VUMC

PHER

Program for
Health Equity
Research

Vanderbilt Program for Health Equity Research
PILOT GRANT PROGRAM | call for applications

INTRODUCTION

The **Program for Health Equity Research (PHER)** generates and advances research to inform and guide innovative solutions that move beyond advancing health disparities but that also advance our understanding of what works for whom, and under what conditions to promote health and health outcomes to "achieve optimal health across populations."

We are pleased to announce the 2024 cycle of the **PHER Pilot Grant Program**. The goal of this intramural initiative is to support innovate research projects that seek to **advance health equity research to achieve optimal health across populations**.

Health equity is "the state in which everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their highest level of health."[1] Every person deserves equal access to quality health care, yet social determinants of health and structural racism result in unjust variations. To achieve health equity, health care systems, policies, and practices must address the racial, social, economic, and environmental obstacles that create and perpetuate health disparities, resulting in poor health outcomes in minoritized populations. [1] https://www.cdc.gov/healthequity/index.html

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DESCRIPTION

PHER Pilot Grants are intended to support discrete research projects that can be completed in a 12-month timeframe of June 15, 2024 to June 15, 2025. <u>PHER will support up to 3 research projects with up to $10,000 per award.</u> These grants are not intended to supplement already funded research projects, unless it is to add a new element related to health equity.

Examples of suitable research topics are provided below. All research projects with an intervention/change must include an evaluation of the initiative.
- Integration of social drivers of health disparities to address and advance health equity.
- Collection or use of accurate race, ethnicity, and language (REaL) data or other demographic data.
- Embedding social justice in approaches to reduce disparities and promote health equity.
- Mitigation of structural racism or bias to improve health outcomes.
- Advancing health equity through transformational community engagement.

Additional guidance on key strategies to advance health equity may be found in "[An Equity Agenda for the Field of Health Care Quality Improvement](#)", a discussion paper by the National Academy of Medicine.

Funding up to $10,000 may be used for research staff, participant compensation, production of materials, related research expenses, services from a VUMC/VU core, or publication costs. Travel to conduct research or present findings at a relevant conference is allowed, with a limit of $1,200 and within the award year. Faculty effort is not an allowable expense. All funded projects must be completed within **12 months** of award, by June 15, 2025.

All faculty, trainees, and students at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Vanderbilt University, and Meharry Medical College are eligible to apply. Trainees/students may apply to serve as the principal investigator but must have a faculty mentor who is actively involved with the project.
The submission deadline is *May 6, 2024 - 11:59 pm CDT.*

Review criteria will include significance of the research topic, scientific rigor of the approach, innovation, and potential impact of the project. Projects with a focus on local patient populations or community partnerships will receive priority for funding. Applications that seek to develop preliminary data for an extramural grant submission are encouraged. The NIH has launched [new initiatives](#) to end structural racism in health care, in addition to its longstanding [funding opportunities in health disparities and health equity](#). Award decisions will be made by a review committee and **announcements will be sent to the awardees in June 2024.**

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HOW TO APPLY

There are **3 parts** to the submission process:
1.) Complete **a short REDCap form** at this link:
   https://redcap.vanderbilt.edu/surveys/?s=YCMXRLR888LCA739
2.) Prepare **a brief budget** (template is provided at the link above) and attach it to the REDCap form.
3.) Prepare **a research proposal** and attach it to the REDCap form.

REDCap form: Asks for the name of the PI, mentor (if applicable), co-investigators, project title, and brief project description, as well as a brief narrative bio of the PI (and mentor if applicable).

Budget: Itemize using the form provided, providing a very brief description or justification for each item.

Proposal: Include the sections detailed below. The proposal should <u>NOT EXCEED 4 PAGES</u> in 11-point type, single spaced. The reference list is not included in the 4-page limit. The proposal should be submitted as a Word or PDF document <u>as an attachment in the REDCap form</u>.

Proposal format:
1. **Title of Project**

Brief overview and objectives: Why are you undertaking this project? What research question do you hope to address using this grant funding? How will this research project advance health equity, including the potential impact of outcomes for addressing social determinants of health.
2. **Project plan:**
   a. ***Background***
   b. ***Research question(s) and hypotheses***
   c. ***Methods*** – Include study design, setting, description of study participants, intervention (if applicable), outcome measures, and analysis/evaluation plan
   d. ***Innovation***
   e. ***Anticipated outcomes*** – What will the project accomplish if successful? Will it lead to future research, programs, or patient benefit?
   f. ***Timeline*** – Grant activities must be completed within 12 months of award.

Other responsibilities of the PI:
A PI may submit only one proposal. The reviewers may request clarifying information or revisions before making final award decisions.

An **interim progress report** is due approximately **6 months** from the start date. A **final report** is due **at the end of the funding period** and should include a description of future plans relevant to the proposal. The PI will be invited to present the project findings at a **CHSR research seminar**. The PI should also submit a research abstract to a relevant **national conference** or **manuscript** to a suitable peer-reviewed journal upon completion of the project.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

For any questions, please email Lexie Lipham at lexie.lipham@vumc.org.