

Bloomberg American Health Initiative: Environmental Challenges

Request for Proposals: Pilot Project

Proposal Deadline: May 15, 2017

The Environmental Challenges Working Group of the Bloomberg American Health Initiative (BAHI) invites proposals for seed grants of up to \$15,000 to support teams of Johns Hopkins researchers to begin or expand interdisciplinary research and practice projects related to designing healthy communities.

BAHI invests in the students, researchers and practitioners who are shaping the public health agenda for a healthier nation. The initiative focuses on five critical health threats in the United States, one of which addresses environmental challenges. To learn more about BAHI, visit <http://www.jhsph.edu/about/bloomberg-american-health-initiative/>.

The BAHI Environmental Challenges Working Group is calling on the public health field to take on a proactive role in developing, implementing, and promoting sustainable, resilient and equitable communities. To do this, we have established a seed grant program for pilot projects that forge stronger partnerships between public health with the fields of urban planning, landscape architecture, architecture, environmental design and assessment, agronomy, food systems, and civil engineering. The seed grants aim to help JHSPH researchers to build collaborations with other JHU researchers and with non-academic professionals and practitioners to design and build healthier communities.

Information about the seed grant program and proposal requirements is provided below. Questions about the seed grant program can be directed to Katie Igreg at kigrec@jhu.edu.

Objectives

The seed grant program invites JHU researchers to forge cross-sector collaborations that address the interactions of public health and the built environment. Up to two pilot projects will be awarded for 12 months of activity starting July 1, 2017. The total amount of funding available for this award is \$15,000, with either one award offered at \$15,000 or two awards offered at lesser amounts.

For this RFP, the built environment includes all spaces in which people inhabit that can affect their health and well-being, and can include air, water, energy, food systems, transportation, land use, planning, architecture and infrastructure. Proposals can focus on any geographic area within the United States – neighborhood, regional, state or national levels.

The goals of the seed grant program are to:

- 1) Develop new or enhanced collaborations among researchers from more than one discipline.
- 2) Build partnerships with government agencies, community organizations or nonprofit organizations.

- 3) Collect or analyze preliminary data that can help bridge the gap from understanding health impacts of environments to improving those environments. However, the project does not need to involve primary data collection.
- 4) Provide preliminary data to develop proposal(s) to external funding source(s) for a multi-investigator project.

A wide variety of research approaches will be considered. A few possibilities are outlined below for illustrative purposes:

- Feasibility study to examine questions and methods that can be applied across multiple places and scales, and which have the potential to inform decision makers.
- Synthesizing existing data, methods, theories, and tools to identify the mechanisms that link public health and the built environment.
- Qualitative methods that evaluate interventions being implemented which address the built environment and the impact of interventions, e.g. on health outcomes.
- Systems analysis, such as using modeling tools to understand the dynamics and/or linkages between public health and the built environment.

Criteria

The lead applicant (PI) must be a full-time faculty member (tenured, tenure track, and fixed term), research scientist, or research scholar affiliated with the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. This affiliation does not need to be a primary appointment, and other collaborators (co-PIs) may be from any Johns Hopkins division. Collaborators can include faculty, staff and doctoral students in any division of Johns Hopkins University. Staff of government agencies and nonprofit organizations may also collaborate in seed grant proposals.

- Research teams should include two or more investigators. There is no maximum number of investigators. We encourage new and young investigators to apply.
- Proposed projects should include teams representing two or more JHU divisions and/or new collaborations between team members. Less priority will be given to proposals from teams representing the same division, but proposals from such teams are welcome if the individuals bring different areas of expertise that are needed for the project.
- Seed grant funds can be used for salary, equipment, supplies, travel and to support graduate research assistants and other support personnel.
- Faculty salary support is permitted on the condition that such support can be clearly linked to developing a pathway to obtain future external research funding.

Recipients of seed grants will be asked to fulfill several obligations, including:

- 1) Prepare two reports, due 6 months and 12 months into the award period, summarizing research progress and accomplishment. The mid-term (6 month) report should be a brief update, about 1 page that could be presented in bullet points. The final (12 month) report will include project progress, next steps and financial information, and expected to be 2-4 pages.
- 2) Submit at least one paper to be considered for presentation at the BAHI Environmental Challenges Symposium, to be held March 7-8, 2018.

Application Procedure

Following the outline below, please submit the completed proposal materials as a single PDF file to kigrec@jhu.edu by 11:59 pm EST on Monday, May 15, 2017.

Note: All proposals for funding should be submitted in 10-12 point font, single-spaced with margins of no less than 0.8 inch. Incomplete proposals or project descriptions that exceed the 2 page limitation will not be reviewed.

The proposal should be submitted as a single PDF document, and include the following:

- A cover page with:
 - 1) Project title (can be a working title).
 - 2) A 300-word (maximum) abstract of the proposal.
 - 3) Principal Investigator's (PI) name, department, division and contact information (telephone & email address).
 - 4) Co-PIs' names, department, division and contact information.
 - 5) Dollar amount requested (up to \$15,000 for 12 months). If matching funds will be provided (such as for non-JHU collaborators), please state the funding amount.
- Project description, up to 2 pages (maximum). Label the sections as:
 - 1) Project goals and objectives.
 - 2) Background information and preliminary studies.
 - 3) Project design – Lay out the basic project plan, including any hypotheses to be tested and the design used to test them, such as data collection and analysis methods. Refer to published papers where possible regarding methods. Provide a brief description of each team members' role in the project.
 - 4) Expected impacts and outcomes.
 - 5) Project timeline describing the timing of the project plan and anticipated project milestones.
- Appendix A: References with all authors listed. Please underline PI and co-PI's names.
- Appendix B: One page budget for 12 months of activity listing key areas of support and justification. Faculty salary support is permitted on the condition that such support can be clearly linked to developing a pathway to obtain future external research funding.
- Appendix C: Biographical sketch for each PI/co-PI, modeled after the standard NSF or NIH format. Details about NIH formatting are available at <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>. NSF formatting is described at www.nsf.gov/pubs/2003/nsf03041/2.htm.

Review Process

Proposals will be judged in terms of:

- Relevance to the goals of BAHI, in particular addressing ways to design healthier community environments.
- The creativity, potential and importance of the proposed project.
- Quality of the research team's preparation and experience, as judged by past research experience, qualifications, and ability to communicate across disciplines.

- The interdisciplinary nature of the proposed project, e.g., how the team will work across disciplines to achieve the project's goals.
- Potential for further grant support from external (non-JHU) sources.
- Strategies for communicating the results.

Proposals will be judged by an interdisciplinary review committee. As such, seed grant proposals should be able to communicate research objectives, design and outcomes to people outside of their discipline.

Timeline

April 3, 2017:	RFP released for seed grant proposals
May 15, 2017:	Seed grant proposal deadline
June 2017:	Grant awards announced
July 1, 2017:	Start date for funded seed grant projects
June 30, 2018:	End of seed grant funding period

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