

**Request for Applications (RFA)**  
**OSU Center for Clinical and Translational Science**  
*Seed Grants for Increasing Community Engagement in Health-related Research*

**Introduction and Background**

Federal health agencies (e.g., CDC, NIH, AHRQ) are increasingly recognizing, supporting, and in many cases requiring “community engagement” in health-related research. Evidence shows that community involvement can increase the relevance and quality of health research, even in clinical studies. Challenges exist, however, in operationalizing “community engagement” for research practice. Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is on one end of the “engagement” spectrum. This end of the spectrum is described as equal participation by community partners and researchers throughout the research process. On the other end of the spectrum, communities are simply informed about what research is occurring, and what the results were. In the middle of the spectrum, communities are engaged in important but limited aspect of research studies, such as recruiting and retaining research participants.

OSU’s NIH-funded Center for Clinical and Translational Science (CCTS) created a Community Engagement Program to increase and improve two-way partnerships between researchers and communities. “Community” can be defined broadly to include residents, organizations, public health agencies, social service providers, healthcare providers, or healthcare payers. Communities can further be defined based on geography, race, ethnicity, disease, gender, sexual orientation, or other defining characteristics. As a land grant institution, The Ohio State University including the health sciences colleges and beyond has many existing community partnerships and projects, some of which already involve communities in research. The purpose of this RFA is to support OSU faculty doing health-related research in developing or enhancing sustainable community-researcher partnerships that result in increased levels of community engagement in the clinical and translational research process.

**Project Activities, Partners and Outcomes**

Seed grants will support any activity that enhances community engagement in a health-related study, research proposal, or research agenda. Community engagement activities may focus on any or all steps in the research process, including but not limited to:

- identifying health concerns
- prioritizing research questions
- designing a study
- recruiting and retaining study participants
- designing data collection instruments and protocols
- collecting data
- designing and implementing interventions
- analyzing data
- interpreting findings
- disseminating findings
- translating findings into practice

Project activities may include identifying and building relationships with appropriate community partners; defining roles and responsibilities of various partners for a community-research partnership; developing community advisory boards; supporting

trainings and site visits for community members and researchers; planning interventions or research methodologies; conducting community assessments; analyzing existing data; or pilot testing data collection instruments or procedures. Applicants are referred to an on-line curriculum ([www.cbprcurriculum.info](http://www.cbprcurriculum.info)) for resources related to planning and implementing CBPR. While it is not expected that projects will incorporate all elements of CBPR, many CBPR principles and activities should be reflected in the application. Example outcomes could include mission and goal statements of a partnership project, a research grant application for external funding, problem identification, or techniques/processes for meaningful community engagement in research.

Applicants must identify community partners with whom they will work. Collaboration with the entities listed below is encouraged. Existing community partnerships will also be considered for funding, but the application must clearly describe the partnership and how it will be enhanced with this funding. If existing community partners are proposed, the application must include a letter of support from the partner(s).

The following entities have agreed to work with funded grant recipients to identify appropriate community-based staff and/or community partners to participate in the proposed project. This does not have to happen before the proposal is submitted. However, proposals must describe why the applicant wants to work with a specific entity and the roles that community partners will play in the project. Applicants are encouraged to contact the entities below to discuss proposal ideas. The most appropriate staff or partners to work with funded applicants will be identified based on interest, geography, and research topic. Broad topical areas of interest among these groups are as follows:

1. **OSU Extension** (<http://extension.osu.edu/counties.php>) Contact: Kirk Bloir, [Bloir.1@osu.edu](mailto:Bloir.1@osu.edu).  
Infrastructure of OSU community educators, faculty, and staff in every county of the state.
  - Childhood obesity
  - Diabetes
  - Weight management
  - Food safety
  - Pregnancy or parenting teens
  - Women's health
  - Sun safety/skin cancer
  
2. **Appalachia Community Cancer Network (ACCN) or Diversity Enhancement Program (DEP)**  
ACCN is a network of 5 community-based coalitions in southeastern Ohio (<https://www.osuccc.osu.edu/accn/aboutus.htm>; Contact: Darla Fickle, [darla.fickle@osumc.edu](mailto:darla.fickle@osumc.edu)). DEP develops community relationships in central Ohio to increase cancer awareness ([www.jamesline.com/go/dep](http://www.jamesline.com/go/dep); Contact: Chasity Cooper, [chasity.cooper@osumc.edu](mailto:chasity.cooper@osumc.edu)).
  - Cancer awareness and education
  - Cervical, colon, and lung cancer
  - Participation in cancer clinical trials (especially by minority participants)
  - Nutrition and physical activity for cancer prevention
  - Follow-up for abnormal pap smears
  - Tobacco control
  - Cancer survivorship

**3. Ohio State University Primary Care Practice Based Research Network (OSU-PCPBRN)** (<https://medicine.osu.edu/pcri/4375.cfm>) Contact: Jennifer Lehman, [Jennifer.Lehman@osumc.edu](mailto:Jennifer.Lehman@osumc.edu).

Network of 24 primary care sites representing 3 clinical networks:

1. Ohio State University Primary Care Network (10 clinical sites representing Family Medicine and General Internal Medicine sites)
2. Columbus Neighborhood Health Centers (5 clinical sites)
3. Nationwide Children's Pediatric Primary Care Centers (9 clinical sites)

A final component of this RFA is a mentorship opportunity. Funded applicants new to conducting community-based research will be matched with an experienced mentor. A list of possible mentors will be supplied. Applicants with significant community-based research experience already will not be expected to select a mentor.

### **Submission Guidelines**

**Deadline:** Applications are due **December 1, 2008, by 5p.m. ET** to [ccts-community@osumc.edu](mailto:ccts-community@osumc.edu). For questions, please contact Nancy Hood at 614-688-3478.

**Funding amount:** Up to \$15,000 (no indirect costs) is available per project (it is anticipated that 3-4 projects will be awarded). A percentage of the budget must be allocated for community partners.

**Eligibility criteria:** The proposed project must be related to clinical and translational research. Applicants must have OSU faculty status (regular tenure or tenure track, regular clinical track, or regular research track).

**Timeline:** Funding decisions will be announced in late December 2008. Project awards will be from January 1 – June 30, 2009. All funds must be spent by June 30, 2009.

**Proposal format: (Maximum 4 pages)**

1. Cover page (not included in page limit)
  - a. Date of Application
  - b. Name
  - c. Department/Position
  - d. Title of project
2. Brief description of research topic or study that will be the focus for this project
3. Rationale for increasing community engagement in your research
4. Description of actual or anticipated community partners and why they are appropriate
5. Project activities (Include a clear description of which steps in the research process community partners will be engaged in and how – see page 1 of the RFA.)
6. Expected outcomes and deliverables
7. Project timeline

8. Future plans for conducting community engaged research and timeline for anticipated grant submissions (including potential agency)

Not included in page limit:

9. Budget and budget narrative (Note: A portion of the budget must be allocated for community partner time, resources, travel, staff, etc.)
10. Biosketch/Other support for PI (in NIH format)
11. Letters of support, if applicable

**Review process:** All proposals will be reviewed by a committee that includes OSU faculty, staff, and community partner representatives.

**Selection criteria:** Preference will be given to projects that: propose higher levels of community engagement; demonstrate a commitment to ongoing community-researcher partnerships; allocate an appropriate amount of the project budget to community partners; propose new partnerships or clearly illustrate how the proposed project will advance the current level of community engagement; and have strong potential for seeking external funding for community-engaged research studies.