Call to Action to Address Racism & Social Injustice Research Program

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS 2022–2023

Overview

There is a continued critical need for universities across our nation to prioritize research focused on systemic racial inequities and injustices that exist not only in our communities but in higher education itself. The Call to Action to Address Racism & Social Injustice Program will provide support for academic research and the expansion of community-based knowledge that advances the understanding of systemic racism and generationally embedded racial disparity, two of the greatest challenges facing our society. **The goal of the program is to enhance exceptional cross-disciplinary research strengths and expand collaborations to build cultures of research and scholarship that address structures of racism and injustice.** We seek high quality, high integrity scholarship and creative activity that provides foundations to intervene in institutionalized racial disparities, structures of violence, and over-criminalization to fundamentally address the roots of these issues with generative ideas, imaginative strategies, and open, unexpected collaborations.

The successful project will approach this research with clarity about the complexities, fissures, barriers, and assumptions that structurally perpetuate racism and social injustice, as well as present a strong vision for how we might become a more just and equitable university, state, and nation where all can live in their full humanity. We welcome projects that have the potential to make a deeper connection with students and reciprocal partnerships with communities, in addition to those rooted in the realm of academic research and expertise of our university. Of foremost importance are accountability, transparency, and sustainability. A plan for how the work can be continued, improved, and shared beyond the funding year is an important component of the application. Please see Section 7 below for the key evaluation criteria.

Research Focus Areas

For 2022, the Call to Action to Address Racism & Social Injustice Program will continue to focus on three critical research areas that are currently the most important and complex challenges facing local communities, states, and our nation:

• **Systemic racism and social justice**
• **Law enforcement and criminal justice reform**
• **Disparities in health and health care**

Projects may include but are not limited to:

• Research that can lead to the removal of barriers that inhibit access to education, opportunity, support, and resources.
• The interrogation of structural and institutionalize systems of disparity and disenfranchisement.
• Strategies for increasing perspective taking and understanding.
• Strategies for the reduction of violence and harm that can increase racial equity, well-being, safety, and belonging.

Proposals may focus on a single research area or apply an intersectional approach via examining the complex configurations of social determinants and how those social constructs interact to yield outcomes.

Funding Period

The funding period for the second year of the research program is July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

Funding Tracks

The solicitation includes three funding tracks, each with a maximum funding threshold:

• **Community-Based Innovation $25,000**
• **Systemic Institutional Change $75,000**
• **Societal Impact $75,000**

Community-Based Innovation

This category is for an applicant individual or team from Champaign County or the campus community, **with an innovative idea that could contribute to the dismantling of systems of bias, marginalization, and disenfranchisement in the local community** by disrupting the status quo with the creation of a complex research challenge. An applicant may or may not have the expertise to transform the idea into an impactful proposal. This funding track will provide the resources for an applicant to collaborate with an expert to develop a research plan of action that explores the current situation, why it currently exists, and how to change it. To submit a qualifying application, an applicant not holding an appointment at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) must partner with an individual with an appointment. The community applicant will serve as the lead collaborator, Co-Project Leader, and the U of I individual will serve as the Principal Investigator. The Principal Investigator must submit the proposal application.

The goal of the research challenge would be to positively impact the human experience and well-being in a diverse and changing world.

Applicants funded through this solicitation may use the funding to organize workshops, conferences, meetings, and/or other reasonable expenses to gather information and other key resources to help crystallize the research proposal.

The funding would support the development and exploration of the innovative idea's potential impact.

Proposals may be funded up to $25,000.

Systemic Institutional Change

This category is for an individual or team, from the Urbana-Champaign campus with **an innovative systemic change strategy that would better position faculty to address structural racism or bias.**

This track's goal is to increase synergies across campus and promote equity. This would foster increased connections among scholars to come together in new and productive ways. The outcome would be improved conditions for marginalized groups.

The funding would support the development, implementation, and evaluation of the change strategy's impact.

Proposals may be funded up to $75,000.

