

**Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA):  
FY20 InCHIP-CHCACT Health Research Seed Grant**

**A. DESCRIPTION**

UConn’s Institute for Collaboration on Health, Intervention, and Policy (InCHIP) is offering seed grant funding for **pilot work that will directly support a future external grant application in the area of community-engaged health research in Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs)**. This represents a unique opportunity for FQHCs and UConn faculty to partner on research that addresses critical clinical and health systems issues. Funded projects must be consistent with InCHIP’s mission and address a health need prioritized 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 \(CHCACT\)](#).

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 external grant must be submitted through InCHIP or UConn Health within one year of completing the pilot project.*

**This pilot grant program is endorsed by the CHCACT-UConn 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.**

**B. PROGRAM AWARD AND DETAILS**

At least 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. Please see Budget Guidelines for more information.

**Funding Priorities:**

Seed grant funding will be prioritized based on:

- A. How the pilot work will increase the likelihood of external grant funding, AND**
- B. The scientific merit of the larger future project for which external funding will be sought and the extent to which it is novel or innovative.**

**C. KEY DATES**

- **Wednesday, April 1, 2020:** Full Proposals due by 11:59 PM EST
- **May 2020:** Applicants notified of award decision
- **July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2022:** Award period

**D. PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT**

It is strongly recommended that prior to developing their seed grant proposal, applicants watch the previously recorded InCHIP webinar on how to effectively structure a seed grant to support a future external grant application.

It is essential that the work supported by an InCHIP seed grant be linked to a larger future project. The webinar can be found [here](#).

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 FQHCs and UConn researchers make linkages with one another as well as with other community researchers and community-based organizations. For assistance with identifying possible UConn and/or community partners, email [deborah.cornman@uconn.edu](mailto:deborah.cornman@uconn.edu).
- **Training and Development Core:** Individual consultations are available by appointment with InCHIP Training and Development Core staff. Additionally, Grant Proposal Incubators can be scheduled to provide applicants the opportunity to meet with a panel of InCHIP investigators to receive feedback on their research idea and proposal.

## E. PROJECT AND INVESTIGATOR ELIGIBILITY

1. **Proposals must be clearly linked to a planned external grant application** in the area of human health.
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. A UConn PI is required and must meet the following eligibility requirements: (a) have an advanced degree (e.g., PhD, MD, PharmD), (b) have an eligible faculty appointment at UConn Storrs, UConn Health, or one of the regional campuses, and (c) be eligible to submit external grants through InCHIP or UConn Health. Eligible faculty appointments are tenured or tenure-track faculty, in-residence research faculty, clinical faculty, other research faculty, and research scientists/scholars.
5. Ineligible UConn faculty appointments are post-doctoral fellows, lecturers, research assistants, research associates, visiting titles, and adjunct faculty.
6. UConn faculty who work at Connecticut Children's Medical Center (CCMC) are not eligible to be a 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.
7. Graduate students are not eligible for this opportunity.
8. The UConn PI must be an approved InCHIP Faculty Affiliate *by the time the final proposal is submitted*. Applicants who are not currently Affiliates must apply to become one by 11:59 pm EST on Monday, March 16, 2020. The InCHIP Affiliation application form and instructions are available [here](#). Please allow at least two weeks for approval.
9. 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](#).
10. 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.
11. The proposed research must be consistent with InCHIP's mission, which can be found [here](#). It does not have to involve intervention development, implementation, or evaluation. A wide range of research is permitted,

including but not limited to, participatory-based natural history studies, observational studies, qualitative research, correlational studies, pilot trials, and secondary data analysis.

12. 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.
13. If funded, changes to the project's objectives and budget will require prior approval from InCHIP staff.
14. 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 or UConn Health within a year of completing the pilot project.
15. A UConn PI who already has an InCHIP seed grant (except for an *Interdisciplinary Team Building Grant*), must close out the award for that seed grant prior to the start of the award period for the FY20 InCHIP Seed Grant.
16. Eligible faculty may only submit one proposal per year as PI or Co-PI. Investigators may serve as a collaborator/Co-I on multiple projects.

