

Request for Applications

Community Partnerships in Research Grant Program



About PolicyLab

[PolicyLab](#) is a Center of Emphasis within [Children's Hospital of Philadelphia](#) (CHOP) [Research Institute](#), one of the largest pediatric research institutes in the country. The mission of PolicyLab at CHOP is to achieve optimal child health and well-being by informing program and policy changes through interdisciplinary research.

PolicyLab researches, develops, and implements evidence-based solutions that are responsive to community needs and relevant to child health policy priorities. Collaboration with practitioners, families and policymakers is imperative throughout our research process because we know we cannot achieve improved youth health outcomes by ourselves.

Program Goal

The goal of the PolicyLab Community Partnerships in Research program is to promote health equity in the Greater Philadelphia area by building and deepening community-academic partnerships for research targeting health improvements among children and their families. The grant program aims to promote capacity-building at CHOP for community-academic partnered research and for the conduct of translational research using best practice in community-engaged research methods. Additionally, this program aims to support the next generation of health equity researchers.

Community-engaged Research Program

The purpose of this program is to promote and support CHOP investigators in establishing community partnerships and conducting community-engaged research that lays the groundwork for external support for a larger-scale collaborative research agenda. Eligible projects will involve partnership development, collaborative research agenda development, community capacity building and/or translational research. A community partner is required. Projects must consider and articulate the principles and purpose of the proposed community-engaged research activities (see relevant definitions and resources below). Additionally, projects must include a focus on health equity (see relevant definitions below). Preference will be given to projects that focus on the Philadelphia community.

Two grant mechanisms are available in this program:

- Partnership Development Awards provide seed funding to support activities related to the development of new or emerging community-academic research partnerships. Partnership development awards will be supported for up to a maximum of \$7,000 for one year.
- Joint Pilot Project Awards are geared towards established community-academic partnerships who seek funds for a well-defined research project that may produce preliminary data for future competitive grant applications. Joint pilot project awards will be supported for up to \$40,000 for up to two years. ****To open Spring 2026****

If you are unsure of whether you should apply for a Partnership Development Award or a Joint Pilot Project Award, consider assessing your current research partnerships or level of community engagement using the following resources:

- [‘Are We Ready? A Toolkit for Academic-Community Partnerships in preparation for Community-Based Participatory Research](#)
- [The Continuum of Community Engagement in Research: A Roadmap for Understanding and Assessing Progress](#)
- [Directing Research Toward Health Equity: A Health Equity Research Impact Assessment](#)

If you still feel uncertain or have questions about the expectations for community-engaged research, please email our Program Manager, Tanisha Belton (beltont@chop.edu)

Key Terms and Definitions

We use the following definitions to guide our understanding of community-engaged research:

- *Academic Lead:* A member of CHOP who is jointly responsible for the preparation, conduct, and administration of the research project or partnership development activities. An Academic Lead may include faculty at all levels including instructors from all CHOP departments and divisions. Academic Leads may also be research scientists, experienced research staff and research fellows in their final year of fellowship transitioning to a faculty position at CHOP.
- *Community Lead:* A member of the affected community who is jointly responsible for the preparation, conduct, and administration of the research project or partnership development activities. A Community Lead could include, but is not limited to, staff from partner organizations, members of local or state government, educators, faith-based groups, service organizations and neighborhood groups.
- *Community:* We define community and/or community partners broadly as a group of people linked by characteristics such as geographic location, race, ethnicity, gender, age, occupation, social and/or cultural ties; those who share common perspectives (or a common cause); and/or those who engage in joint action in geographical or virtual settings.
- *Community-engaged Research:* Community-engaged research is a collaborative process through which communities and researchers work together to solve mutually recognized problems and build on strengths that each party brings to the collaboration. It involves a participatory approach that includes those affected by the issue. It includes guiding principles of social justice, mutuality, and reciprocity that are practiced through dialogue, co-learning, and long-term commitments to participation. Community-engaged research practices are equity-driven and intentionally change-oriented.
 - Community-engaged research activities occur along a continuum. Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is one method for community engagement. Other methods include community service, service-learning, training and technical assistance, coalition-building, capacity-building and economic development.
- *Community-based Participatory Research (CBPR):* A collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the

unique strengths that each brings. CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community with the aim of combining knowledge and action for social change to improve community health and eliminate health disparities.

- *Health Disparities:* A disparity in health or health care is an avoidable and unwanted difference or gap—among individuals and groups. This definition of health disparities includes differences in health status, the presence of disease, health outcomes, as well as quality of and access to health care. Health disparities can affect many different populations including those with lower socioeconomic status, individuals from racial and ethnic minority groups, residents in rural areas, women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities.
- *Health Equity:* Equity is the absence of unfair, avoidable or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically, or geographically, or by other dimensions of inequality (e.g., sex, gender, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation). Health is a fundamental human right. Health equity is achieved when everyone can attain their full potential for health and well-being.

Key Dates

- Request for Applications: 9/26/2025-11/17/2025
- Submission Deadline: 11/17/2025 at 5 p.m.
- Notification of Award: 12/15/2025
- Anticipated Start Date: 1/1/2026