2017 IRL CFA
FAQ – Updated February 6, 2017

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GENERAL

Q: Can you share some qualities that you are looking for in IRL team members?
A: Our successful 2016 team members had these top three qualities: 1) The capacity and desire to become leaders in advancing population health and health equity at the local and national levels; 2) A compelling vision for how the research and community partners will work together collaboratively and be accountable to the community, and 3) Research with a strong potential to inform policy or action at the local and/or national level, properly scaled, and not too ambitious.

RESEARCHERS

Q: Can you define mid-career researcher?
A: We are looking for applicants who are mid-career, rather than junior career or late career. While we don't have a set definition for "mid-career," generally speaking, a researcher would be considered "mid-career" if they are more than five years out from their PhD (or other terminal degree) or have extensive research or evaluation experience. However, the determination of mid-career need not be based on rank. We want team members who are skilled and experienced in doing research and past the initial phase of their career, but not at the end. Researchers and community leaders who are interested in being included as team members are invited to make their case for their mid-career status in the application materials. We focus on "mid-career" because these individuals are in a unique position where they have gained the skills and experience to lead but also have time to implement their learning and influence their peers and organizations as they continue to work formally for significant time beyond the IRL program.

Q: Do the researchers have to be at an academic institution?
A: No, the researcher does not need to be based at an academic institution. Researchers may hold academic appointments or positions in applied research firms or community organizations. We encourage you to browse through our

[2016 IRL Team Profiles](#) to get a sense of our Cohort 1 team members and their research projects.

Q: Do you have to have a PhD in order to be included on an application as a research partner?
A: While we expect that many researchers listed as team members will have earned a PhD or related degree, this is not necessary provided the applicant can demonstrate that the researcher has a strong record of excellence in research or evaluation. With that said, researchers from diverse disciplinary and demographic backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply.

Q: How do you gauge demonstrated expertise in research?
A: We take a holistic approach. For some, it will be a clear record of quality peer-reviewed publications. For others, white-paper reports. And for others, research-based policy briefs. Overall, there is no one metric. Applicants and team members must make their case.

Q: Can the researchers be from the same organization/institution?
A: Yes, the two researchers can be from the same organization/institution.

Q: If I am currently a doctoral student or in a post-doc position, can I be included on an application as a research partner?
A: No, doctoral students and post-doctoral fellows are not considered "mid-career researchers." In addition, persons on NIH or NSF training fellowships (e.g. K awards) are ineligible for this program.

COMMUNITY PARTNER

Q: For the community partner, do you have a preference of whether the partner is a staff member or a constituent/volunteer member?
A: The community partner may be either a staff member or a constituent/volunteer member. For the purposes of this program, community partners are individuals with close ties to a community of interest; individuals must have the potential to take action on the issue themselves or have relationships with entities that can take action.

Q: Could the community partner be a person who is employed by the University, but whose job is primarily to be a community liaison for everything that pertains to University-Community relations?
A: No, an individual employed by a university would not be considered eligible to serve in the community partner role.

TEAM

Q: Does the team need to show a record of working together, or can it be a newly formed team?
A: Research partners on an IRL team do not need to be located in the same geographical area or have a long history of collaborating together, but a plan for

maintaining team cohesion is a necessary component of the application and selection process. More specifically, each team must thoroughly describe their experience and plan for establishing and/or maintaining an effective, equitable collaboration.

Q: I am interested in applying for this program, but I do not have a full team to apply with. Can anyone help me find additional team members to partner with?
A: Please email ResearchLeaders@umn.edu. The IRL national program center will be offering limited assistance to help researchers and non-researcher community leaders identify possible team members. But we cannot promise matching success.

Q: Is each individual only allowed to be part of one IRL application, or can an individual be on more than one team, as long as the focus of each individual application is different?
A: You can only apply to be part of one IRL Team. In other words, you can only be listed on one applicant organization's application as a team member.

