

## **PolicyLab Community Partnerships in Research Program Partnership Development Award**



The Partnership Development Award is part of PolicyLab's Community Partnerships in Research program. It is designed to provide seed funding to support activities related to the development of new or emerging community-academic research partnerships. Partnership Development Awards are supported for up to a maximum of \$7,000 for one year.

### **How can funds be used?**

Partnership Development Awards activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Developing research partnership infrastructure (e.g., advisory boards, partnership roles, and responsibilities, policies and procedures, and memorandums of understanding).
- Facilitating formal and informal meetings for partners to identify shared goals, priorities, and research interests, explore other potential research partners, or discuss how to adopt equitable collaborative principles and operations.
- Facilitating open dialogue around challenges and opportunities to address community health needs.
- Exploring and seeking involvement of potential partners.
- Building research capacity for community partners (training on research design, methods or protocols).
- Building capacity for academic partners (learning about principles of community engagement, for example).
- Developing a research plan for a joint pilot project.

### **Eligibility**

- All applications must be led by a CHOP Academic Lead. Please see the definitions for Academic Lead and Community Lead in the Request for Application.

### **Other Criteria**

- Funding is not designed to support delivery of ongoing program services or to purchase equipment or capital expenses.
- An Academic Lead can only apply for one grant per award cycle.
- Grants involving a community partner must consider funding directed to the Community Lead and/or organization represented by the Community Lead. Budgets not including community-directed funds must include a rationale for this exclusion.

### **Review Process**

A Review Committee composed of academic and community reviewers with experience in community-engaged research will review all grant applications, giving preference to those that have the potential to meaningfully engage community partners in the research process, improve research translation and decrease health inequities. Applications should be well written, precise, and succinct, and should follow the provided template.

**Selection Criteria**

Partnership Development Awards will be scored in four areas:

- *Health Equity Consideration:* Does this application adequately explain the importance of the academic and community relationship in addressing the selected health equity issue? Does the application appear to sufficiently understand the root cause and context of the selected health equity issue?
- *Community Impact:* Is the proposed benefit to the community clear? Is the plan for community engagement appropriate? Is there potential for the development of a shared research agenda in the future?
- *Research Partnership:* Does this application clearly state the purpose of this partnership? Does it clearly outline the role each partner will play? Does the application clearly outline how the applicants view a successful deployment of funds?
- *Approach:* Is the overall approach well-reasoned and appropriate to develop a community-academic partnership? Are potential problems and alternative strategies presented? Are resources allocated equitably?

All applicants will receive a copy of reviewers’ anonymized comments and scores.

Score	Descriptor	Additional Guidance on Strengths/weaknesses
5	Outstanding	Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses
4	Very Good	Very Strong with only some minor weaknesses (examples of minor weaknesses: participant incentives are inadequate; timeline is reasonable but lacks detail/clear milestones)
3	Adequate	Some strengths but with at least some moderate weaknesses (examples of moderate weaknesses: unspecified communication plan between community lead and academic lead, community engagement is described but limited to select phases of the project)
2	Weak	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses (examples of major weaknesses: equity impact is not clearly specified, community partner role is minimal, research approach is poorly justified to meet the goals)
1	Poor	Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses (examples of major weaknesses in absence of strengths may include roles, responsibilities, and use of funds are unclear or inappropriate, community partnership is not meaningfully described)

**Key Dates**

- o Request for Applications: 2/2/2026-4/6/2026
- o Letter of Intent Deadline: 3/16/2026
- o Submission Deadline: 4/6/2026 at 5pm
- o Notification of Award: 5/11/2026
- o Anticipated Start Date: 7/1/2026

**How to Apply for the Partnership Development Award**

Please submit your application as a single Word document via email to Tanisha Belton at [beltont@chop.edu](mailto:beltont@chop.edu) by **April 6<sup>th</sup> at 5pm**. Please use the included template.  
Application components include:

- Cover page, listing: Project Title, Academic Lead(s), and their Department/Division, Community Lead(s), and their organizational affiliation
- Project Description, including summary and proposed timeline
- Partnership Description, including description of the Academic Lead, community, and community organization, and any prior collaborative efforts
- A response to the following questions:
  1. How do you see this partnership leading to the development of a shared research agenda?
  2. What health equity issue does this partnership aim to better understand or remediate? What is the context of this issue in the community and what role will each partner play in learning and action on this issue?
  3. Where do you view the proposed relationship building activity on the '[Continuum of Community Engagement in Research](#)'? (Specifically, in relation to Figure 2: The Continuum of Community Engagement in Research: Involvement and Activity)
  4. How will you know this partnership development period was successful? How do you envision this work supporting sustainability? Are you working towards an application for the Joint Pilot Award?
- Budget and justification
- Letter of support from Community Lead

## Budget

Budgets must be reviewed and approved by your business manager prior to submission. Funding may not be used for faculty (CHOP) salary support. Other personnel salary support is allowable (e.g., CHOP research coordinator staff and students and Community Lead and community staff). Provide a breakdown of costs by category (e.g., personnel, travel, supplies, etc.) and describe in the Budget Justification how the funds will be used and how the costs were calculated. PolicyLab will attempt to fund all requested budgets in full but may elect to partially fund certain protocols to increase the number of funded proposals.

## Award Requirements

Awardees must submit a year-end report for review by the PolicyLab Community-engaged Research Grant Committee. This report should include key milestones and accomplishments, future partnership plans, expenditures and lessons learned. Any products or deliverables (reports, presentations, etc.) should also be reported. Awardees are expected to attend a kick-off meeting held in January of the award year.

## For questions or support:

Program staff will offer assistance to help applicants prepare strong, competitive applications that meet the program goals. Please contact Tanisha Belton ([beltont@chop.edu](mailto:beltont@chop.edu)) if support is needed.

## Qualitative Research Core Support

The Qualitative Research Core partners with investigators to support and execute qualitative and mixed/multi-method research. They are a team of methodologists, project managers, and research coordinators with extensive training, knowledge, and practical experience in implementing qualitative projects, particularly with special populations. Their services include qualitative training opportunities to help your existing team build their own skill set, as well as consultation and collaboration with QRC experts joining your team. They have time set aside to consult on research design and grant writing for partnered applications to this funding opportunity. Please reach out to them by March 23, 2026, at <http://redcap.link/QRCinquiry> if you're looking for support with your qualitative or mixed/multi-method project.

**PolicyLab Community Partnerships in Research  
Partnership Development Award**

**Application Template**

**Project Title:**

**Academic Lead:**

**Department/Division:**

**Email:**

**Community Lead:**

**Organizational Affiliation:**

**Email:**

**Date Submitted:**

**Project Description (1/2 page)**

(Succinct description of the proposed project and timeline)

**Partnership Description (1/2 page)**

(Description of the Academic Lead, Community Lead, community, and any prior collaborative efforts)

**Response to the following questions (1/2 page each):**

How do you see this partnership leading to the development of a shared research agenda?

What health equity issue does this partnership aim to better understand or remediate? What is the context of this issue in the community and what role will each partner play in learning and action on this issue?

Where do you view the proposed relationship building activity on the '[Continuum of Community Engagement in Research](#)'? (Specifically, in relation to Figure 2: The Continuum of Community Engagement in Research: Involvement and Activity)

How will you know this partnership development period was successful? How do you envision this work supporting sustainability? Are you working towards an application for the Joint Pilot Award?

**Budget and justification**

[Empty box for budget and justification content]