



Trailblazer Planning Grant

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

Community Health Partnerships is requesting applications for awards supporting the development of community-university partnerships that will focus on improving health, examining social determinants of health, or enhancing health equity. Awards will be up to \$5,000 to support partnership growth and collaborative grant proposal development.

Proposal Deadline

October 1, 2025

Please note that you will be submitting through the Indiana CTSI's grants management software WebCAMP. Please allow enough time to become familiar with this system.

The WebCAMP user's guide is also available under the funding announcement here:
<https://indianactsi.org/translational-research-development/open-funding-opportunities/>



Indiana Clinical & Translational Sciences Institute (CTSI) Community Health Partnerships

Trailblazer Planning Grant Request for Applications

I. Purpose

Indiana CTSI Community Health Partnerships (CHeP) is soliciting proposals for the development of community-university partnerships to improve health, examine social determinants of health (SDoH), or enhance health equity, to result in future collaborative research proposals. The award can be used to establish new partnerships or to strengthen/expand existing community-university partnerships to solve critical health problems affecting Indiana residents. This award will not fund research pilot projects; instead, it will fund activities to help develop partnerships between organizations that have potential to later engage in joint research projects to address health, health equity, or SDoH. The expected outcome of this award is the development of a future research proposal for opportunities such as the Community Health Partnerships [Trailblazer Award](#). Examples of partnership development activities we are interested in funding include meetings, conferences, travel expenses, stakeholder interviews, and quality improvement assessments. This RFA accepts projects which propose to serve any of the counties of Indiana, and given the paucity of projects in public health regions 1 (Lake, Porter, LaPorte, Newton, and Jasper counties) and 7 (Vermillion, Parke, Putnam, Vigo, Clay, Owen, Sullivan, and Greene counties), we especially encourage projects with a focus on those regions.

II. Types of Projects

The Trailblazer Planning Grant is intended to fund partnership development through conferences, travel, collaborative meetings, stakeholder interviews, and other activities that will culminate in a community-engaged collaborative research proposal application to the Trailblazer Award (or other funding mechanism). This award is not designed to fund research studies, pilot studies, or supplies for existing partnership work.

CHeP defines health broadly and is seeking to fund the development of partnerships whose long-term goals are to impact SDoH and focus on improving the underlying factors influencing health outcomes and health equity. Intended goals of the partnerships may span various sectors and do not necessarily have to be clinical in nature. Examples of such goals could include affordable housing; food security and nutrition; community safety and violence prevention; education and employment; anti-discrimination and inclusion; environmental justice and access to green spaces; and transportation and mobility.

Examples of past funded projects:

- IU School of Medicine and the Indiana Department of Corrections developed a partnership with the goal of improving care for incarcerated youth with autism spectrum disorder.
- A women's health center and the IU School of Medicine developed a partnership with the goal of improving perinatal mental health in rural areas.
- IU Bloomington and a public library developed a partnership with the goal to develop and implement an obesity prevention agenda for children and families in an Indiana county.

II. Application Requirements

Applicants must describe the strategies they will use to build or strengthen a partnership and the short-term goals of the partnership. The goals should include plans for co-designing collaborative initiatives and grant applications to address health, health equity, or SDoH. A few examples of SDoH include economic stability, access to care and resources, exposure to trauma, and immigration status. There must be at least one university-based partner and one community-based partner. All partners must currently be employed in Indiana-based institutions or organizations.

The University Project Lead must be a "full-time" ($\geq 80\%$ FTE) faculty member employed by a college, university, or other academic institution located within the state of Indiana. Postdoctoral students, fellows, residents, adjunct professors, visiting professors, and university staff members are not eligible to serve as the sole University Project Lead. However, they are permitted to, under guidance from a research faculty member designated as the University Project Lead, serve as collaborators or in a leadership role for the project.

The Community Project Lead must have $\geq 80\%$ of their work assignment based in the community. Examples of communities include but are not limited to: (a) geographically-based groups; (b) condition-specific groups (e.g., patients with diabetes, hypertension, STDs, etc.); (c) self-characterized communities (e.g., African American, LGBTQ+, Hispanic or Latino, etc.); (d) community-based hospitals, clinics, health departments, or other health facilities; or (e) neighborhoods, grass-roots organizations, faith-based organizations, and community organizations interested in health.

All individuals on the application are required to join the Indiana CTSI Community Health Partnership Network. To join the Indiana CTSI Community Health Partnerships Network, please complete this [form](#).

III. Funding

The Indiana CTSI Community Health Partnerships will provide up to \$5,000 in funding per partnership. The proposed budget must be justified, including all planned expenditures. No indirect costs or finance and administration costs are allowed. Funds cannot be used to purchase equipment greater than \$1,000 per piece. Faculty salary support can be covered up to \$1,000 per proposal (including fringe and benefits). There are no limits on non-faculty salary support. Hospitality costs need to be well-justified as a required part of meeting the goals of the proposal. Travel expenses are limited to those that are necessary to achieve the aims of the proposed project. Only in-state travel is allowable, and State of Indiana reimbursement rates

apply (<http://www.in.gov/idoa/2459.htm>). The proposed efforts cannot exceed 24 months from the start date.