Societal Impact

This category is for an individual or team, from the Urbana-Champaign campus with **an innovative solution that would address embedded systemic racism, social/criminal injustice, or health disparities external to the university.**

The goal for this track is to broaden the cohort of investigators focusing their research on systemic inequities. These may include educational and achievement equity gaps, well-being, and differential health outcomes, or improving societal identities and social injustice.

The funding would support the development, implementation, and evaluation of the proposed solution's impact.

Proposals may be funded up to $75,000.

Eligibility

Principal Investigators (PIs) and Co-PIs must hold appointments at the University of Illinois at the Urbana-Champaign campus. The PI may be either a tenure-stream or specialized faculty (instructors and lecturers), or an Academic Professional with appointments (0 to 100%) in any Urbana-Champaign university unit. The PI is responsible for the design, scientific and technical conduct, administrative oversight, fiscal accountability, regulatory oversight, and reporting for a research, instructional, or public services project. A PI may submit more than one proposal, but it must be a different proposal submitted to a different research category or funding track. A PI can be in more than one proposal as part of different research teams.

University members are encouraged to collaborate with community organizations or PreK-12 educational institutions. Community members are also encouraged to initiate collaborations with university members. Community collaborators may be from non-profit organizations, public agencies, school districts, etc. but cannot serve as PIs or Co-PIs. Instead, they may be listed as Co-Project Leader.

Application Guidelines

The application process is comprised of two phases: Pre-Proposal and Full-Proposal. The purpose of the Pre-Proposal submission is to provide an overview of the research proposal for internal peer evaluators to determine if it aligns with the Call to Action and if it should advance to the Full-Proposal phase. **Both submissions must be submitted electronically via the Special Programs Webtool (SPWT): https://specialprograms.research.illinois.edu.** The SPWT contains the required templates for the Pre-Proposal and Full-Proposal submissions, located in the Application Guidelines section. Read the original Call to Action Massmail: https://massmail.illinois.edu/massmail/1982189843.html.

Pre-Proposal Application Process

Pre-Proposal Applicants must submit the following documents:

- **Project Pre-Proposal, a required template,** that provides a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work, the need for the work, and includes the broad long-term goals, objectives, specific aims, and how the project contributes to the Call to Action goal and focus area(s). (2 pages maximum, single space,
  11-point font.
- **Internal Evaluator Letter of Agreement, a webform,** for each invited individual to acknowledge agreement to accept the PI's invitation to join the research program Evaluation Pool. **The PI will invite individuals, a minimum of two maximum of four, affiliated with UIUC to join the Evaluation Pool for their subject matter expertise in the proposal's research focus area.** In addition to faculty who have not submitted a proposal in the research category for which they seek to evaluate, academic professionals and professional practitioners with subject matter expertise may serve as evaluators. Prior to the evaluation phase, evaluators will be selected from the pool and sent an invitation to evaluate Pre-Proposals that align with their noted subject matter expertise in the RFP Research Focus Area(s). If an evaluator accepts the invitation to evaluate, an evaluator can anticipate evaluating up to approximately 20 proposals from an RFP Research Focus Area.
- **Two-page biographies for each member** of the project team. There is not a template for the biographies. Please select a format that is the best for your project.

In addition to the above documents, please be prepared to enter in the SPWT the names and emails of the **individuals, a minimum of two maximum of four, for whom you have submitted Internal Evaluator Letter of Agreements.** As a token of appreciation for their time, they will each receive a $350 Service in Excess (SIE) payment upon completing their assigned evaluations and returning the required document to process the SIE. The submission period for evaluations will be from December 18, 2021 to January 11, 2022. All evaluations must be submitted via the SPWT.

Pre-Proposal Deadline: December 3, 2021, 5 pm Central Time

- Pre-Proposals may be submitted from November 5, 2021 through December 3, 2021, 5 pm Central Time.
- No extensions or exceptions will be entertained.
- The selection committee will only consider complete applications.

Notification of proposal status to advance to Full-Proposal submission will occur the last week of January 2022.

