

The Children, Youth and Family Consortium (CYFC)
REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS
CYFC Scholars Program

DEADLINE: April 3, 2009

I. OVERVIEW

The Children, Youth and Family Consortium (<http://www.cyfc.umn.edu>) is a Twin Cities campus center that aims to build the capacity of the University of Minnesota and Minnesota's communities to use research to inform policy and improve practice to enhance the well-being of children, youth and families in the state. The CYFC Scholars Program supports a cohort of University of Minnesota faculty and research staff from diverse disciplines to conduct research responsive to CYFC's agenda focused on *the intersection of educational and health disparities*.

With this Request for Applications we seek applicants for two types of roles:

1. "Scholars" will work with CYFC for at least 4 years, conduct a significant research project related to the intersection of educational and health disparities, work closely with CYFC to translate, disseminate and apply research findings, and receive \$25,000 per year for four years to support their time and select expenses.
2. "Fellows" will be chosen annually to join the CYFC Scholars cohort and participate in networking and co-learning activities and will receive \$5,000 for one year to support a small research project, pilot work, or the development of some evidence-based applied or scholarly product related to their current work. Participation in the networking and co-learning activities is not limited to one year.

Scholars and Fellows will work jointly with CYFC staff to increase the visibility and impact of their cutting edge research in the emerging area of study of the intersection of educational and health disparities. The CYFC staff will work with participants to bring to practitioners and policy makers usable research evidence that is generated through the investigations supported by this program.

The Scholars program also provides a unique, ongoing forum for CYFC Scholars, Fellows and their students and trainees to provide feedback on ideas, discuss interdisciplinary research opportunities, share findings, and build relationships.

Therefore, the three objectives of the CYFC Scholars Program are to:

- 1) Generate new knowledge about the intersection of educational and health disparities
- 2) Create opportunities to apply that knowledge to the work of practitioners and policy makers
- 3) Provide a professional development experience that is personally rewarding and enriches the participants' work.

The overarching goal of the program is to create new knowledge that has impact greater than the sum of the individual research endeavors.

II. WHO CAN APPLY:

Faculty on any UMN campus, in any discipline, at any rank and in tenure and non-tenure track positions, as well as research-focused Professional and Administrative staff, are encouraged to submit applications for either the Scholar or Fellow role. Scholars must be able to commit to the four-year duration of the Scholars Program. Graduate students in any discipline, on any campus, are also encouraged to apply as Fellows.

We will consider “team” applications for the Scholar or Fellow role, representing partnerships between University faculty/staff or between University faculty/staff and community members. However, in the case of the Scholar role, the \$25,000 per year support would be awarded to the team, not \$25,000 per individual within the team.

III. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS:

IIIa. Scholars:

In this Request for Applications, potential Scholars are asked to propose a fundable research project consistent with CYFC’s focus on the intersection of educational and health disparities that could be funded and implemented, if not completed, during the 4-year Scholar Program. We understand that our 4-year theme cycle is not necessarily aligned with the timelines necessary to fund, implement and complete a research project, particularly when federal funding is involved. Although CYFC is not likely to be able to sustain support of the Scholar past four years, we are committed to continue working with the Scholar to identify and implement translational and dissemination activities past the four years of support.

The funds provided by CYFC are intended to support the Scholar’s time as a Scholar and support other activities related to the research project proposed (details below). It is expected that the Scholar, with assistance from CYFC, will seek external funding to support implementation of the research project. Proposals for new projects as well as expansions of existing projects are welcome. However, new projects should be well conceived so that the process of securing external funding can be efficient. We understand that in preparation for seeking funding, activities such as forming partnerships, conducting literature reviews, collecting pilot data, etc., may need to take place during the first year.

Preference is given to applications that propose a multidisciplinary and community-engaged research approach and that involve students and other faculty and research staff in the work.

IIIb. Fellows

In this Request for Applications, potential Fellows are asked to propose a small research project, a pilot project, or other study of limited scope related to the intersection of educational and health disparities. We are also interested in funding products resulting from completed work that would serve to translate research findings for the community, practitioners, or policy makers. Examples include briefing reports, training manuals, videos, websites, exhibits, etc.

IV. HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS:

IVa. Scholars

Scholars will receive a joint appointment as a senior research associate with CYFC and will be awarded \$25,000 each spring for up to four years under an annually renewable agreement (based on a review and determination of adequate progress and contingent on available funds). The funds are to be used to support the Scholar's time and expenses related to the Scholar's proposed research. Expenses may include Scholar's salary/benefits; graduate student or post-doctoral fellow's salary/benefits; "course release"; travel related to the proposed research; materials or equipment related to the proposed research; research participant stipends; other research expenses, etc. Ten percent or more of the Scholar's time should be protected to ensure ability to complete the proposed research. CYFC funds may be used to assure protected time. The use of the \$25,000 award will be negotiated with the Scholar finalist and his/her academic department prior to making a final decision regarding acceptance of the finalist as a Scholar. Use of CYFC funds will be renegotiated each year. Different uses of the funds may be negotiated each year to best align with departments' systems and to best support the Scholar's work on the proposed research project. The intent of this negotiation process is to ensure that the priorities of all three parties (CYFC, the Scholar, and the department) are balanced. CYFC's priorities include using funds in ways that will best facilitate the Scholar's research project, the successful submission of proposals for external funding, and increased involvement and support of students and other research staff and faculty in the Scholar's work.