IV. Review Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee that includes both community and university representatives. Please see our [FAQ](#) page for more information. Review criteria include:

1. **Engagement of partners.** Motivation and purpose for partnership from both the community and university perspectives. **[0-5 points]**
2. **Focus on health, health equity, or social determinants of health.** Degree to which health, health equity, or SDOH will be addressed by the partnership to solve critical health problems affecting Indiana residents. **[0-5 points]**
3. **Approach for partnership development.** Plan/strategies that will be used to develop the partnership with short-term goals. **[0-5 points]**
4. **Expected outcomes of partnership.** Plans for future collaborations, which will include developing research proposals. We encourage partners to submit their first joint research pilot to our Trailblazer Award funding mechanism. **[0-5 points]**

V. Post-Award Requirements

During the award period, funded recipients will be required to:

1. Attend one meeting hosted by the Indiana CTSI CHeP with other Trailblazer Planning Grant awardees.
2. Submit written progress reports annually during the life of the award describing the work accomplished to date and related budget expenditures.
3. Present partnership experience and next steps at the Indiana CTSI Community Health Partnerships Annual Meeting.
4. Complete partnership surveys at the start of the project, 12 months after the start of the project, and at the close of the project. These partnership surveys are for the purposes of our own internal program improvement.

Once the project is completed, all recipients (via WebCAMP) will be required to:

1. Submit a 1-page report summarizing their experience and future ideas for addressing health, health equity, or SDOH.
2. Provide a partnership summary statement at project close out.
3. Annually complete status reports for at least five years on the partnership as well as data on projects, publications, extramural funding, or intellectual property that resulted from the project. The Indiana CTSI staff will contact awardees with the link to the online progress reporting system.
4. Acknowledge Indiana CTSI Community Health Partnerships support in all presentations, publications, and reports. Acknowledgement procedures will be explained at the initial post-award meeting.

VI. Completing the Application

Applicants should complete a Letter of Intent no later than September 17th, 2025. LOIs should be sent to chep@iu.edu. LOIs should describe the study aims, research questions, or the general topic of the

proposal. LOIs should be a maximum of 300 words. This requirement allows us to find reviewers with the appropriate expertise. Applications may still be submitted without a Letter of Intent but may not be reviewed by someone with expertise in the topic area of the proposal.

To start your full submission, use the **Start a Submission** link [here](#) [CTSI Trailblazer Planning Link](#) or enter <https://indianactsi.org/researchers/services-tools/translational-research-development/open-funding-opportunities/#TBP202510> into your browser.

1. **Partnership Description:** *(up to two pages, single-spaced, Arial 11-point font, 1-in margins)*
 - a. Describe the motivation and rationale for this partnership and how partners will work together to effectively co-design a collaborative research initiative to improve health, enhance health equity, or examine/influence social determinants of health. Describe plans for building the new partnership (or strengthening/expanding an established one) and any unique qualifications or resources. *(up to one page)*
 - b. Describe the potential outcomes of the partnership. *(up to one-half page)*
 - c. Describe the area of health, health equity, or SDoH you will address through this partnership. *(up to one-half page)*
 - d. Describe short-term goals including future collaborative research proposals. *(up to one-half page)*
2. **Project Timeline:** *(up to 1 page)* Outline the tasks and milestones of the proposal, showing the sequence and duration of the activities. The project timeline should not exceed 24 months.
3. **Budget & Budget Justification:** See [FAQ](#).
4. **Resume, CV or NIH Biosketch of University Lead and Community Lead**
5. **Response to request to use application for educational purposes.** See [FAQ](#).
6. **Application Checklist**

VII. Timeline

RFA Release:	March 3, 2025
Virtual Q&A Session:	April 24, 2025
Letter of Intent Deadline:	September 17, 2025
Proposal Deadline:	October 1, 2025
Award decisions:	November 2025
Start date:	December 1, 2025

VIII. We encourage you to reach out to Sarah Glock with questions and/or your regional Community Health Partnerships liaisons (listed below) for help with solidifying partnerships or to discuss project ideas.

Sarah Glock, Program Manager: sardowns@iu.edu / 317-278-8416

Heidi Beidinger, University of Notre Dame Liaison: hbeiding@nd.edu / 574-631-7636

Silvia Bigatti, Indiana University Indianapolis Liaison: sbigatti@iu.edu / 317-274-6754

Priscilla Barnes, Indiana University Bloomington Liaison: prbarnes@iu.edu / 812-855-4789

Donna Vandergraft, Purdue University Liaison: dvanderg@purdue.edu / 765-494-8538

If you have further questions, please see our [website](#) and [FAQ](#), view our informational webinar recording [here](#), and register to attend our virtual **informational webinar and Q&A on Thursday, April 24th at 1:00pm.**

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://iu.zoom.us/meeting/register/4HoQPMdoTzSmub5g6buL8w>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Please see [our webpage](#) for more details on our Trailblazer Award (up to \$25,000/project), that focuses on community-based participatory research and health equity. The Trailblazer Award may be an area of interest for existing partnerships.