## F. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Proposals should contain the elements enumerated below and follow the structure and guidelines indicated. Page limits assume 1-inch margins, 11- to 12-point font, single spacing, and single-sided pages. Proposals (items A through K below) should be submitted [here](#) by **11:59 pm on April 1, 2020** as a **single compiled PDF** using the form below.

### A. Cover Page

1. **Project Title** (maximum 200 characters).
2. **PI(s) Contact Information** (name, email address, department/organization, title/position for each PI).
3. **FQHC Partner(s) who are not PIs** (name, email address, organization, title/position for each FQHC partner).

### B. Abstract/Project Summary (maximum 1 page) – 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 application.

### C. Research Plan (maximum 4 pages)

1. **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.
2. **Research Strategy** – Provide a brief description of significance, innovation, and approach. The significance and innovation descriptions should focus on the larger research questions 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.

### D. References (not included in the 4-page maximum for the Research Plan).

### E. Biographical Sketch of PI(s), in NIH or NSF format.

### F. Roles and Functions of Project Personnel – Briefly describe the roles of all people working on the project. If there is more than one PI, describe the individual project responsibilities of each PI. And be explicit about how the FQHC partner(s) will be engaged in the design and implementation of the proposed research project.

### G. Budget with Justification for each item (maximum 1 page).

### H. Other Sources of Support for Proposed Project (e.g., additional funding, in-kind services, equipment).

### I. Proposed Project's Relationship to Extant Research – Provide a brief description of how the proposed pilot project is related to any current projects being conducted by the PI(s).

J. Letter(s) of Support from the Collaborating FQHC(s).

K. Other Letters of Support (optional).

### **IMPORTANT NOTES:**

1. 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.
2. Seed grant proposals are not required to be routed through InCHIP or Sponsored Program Services (SPS).
3. Seed grant proposals must be predominantly the work of the PI(s) and for the benefit of the PI's research program. Proposals written primarily by graduate students or others in the PI's name will not be considered.
4. Full proposals will undergo a rigorous review process by reviewers from the InCHIP affiliate network 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. PIs will be notified via email whether or not their proposal has been awarded funding.

## **G. REVIEW CRITERIA**

Priority for funding will be based on the following review criteria:

1. Scientific merit of the planned external grant application and the extent to which is it novel or innovative (e.g., testing a new methodology, theory, or understudied research area).
2. Scientific premise and rigor of the pilot work to be supported by the seed grant, and the extent to which it will make a substantial contribution to the planned external grant application.
3. 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.
4. Specification of the FQHC-defined need the proposed research will address.
5. Appropriate and significant scientific contributions by the UConn PI and the partnering FQHC(s) towards completing the aims of the study.
6. The relevance of the study to [InCHIP's research mission](#) and strategic priorities.
7. Composition of the research team (preference will be given to diverse teams that include multiple community partners and/or multiple academic disciplines).
8. Feasibility of plans to submit an external grant proposal to funders no later than one year following completion of the pilot project.

## **H. BUDGET GUIDELINES**

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 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.

## I. AWARDEE REQUIREMENTS

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 to InCHIP for a period of 5 years following receipt of their funding award. Changes to the project’s objectives, PI(s), and budget will require prior approval from relevant InCHIP staff.

Faculty based at UConn Storrs, Hartford, Avery Point, Stamford, and Waterbury must submit any external grant applications that result from this seed grant award through InCHIP.

All research products (e.g., publications, presentations) must acknowledge InCHIP funding support: *“This research was supported by pilot grant funding from the Institute for Collaboration on Health, Intervention, and Policy (InCHIP) at the University of Connecticut.”*

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).

## J. CONTACT

For questions not addressed in this FOA or on [our seed grant website](#), please contact [deborah.cornman@uconn.edu](mailto:deborah.cornman@uconn.edu).