Q: Can I be listed as a team member or apply for more than one RWJF leadership program?
A: Yes, you can apply for or be listed as a team member on more than one leadership program application. But, you can only get into one program. Each potential applicant or team member should think about each of the four RWJF leadership development programs and decide which is best suited for his/her interests. We recommend putting most of your energy into the program you think is the best fit for you. If you do decide to apply or be listed as a team member for more than one program, you must fill out a separate application for each one. For more information on RWJF leadership development programs, please visit http://www.rwjf.org/changeleaders.

RESEARCH PROJECTS
Q: Can you give us a sample project from Cohort 1?
A: Check out the IRL Cohort 1 Team Profiles on our website http://interdisciplinaryresearch-leaders.org/2016-team-profiles/ to learn more about our teams and their research projects. Please note that the research themes/topic areas for IRL Cohort 1 are 1) Early childhood and health, and 2) Housing, community development, and health, which are different than our Cohort 2 themes/topic areas – 1) Youth development approaches to prevent violence and promote health, and 2) Community and individual resilience and health.

Q: What are the two themes/topic areas for the 2017 IRL CFA?
A: IRL grantee teams must focus their research and association action activities on one of trop topic areas, or themes. For the second IRL cohort (beginning September 2017), the two topic areas are:

1) Youth development approaches to prevent violence and promote health
2) Community and individual resilience and health

Q: How detailed does our research project description need to be at the time of application (e.g. number of surveys/focus groups, sample size, etc)?
A: In general, the more detailed your research project description is in the application, the better.

Q: Can we interpret resiliency to include things like housing? Early childhood education? Nutrition campaigns (sugary drink tax) to fund community improvements? Fear of deportation stress on families?
A: The "community and individual resilience and health" theme can include a variety of topics and research projects. We ask you to make the case for why your proposed research projects falls under one of the two themes/topic areas in your application. Please see the 2017 IRL CFA for more details on the two themes/topic areas.

Q: What if the research ideally involves more than a single community partner? Is it possible to involve additional community partners?
A: For this IRL call for applications, the team is limited to one community partner team member. However, you can include contracts and consultants in the research project budget to engage the services of additional community partners if the project calls for it.

Q: What does the 'Revised Research Proposal' entail?
A: It is our hope and expectation that all grantees accepted into the program successfully submit the Revised Research Proposal in December 2017.
The first 3-4 months of the program will be spent refining the research proposal and teams will have input and assistance from the Interdisciplinary Research Leaders national program center and mentors to help them accomplish this goal. Funds for the research project will not be released until submission and approval of a full revised research proposal, approximately six months after the grant start date of 9/1/2017.

Q: Is program evaluation eligible for funding under this call?
A: Yes, an evaluation of an intervention is one example of an evaluation-specific research design that can be proposed and detailed in the application.

FUNDING/SUPPORT/AWARD

Q: Is there funding to assist the team members in attending the in-person meetings?
A: Yes, all travel expenses for all required program meetings and trainings will be paid directly by the IRL national leadership program center or RWJF. This will not come out of your grant budget.

Q: Will you fund programs in the same city/county?
A: Yes, it is possible that we would fund more than one grantee in the same city or county. Geographic diversity among teams is a goal, however, and it is unlikely that we would fund several teams in the same geographic location.

Q: What is the time commitment for fellows in this program?
A: The time commitment for the program is estimated to be one day per week – approximately 20% FTE -- for three years. To support the fellows' time to participate in the program, the grantee organization will receive financial support of $25,000 per team member for each year of the three-year program.

SELECTION
Q: Will applications be scored and reviewer comments provided to applicants?
A: Applications will undergo a rigorous, multi-stage review process. Per RWJF policy, reviewers' written comments will not be provided to applicants. While we can't provide applicant organizations with specific reviewer information, we can share some of the qualities of applications that were selected to be part of the program.

FUTURE IRL CFA
Q: Do you know the topic areas for subsequent years?
A: Announcements about topic areas for the 2018 call for applications will be made in early 2018. I encourage you to sign up on the program website to receive future funding alerts, at www.interdisciplinaryresearch-leaders.org, and follow us on Twitter at @IRLeaders.