The Institute for Translational Research in Children’s Mental Health

2017 Collaborative Seed Grant Program

The University of Minnesota Institute for Translational Research in Children’s Mental Health (ITR) announces the **2017 Collaborative Seed Grant Program**. ITR collaborative seed grants are designed to support small research projects addressing important issues in children’s mental health that align with ITR’s mission, are identified by communities in Minnesota, and have a high likelihood of leading to external funding.

The mission of the Institute for Translational Research in Children’s Mental Health (ITR) is to advance quality research, evidence-based training, and information dissemination focused on children’s mental health and development ages 0 to 18. ITR provides basic scientific and translational prevention and intervention research leading to the implementation or enhancement of evidence-based programs and practices.

- Two to three small grants will be awarded to support university-community collaborative participation in small research projects addressing important issues in children’s mental health (maximum award $20,000).
- Proposed projects must be completed within one year. Projects should be designed to position the research team to apply for external funding to continue their program of research.
- Letters of Interest are due Monday, **May 1, 2017** describing the child and/or family issues you propose to focus on and your capacity to partner with a community entity in research.

**TECHNICAL DETAILS**

**Investigators:** All projects must include two co-investigators:

1. A community organization providing services in Minnesota, to include 501c3 organizations, healthcare organizations, hospitals, clinics, local or tribal governments.

2. Community agencies must be actively involved in researching or providing
services to children, adolescents, and/or their families and must provide a letter of commitment.

3. A junior researcher at the University of Minnesota.

A junior researcher is defined as:
- Assistant or Associate Professor within 7 years of having received their PhD;
- PhD research associates, who are within 7 years of having received their PhD;
- Post-doctoral fellows who are supervised by a faculty member (letter of support required). Faculty members supervising post-doctoral fellows will be required to be included as key staff on the project and the faculty member must assume ultimate responsibility for the project.

Research Project:
All projects must represent collaboration between community and university investigators that is new or proposes a new area of inquiry not currently supported by existing funding. Proposals found to be non-competitive by ITR during a previous review may not be submitted again without substantial revisions.

Projects should address issues focused on children’s mental health. Successful applicants will clearly state the significance of their chosen issue. Applicants will also describe their interest and capacity for research.

Grant Activities:
ITR awards are for the support of junior researchers and community partners working together to develop and submit a proposal for NIH (or similar) research funding. NIH research proposals of this type generally include pilot data to justify their community significance and scientific merit. Therefore, use of funding provided by an ITR collaborative seed grant may be targeted towards gathering pilot data and include:

1. Support for the community partner to participate effectively (e.g. assign staff time to the project.)
2. Gathering preliminary quantitative data to support planned research proposals.
3. Facilitating community focus groups or other qualitative research to inform the development of future research proposals.

RESEARCH FOCUS AREA
Proposals must focus on children, adolescents, and families whose exposure to risk factors increases the likelihood that they will experience mental health related difficulties and/or children, adolescents and families already identified as having mental health difficulties. Seed projects must foster evidence-based prevention/intervention programs and approaches. Letters of Interest do not need to designate a specific evidence-based approach for study. This may be developed as part of the full application process, in partnership with an academic and community partner. Basic science research is acceptable, provided that the research team clearly explains how data generated will inform future evidence-based prevention/intervention programs.

Examples of seed grant research projects that will further the ITR mission to provide quality basic scientific and translational research in children’s mental health may include but are not limited to:

- 4. Preliminary data collection needed to further a research proposal
- 5. Secondary analysis of existing data
- 6. Pilot and feasibility studies as vehicles leading to external funding
- 7. Small, self-contained research projects
- 8. Data collection and analysis designed in collaboration with a community partner in response to a community need related to children’s mental health
- 9. Development of applicable research methodology
- 10. Development of new applicable research technology

Preference will be given to proposals:

- 1. Building or strengthening cross-disciplinary partnerships
- 2. Representing a new research direction in an area likely to generate external funding
- 3. Having significant scientific merit
- 4. Focusing on underserved communities
- 5. Enhancing the career of a junior researcher who is willing to form a strong alliance to ITR.

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**2017 ITR SEED GRANT APPLICATION DATES**

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<td>Letters of interest due</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 26, 2017</td>
<td>Application invitation to successful LOI</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 26, 2017</td>
<td>Seed grant proposals due.</td>
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<td>July 31, 2017</td>
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LETTER OF INTEREST

Interested co-investigators are requested to submit a letter of interest (LOI) in order to participate in this funding opportunity. **LOIs NEED NOT DESCRIBE A FULLY DEVELOPED RESEARCH PLAN.**

The letter of interest should be no longer than 2 pages and address the following:

1. Describe your community partner organization, its mission and its service focus. Please include information about services provided and the number and types of staff and clients involved in these services.

2. Specify the children’s mental health area (question, problem or issue) you are proposing to focus on. (Please be as specific as possible. A focus such as “children with problems” is too broad.) What is your current involvement with this question, problem or issue?

3. What is the significance and relevance of this children’s mental health issue to communities in Minnesota?

4. Describe your community organization’s interest and involvement with evidence-based prevention.
   a. Experience with evidence-based prevention and/or early intervention programs, including any they are currently utilizing.
   b. Willingness and ability to implement evidence based prevention and/or early intervention programs as part of future research.

5. Describe your community organization’s capacity to participate in research.
   a. Knowledge and experience as a research partner.
   b. Administrative and staff support and interest for research.
   c. Ability and experience with data collection.

Submit your completed letter of interest by May 1, 2017 no later than 4:30pm. Letters of Interest should be submitted via email to bray0021@umn.edu (please include “ITR Collaborative Seed Grants” in the subject heading).
NEXT STEPS

**Review of LOIs:** ITR administration will screen all LOIs to ensure they meet the requirements.

**Full Proposal:** Full proposals will be solicited from all applicants who receive a positive screening and are successfully partnered with a community partner. It is expected that community and university co-investigators will jointly develop the full proposal. A detailed outline for the full proposal will be forwarded to all community/researcher partnerships.

**Selection:** ITR faculty will review final proposals and make all funding decisions.