Full Proposal Application Process

Full-Proposal Applicants must submit the following documents:

- **Project Full-Proposal, a required template,** that provides project summary, goals, objectives, alignment with the Call to Action, background, expertise, anticipated outcomes, impacts, and deliverables. (4 pages maximum, single space, 11-point font).
- **Project Full-Proposal Synopsis, a required template,** that provides a summary of the project that may be shared with the campus and local communities, on university websites, or in university publications.
- **Budget** and **Budget Justification required templates.**
- **Memorandum of Understanding, a required template,** to acknowledge agreement that if a proposer's project is awarded and accepted, the PI must participate in the Call to Action Annual Symposium, return unspent funds at project completion, and submit progress reports for the first six months and the full 12 months of the project.
- **Two-page biographies** for each member of the project team. There is not a template for the biographies. Please select a format that is the best for your project.
- **Project timeline.**

In addition to the above documents, please be prepared to enter in the SPWT the names, emails, and phone numbers of **two individuals who have agreed** to serve as subject matter expert evaluators on the proposal and are not affiliate with the U of I. As a token of appreciation for their time, they will each receive a $350 honorarium upon completing the evaluation and returning two documents required to process the honorarium. The submission period for evaluations will be from March 11, 2022 to April 3, 2022. Evaluations must be submitted via the SPWT.

Full Proposal Deadline: March 4, 2022, 5 pm Central Time

- Full-Proposals may be submitted February 5, 2022 through March 4, 2022, 5 pm Central Time.
- No extensions or exceptions will be entertained.
- The selection committee will only consider complete applications.

Notification of proposal funding status will occur beginning the third week of April 2022.

If a project is funded and includes work with human subjects, Institutional Review Board Approval from the Urbana-Champaign Office for the Protection of Research Subjects will be required prior to beginning the research. More information is available at: https://oprs.research.illinois.edu/about-oprs-irb.

Key Evaluation Criteria

Required Criteria below must be addressed in the proposal submission.

- **Local impact or relevance.** A challenge of significant scale and complexity selected with an eye to long-term vision and expectation of significant results. Underscores Illinois' responsibility and commitment to produce knowledge benefiting the state and local communities.
- **Build on current strength and leadership.** Creates and leverages existing scholarly strengths and emerge from what faculty are already pursuing, especially if faculty have opportunities to strengthen connections with faculty/students from other areas.
- **Impact on the university and its reputation.** Advances Illinois' scholarly leadership in the topic area, as well as its national and global status—looking broadly at the resources and strategic assets we would bring—faculty, staff, students, financial resources, collaborators and partners, and local assets or advantages.
- **Alignment with the mission of a land-grant research university.** Fundamentally draws on our institution's research power and creative activity; foster open, shared advances in fundamental disciplines; and bring together research with education, outreach, and public engagement.
- **Faculty and staff diversity and development.** Broadens the opportunities and expands participation of groups, faculty, and staff who are underrepresented, which is essential to the health and vitality of Illinois' community of scholars. The Office of the Chancellor is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports.

Preferred Criteria

Preferred Criteria below are not required to be addressed in the proposal submission. However, it would be beneficial if the proposal addressed one or more of them.

- **Interconnection with undergraduate and graduate education.** Engages students in innovative and groundbreaking ways. Should centrally involve graduate and professional students, integrate with curriculum, and provide experiential and intercultural learning opportunities for undergraduate students.
- **Engagement of external constituencies.** Capitalizes on Illinois' vibrant research, knowledge infrastructures (centers, institutes, Illinois Innovation Network [IIN], Discovery Partners Institute [DPI,] etc.), our diverse state and on our extensive network of national and international partners.
- **Sustainability.** Has the capacity to be a sustained effort over time (via grants, foundations, support from industry, state funding, university development efforts, or other sources).
- **National impact or relevance.** Should be a challenge of significant scale and complexity selected with an eye to long-term vision and expectation of significant results benefiting the nation.

More Information

The Call to Action to Address Racism & Social Injustice Research Program is administratively supported by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. For questions, please contact Holly Clingan at C2ARFP@illinois.edu or call 217-300-9580.