborations, anybody from or affiliated with an applying entity can become a project lead. Hence, the project lead can be a staff member of a community organization, a community health center staff member or clinician, a member of a patient advocacy or support group, a member of a Patient-Powered Research Network group, or a PFAC member of a hospital or community health center. A researcher or faculty member can also become a project lead as long as they work with a community partner or have identified a community partner that is willing to engage in the proposed project. A proposal can also have multiple co-leads, e.g. a researcher and a community partner.

6. **Do I need to identify a novel problem, or can I address a problem our partnership has already convened on?**

The proposal can either address a new problem or a problem that a partnership has been working on. If a partnership chooses to work on an ongoing issue, the proposal should describe what part of the

issue would be addressed differently and how the new approach would significantly improve community outcomes.

7. *Can I use this grant to disseminate work previously completed by my partnership?*

No. The Promising Partnerships' goal is to support community-academic partnerships conducting preliminary activities necessary for future research grant applications. It will not fund dissemination efforts.

8. *What will the review process look like?*

Each incoming proposal will be first screened for its completeness, i.e. if it has all the required Application Components, and the applicant's eligibility, i.e. if the applying entity falls under the categories listed on the **WHO CAN APPLY?** section above.

Proposals that pass the screening will then be reviewed by a review panel comprised of members of CCHERS' Research Governance Committee, members of the Boston BRI...DGE Project Advisory Board (PAB), and external members. External members are individuals who do not have any employment affiliation with CCHERS and do not sit on CCHERS' Board of Directors and any Committees under CCHERS' Board of Directors.

Each proposal will be vetted based on a Review Metric by individual reviewers or a subgroup of reviewers. The results will be discussed in a fully convened review panel meeting. Five proposals with the highest Review Metric score will be selected.

9. *How will I know if I get funded?*

The Boston BRI...DGE team will send a notification to both awarded and non-awarded applicants. The project lead will receive the notification via email from our team between June 15 to 17, 2020.

10. *I am a PFAC member. How can I participate in this opportunity?*

An individual is not an eligible entity. The applicant must be an organization or institution listed under the **WHO CAN APPLY?** section above, based in Massachusetts, and has a 501(c)3 tax exempt status. Since a PFAC generally does not have an independent 501(c)3 status, it may not be an eligible entity per se. However, a PFAC and its member can still participate in this funding opportunity by partnering with a 501(c)3 institution, such as its affiliated hospital, a community health center, or a community-based organization. The 501(c)3 institution should become the applying entity, the PFAC should be listed as a partner, and you can become either a project lead, co-lead, or team member.

Still have questions? Contact a.oendari@northeastern.edu.

VIII. ABOUT CENTER FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION RESEARCH AND SERVICE

The Center for Community Health Education Research and Service, Inc. (CCHERS) is an independent non-profit organization in Boston that is a community–academic partnership. Established in 1991, the partnership comprises of Boston Medical Center, Boston Public Health Commission, Boston University School of Medicine, Northeastern University Bouvé College of Health Sciences, and an established network of 15 federally qualified health centers. CCHERS envisions a healthcare system based on health equity and racial justice for optimal health of the most vulnerable populations and communities of society. Its mission is to engage institutions, communities, community health centers, and other stakeholders in education, research, and service partnerships to reorient health professions education, improve health of communities, and promote healthcare system change.

Click [here](#) to learn more about CCHERS.

APPENDIX A

The following pages contain the required forms for the application.

Please see **V. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS** on page 3 for details on how to complete each form.

Click [here](#) to download these forms and templates from CCHERS' website.

1. Application Form
2. Abstract
3. Narrative
4. Biosketch
5. Budget