

VUMC Office of Health Equity Health Equity Innovation Awards (FY23)

Health Equity Innovation Awards Question:

How can VUMC close the gaps for individuals who face social, cultural, geographic, and economic barriers to having the best health possible?

Background and Purpose

VUMC's Office of Health Equity (OHE) is pleased to announce *Health Equity Innovation Awards* focused on advancing health equity. Advancing health equity ensures that all people--including VUMC employees, patients, and community members--have the opportunity to attain their highest level of health, regardless of the social, cultural, and/or economic conditions in which they live, work, and play. These conditions are often referred to as the social determinants of health including employment, education, financial stability, transportation, housing, English proficiency, systemic racism, and exposure to violence, among others.¹ Examples of communities that systematically experience worse health outcomes related to these factors include racial/ethnic minorities, individuals with limited socioeconomic status, sexual and gender minorities, underserved rural residents, and others who experience discrimination or social disadvantage.

The *Health Equity Innovation Awards* support innovative ideas and solutions to advance health equity, ultimately improving health outcomes for impacted communities. The awards are built upon the principle that there are assets, opportunities, and innovative ideas within VUMC and in our communities that can advance health equity. Health equity innovations at any stage of development are welcome including early concepts and ideas that would benefit from feedback from health equity experts. Areas of interest and inspiration include but are not limited to:

- 1) How can VUMC help patients, employees, and/or community members find and navigate the organizations, programs, and resources they need to lead healthy lives?
- 2) How can VUMC enhance internal and external partnerships to better organize and deliver care to patients, employees, and/or community members?
- 3) What education or training would help VUMC conduct research and do quality improvement using a health equity lens?
- 4) How can data and technology advance health equity for patients, employees, and/or community members?
- 5) How can VUMC better understand the social and economic conditions that impact the quality of life and health outcomes for patients, employees, and/or community members?
- 6) How can VUMC increase the likelihood that all patients, employees, and/or community members have the best chance to be healthy?

¹ Social Determinants of Health. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-of-health>

- 7) How can my department support the priorities identified in the [VUMC's Community Health Needs Assessment](#)?

Please see the [FAQs](#) for more about areas of interest and inspiration.

Awards Guidelines

1. **Applicants and Teams:** Awards are open to VUMC faculty, employees, residents, fellows, and post-docs. VU students* in medicine, nursing, public health, and other disciplines may apply but awards must be directly relevant to VUMC. Submissions by teams from different departments and areas within VUMC are encouraged.
**Please note: VU students may be the project leads. However, students will need a faculty sponsor who will be responsible for the conduct of the project.*
2. **Health Equity Focus:** Proposed ideas and solutions for this award must have a strong tie to improving health outcomes in impacted communities. The focus should be on health equity, which is different from Diversity & Inclusion. See [this](#) article to learn more about the differences between Health Equity and Diversity and Inclusion.
3. **Systems Thinking:** We encourage awards that address change at the policy and/or systems level. Please see the [OHE website](#) for more information.
4. **Support and Timeline:** The OHE will provide support up to \$10,000. Project support will come directly from the OHE cost center for effort/personnel and/or non-personnel expenses. Our OHE team will be engaged in a consultative capacity as needed. The implementation period for award ideas can vary but awards must be completed within twelve months.

Intent to Apply

If you are interested in applying, please submit an intent to apply form [here](#) by **Monday, April 11, 2022**. Intent to apply is not required but highly preferred.

Application

To submit your Health Equity Innovation Award application, you can use this link [here](#). Please provide the following application requirements in your completed application. You must submit your completed application as a single PDF file by **Friday, April 29, 2022**. Please see the [OHE website](#) for additional guidance.

Application Requirements

Health Equity Innovation Awards

Office of Health Equity

Project Title: _____

Project Lead: _____

Project Lead Email: _____

Financial Lead: _____

Financial Lead Email: _____

Health Equity Challenge: What is the challenge related to health equity at VUMC that the proposed innovation addresses? (150 words max)

Rationale: Provide the justification for addressing your health equity challenge. Describe what the significance is and what potential gaps your proposed innovation intends to fill. (150 words max)

Proposed Innovation: Describe your proposed innovation, idea, or solution. How will the proposed innovation, idea, or solution address this challenge? (150 words max)

Collaborators, Strategies, and Tactics: Tell us about your internal team and external team (if applicable) and plans for getting the work done. (150 words max)

Measuring Impact: Provide an overview of what you feel your project can achieve. (150 words max)

Project Objectives and Activities: Provide details about the project’s objectives and activities and tie them back to the project goals. Please use the table below as a model for sharing this information. You can share the information in the table format or as a narrative broken down by goal, [S.M.A.R.T. objective\(s\)](#), and activities.

Goal	S.M.A.R.T. Objective(s)*	Activities**
<i>Goal 1</i>	<i>Objective 1.1</i>	<i>Action 1 Action 2 Etc.</i>
	<i>Objective 1.2</i>	<i>Action 1 Action 2 Etc.</i>
<i>Goal 2</i>	<i>Objective 2.1</i>	<i>Action 1 Action 2 Etc.</i>

*S.M.A.R.T. Objective(s) – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound

**Activities – what actions support achieving the objective(s)?

Proposed Budget and Budget Justification: Please use the budget template below and include a brief budget justification for each line item that explains the rationale for the funds requested. The maximum funding level is up to \$10,000. Project support will come directly from the OHE cost center for effort and/or non-personnel expenses. OHE will need to ensure costs are allowable per VUMC policies.

Proposed Budget		
Item Description	Cost	Justification
<i>Ex. Salary</i>		
<i>Consultants</i>		
<i>Supplies</i>		
<i>Print/Copy</i>		
<i>Postage</i>		
<i>Etc.</i>		
Total Amount:		

Things To Keep in Mind: To make the utilization of funds as seamless as possible and to ensure that grant funds are used appropriately, regular check-ins with the Office of Health Equity’s financial team will occur every three months from project launch through project completion. Funds are available to use immediately after your launch date but must be used prior to June 12th, 2023. Funds cannot be rolled over to the following fiscal year.

Questions

Questions about the awards should be directed to VUMC’s Office of Health Equity at OHEinfo@vumc.org. FAQs related to the awards are on the [OHE website](#).

Key Dates

Release date: Friday, April 1, 2022
 Intent to apply* by Monday, April 11, 2022
 Application deadline: Friday, April 29, 2022
 Award launch date: Friday, July 1, 2022

**Intent to apply is not required but highly preferred*

About the Office of Health Equity at VUMC

The Office of Health Equity serves as an institutional home for coordinating and catalyzing health equity initiatives across VUMC and in the community. Visit the OHE [website](#) to learn more about health equity and our work.