We will assist Scholars in identifying funding sources for implementing their projects and will assist them in preparing grants and budgets. Scholars will serve as the Principal Investigator on grant submissions but grants will be submitted through CYFC. When submitting grants Scholars will communicate both their academic unit affiliation and their CYFC Scholar appointment. Upon award, funds (direct and indirect costs) will be transferred to the Scholar's academic department, minus funds to support CYFC's role, the indirect costs associated with these funds, plus 1% of indirect costs to support CYFC's pre-submission support of the Scholar (identifying funding sources, assistance in preparing grants and budgets, serving as a liaison to University administrative units, etc). Grant budgets will include direct cost support for CYFC for all or some of the following post-submission activities:

- 1) *Broker* -provide assistance to the Scholar in finding community or university partners
- 2) *Engage stakeholders* – convene Scholars and external stakeholders to dialogue about issues related to educational and health disparities and the Scholars' research
- 3) *Create impact* - provide venues for disseminating research findings; showcase the Scholar's work in CYFC's communications and publications; develop "research to practice" and "research to policy" strategies and activities based on the Scholar's work to enhance the impact of the Scholar's work
- 4) *Facilitate co-learning and potential collaboration* - coordinate the Scholars program and provide the cohort periodic opportunities for networking, relationship-building, sharing ideas, cross-fertilization, etc.
- 5) *Project assistance* - project reports, contract management, interfacing with funders, coordination of community advisory board or research team meetings, writing/editing, etc.

- 6) *Navigate systems* - Facilitate communication and connection with Sponsored Projects Administration, Sponsored Financial Reporting, the Institutional Review Board, and University of Minnesota Foundation.

Scholars' obligations include:

- 1) Steady progress toward, and eventual success in, obtaining external funding
- 2) Implementation of the proposed research
- 3) Attendance (with their students if possible) at quarterly cohort meetings
- 4) Occasional presentations at CYFC outreach events
- 5) Response to requests for information from internal or external audiences
- 6) Collaboration with CYFC to translate Scholars' findings for practitioners and policy makers
- 7) Preparation of a project-end report for CYFC's website
- 8) Serving as an ambassador for CYFC to audiences internal and external to the University.

IVb. Fellows

Fellows will be awarded \$5,000 for one year to be used in direct support of the proposed project or product development. Funds may be used to support faculty, staff or student salaries/fringe, travel, materials and supplies, professional services, consultant fees and other expenses (funds may not be used exclusively for equipment) related directly to the proposed work.

Fellows are invited to participate as members of the Scholar cohort (quarterly meetings and other avenues for sharing). Advantages of this participation include networking with a multidisciplinary group of faculty, staff and students interested in the intersection of educational and health disparities, learning from as well as contributing to the learning of others, possible professional collaboration, and opportunities to involve one's students in cohort activities. CYFC will work with Fellows to identify and implement opportunities to translate Fellows work for community, practitioner and policymaker audiences.

V. ABOUT THE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY CONSORTIUM

The Children, Youth and Family Consortium (<http://www.cyfc.umn.edu>) aims to build the capacity of the University of Minnesota and Minnesota's communities to use research to inform policy and improve practice to enhance the well-being of children, youth and families in the state. CYFC addresses critical social and community issues through the generation of new research knowledge, translation of research-based information for application to practice and policy and the incubation and coordination of interdisciplinary and community-University partnerships intended to either discover knowledge or apply research evidence. Our work is grounded in a developmental perspective (what happens earlier can affect later outcomes) and ecological framework (outcomes are influenced by multiple, interacting factors at the individual, family, community, policy and societal levels). *Our work is organized around themes and we will focus the next several years on the intersection of health disparities and educational disparities. For example, health status and educational success may influence each other, predict similar outcomes or be influenced by similar root causes. Prevention and intervention strategies to reduce disparities in one may be appropriate for the other.*

VI. APPLICATION

VIa. Scholars

Please submit a narrative addressing 1-8 below (max 5 pages):

- 1) Indication that you are applying as a Scholar
- 2) Title of project
- 3) Who are you? Name, type of appointment, campus, unit/department, complete contact information, 1 paragraph biography. *Please attach a c.v.* (not included in page limit)
- 4) What is your proposed research project? (Please be explicit about the connection to the intersection of educational and health disparities)
- 5) What are your goals and anticipated outcomes?
- 6) What research activities will you engage in?
- 7) Are there opportunities for other faculty, staff and students to be involved in your project?
- 8) What ideas do you have for securing external funds to support implementation of your project and what do you think your project might cost? (a budget is not required)

We also require a letter of endorsement from the department chair or dean demonstrating support for the potential Scholar's application and a willingness to negotiate use of the \$25,000 award should the applicant be selected as a finalist.

Applicants should keep in mind three primary *impact* goals of the Scholars Program:

- 1) Establish new and expand existing areas of research through a **multidisciplinary research agenda** to address educational and health disparities affecting MN children and families.
- 2) **Raise public awareness** of the issues and challenges facing children, youth and families, especially as they relate to the inequalities in educational and health outcomes that result from minority ethnic status, native language other than English, economic disadvantage, urban or rural residence, disability, etc.
- 3) Increase stakeholder investment by engaging the expertise and commitment of new and ongoing **community-University partnerships** to identify strategies to eliminate disparities.

Applicants should also keep in mind CYFC's *strategic* goals in creating the Scholars Program:

- 1) Provide a mechanism for CYFC to complete its research to practice and research to policy cycles – **generate** research, **translate and disseminate** research, **apply** research, **learn** from application, **revise** research strategies.
- 2) Create a mechanism for CYFC to build deep **relationships** with and among diverse faculty, staff and students

VIb. Fellows

Please submit a narrative addressing 1-10 below, no longer than 4 pages (including budget), that provides the following information:

- 1) Indication that you are applying as a Fellow
- 2) Title of project
- 3) Who are you? Name, type of appointment, unit/department, and complete contact information. Any information about you (and your partners if relevant) you believe

reviewers need to know to evaluate the quality of the proposed work or your capacity to do it.

- 4) What is your idea?
- 5) What are your goals and anticipated outcomes?
- 6) What activities will you engage in?
- 7) How will you know if you've achieved your goals or created your desired outcomes?
- 8) How will you leverage the funds provided? Likelihood of external is certainly leverage, but so are new partnerships, increased visibility, etc.
- 9) How will you use the funds? – Please provide a budget itemizing the major expenditure areas of: salary/fringe, supplies, travel, professional services and consultant fees.
- 10) In what ways would participation in the Scholar cohort be beneficial to you? Is there anything in particular you feel you would contribute to the Scholar cohort?

VII. REVIEW CRITERIA

VIIa. Scholars

CYFC staff and members of its Advisory Council will review applications according to the following criteria:

- 1) Quality of research idea
- 2) Capacity of faculty member or research staff member to carry out research idea
- 3) Alignment of research idea with the intersection of health and educational disparities
- 4) Alignment of research idea with the ecological approach used at CYFC
- 5) Alignment with the emphasis on multidisciplinary work
- 6) Alignment with the emphasis on community-engaged approaches
- 7) Potential for the work to include students and other faculty or research staff
- 8) Impact or potential for impact on children, youth and families, our knowledge base, students, or communities
- 9) Readiness of the project for external funding and likelihood of completion

Applicants should also be aware that we will attempt to create a “balanced portfolio” of projects addressing a range of issues related to the intersection of educational and health disparities. Therefore, worthy projects and candidates may not be chosen despite the application’s quality.

VIIb. Fellows

CYFC staff and members of its Advisory Council will review applications according to the following criteria:

- 1) Quality of the idea
- 2) Capacity of applicant to carry out research idea
- 3) Alignment with theme of the intersection of educational and health disparities
- 4) Alignment with the ecological approach used at CYFC
- 5) Alignment with the emphasis on multidisciplinary work
- 6) Alignment with the emphasis on community-engaged approaches

- 7) Impact or potential for impact on children, youth and families, our knowledge base, students, or communities
- 8) The potential to leverage these funds to obtain additional resources, create impact in communities, enhance visibility of important children, youth or family issues, or build partnerships
- 9) Potential value of Fellow's participation in the Scholar cohort.

VIII. SHARED LEARNING

As noted above, CYFC aims to translate research-based information for application to practice and policy and promote understanding of the critical issues facing children, youth and families in the state. CYFC will partner with successful Scholar and Fellow applicants to create communication strategies and dissemination products to further CYFC's translation and communications goals and to showcase the participant and their work. In addition, for all completed projects, we will post project-end reports and scholarly products on our website to increase the visibility of the work completed as part of the CYFC Scholar Program.

IX. TIMELINE:

Applications are due by 5pm on April 3, 2009. Email application to cyfc@umn.edu.

Applicants will be notified of our decision by late-April, 2009

The program will begin in May-June, 2009

Please email narratives and supporting material to cyfc@umn.edu