

Racial and Social Equity in Local Context: Engaging with Durham's Priority Areas for Community Impact

Request for Proposals

Thanks to generous funding from The Duke Endowment, the Office of Durham & Community Affairs, the School of Medicine and the School of Nursing, the Office of the Provost is accepting research proposals to engage with "Racial and Social Equity in Local Context." The deadline for submissions is March 15, 2023. We anticipate issuing awards ranging from \$20,000 to \$60,000 with start dates as early as July 1, 2023 and ending by June 30, 2025. We expect to support up to 12 proposals.

Background and Themes

As a major research institution, Duke is well positioned to leverage its strong research expertise and resources to deepen our understanding of racial and social inequalities and to apply that knowledge to produce more equitable outcomes.

As part of Duke's commitment to forge more purposeful partnerships, the Office of Durham & Community Affairs has worked closely with community representatives to define priority areas in which we might leverage Duke's research strengths and expertise. As laid out in Duke's [Strategic Community Impact Plan](#), these priorities are:

- Food Security and Nutrition
- Housing Affordability and Related Infrastructure
- Early Childhood and School Readiness
- College and Career Readiness
- Nonprofit Capacity

Durham boasts important community assets in each of these domains, but local leaders see further investment and sensible policy as crucial to expanding equitable opportunity and sustaining resilient neighborhoods. Across our 10 schools and interdisciplinary institutes, initiatives and centers, Duke has significant faculty expertise relevant to these strategic priorities.

We invite research proposals that engage deeply with one or more of the five community-defined priorities for Durham. Proposals might seek to provide better understanding of an issue or related set of issues, whether through collection and analysis of evidence about

current conditions, historical trajectories or comparisons to the circumstances in other cities. Alternatively, proposed research might investigate potential strategies relevant for local policymakers, NGOs and/or firms focusing on some aspect of a priority area. The selection process will give preference to projects focusing on Durham or the Triangle region, but faculty may propose research focusing on other communities in North Carolina.

Applicants should make clear how the proposed research relates to one or more of the five areas emphasized in the Strategic Community Impact Plan, and to the specific circumstances of Durham, the Triangle or elsewhere in the state. Priority consideration will be given to proposals that:

- Involve equitable, substantive collaborations with community partners throughout every phase of the research process
- Sensibly engage students in the research projects
- Have a plan for impact or sustainability beyond the term of the grant — either through communicating research outcomes to inform ongoing efforts in Durham or laying out how research might continue beyond the duration of the grant

The Ethos of Community-Engaged Research

Community-engaged research involves co-creation between academic scholars and partners beyond the community. Such undertakings rest on trust and mutual respect that requires significant investment of time in relationship-building. Community-engaged researchers recognize the significant knowledge that community members possess about their own circumstances and have the capacity and motivation to listen with humility. They develop key questions and research methods with their external partners, explain the nature and goals of research with any community informants or subjects, and discuss research findings and dissemination strategies with their community partners.

Duke faculty who would like their research to move in this direction, but who lack experience with this approach and/or pre-existing relationships with partners, may wish to avail themselves of a workshop on February 24, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (additional details [forthcoming](#)) cosponsored by the Office for Faculty Advancement, Office of Durham & Community Affairs and Office of Interdisciplinary Studies, and/or apply for an [Intellectual Community Planning Grant](#) (applications now open, with a deadline of January 20). For additional resources, see:

- Beyond the Academy's "[Guidebook for the Engaged University](#)" (2022)
- The [Community Engaged Research Initiative](#) of the Duke Clinical and Translational Science Initiative (CTSI)

Eligibility

Duke regular rank faculty can serve as primary investigators (PI), with the exception of faculty with primary appointments in the School of Medicine or the School of Nursing, who are **not** eligible to serve as PIs but may participate as research team members, provided that the research team has at least 50% of faculty from schools outside of Medicine and Nursing. Proposals may be submitted by either a single faculty member or from a group of faculty.

We welcome both disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches from all disciplines, and proposals from a single faculty member as well as groups.

Eligible Types of Expenditures

Budgets may cover a range of reasonable and justifiable research expenses. Common expenses include: stipends for research assistants; honoraria and payments to community partners and consultants; research-related travel and materials; workshops; transcription services; statistical consultants; open access publication subventions (in the case of research that has already reached an advanced stage); and interactive multimedia installations or multimedia platforms. For projects that involve only faculty with full nine-month salaries, summer salary up to \$10,000 + fringe is also allowed, per project. For projects that include faculty expected to raise their salaries through grants, an additional \$10,000 + fringe is allowed to go toward effort (for a total of \$20,000 + fringe).

Proposal Requirements

In addition to general information, proposals should include the following:

1. A brief abstract or summary of the proposal (250-word maximum)
2. A research plan (three-page maximum) that articulates (1) statement of research objectives, (2) description of significance and innovation of the research, and (3) work already completed related to the proposed work (if relevant)
3. A brief description of any community partnerships, and how the research team will ensure an equitable partnership with these community partners, along with a letter (or letters) of support (four-page maximum)
4. A project timeline (one-page maximum)
5. A budget (one-page maximum)
6. Two-page CVs for each faculty member of the research team

Review Process and Selection Criteria

Applications will be subject to peer review, as well as the evaluation of a selection committee comprised of faculty and Durham community partners to be named by the provost. Peer reviewers and selection committee members will focus on the following criteria:

- Originality of proposed research
- Opportunities for students to engage in the project
- Depth of engagement with Durham and area community partners and organizations (or partners elsewhere for projects focusing on other parts of North Carolina)
- Potential implications for public understanding of the priority issues facing Durham, or potential guidance to local decision-makers in addressing these issues
- Feasibility of the sustainability plan

Expectation of Training

Grant recipients will be required to participate in a workshop on best practices in community-engaged research, offered during the late spring and summer of 2023.

Submission Instructions

Please submit proposal information via Formstack [here](#).

Timeline

RFP released	12/12/2022
RFP deadline for submission	03/15/2023
Awardee(s) notified	05/15/2023
Funds made available (or sooner upon request)	07/01/2023

Contact for Questions

Please contact the Office for Faculty Advancement at facultyadvancement@duke.edu with any questions about this request for proposals, including questions about using Formstack. We invite you to register for office hours to discuss potential proposals with Office for Faculty Advancement, Office of Durham & Community Affairs and Office of Interdisciplinary Studies.

- Monday, January 23, 1:00-2:00 p.m.: [Register](#)
- Monday, February 20, 3:00-4:00 p.m.: [Register](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are the key obligations of the PI?

The PI is responsible for the execution of the award. This includes spending funds according to what was agreed upon in the submitted proposal and in the award letter. Any award modifications must be approved by OFA prior to expenditures. The PI is also responsible for completing the project by the end of the award cycle.

2. As a non-regular rank faculty member, can I be a PI on a grant?

No, but you are welcome to participate as a research team member.

3. As a regular rank faculty member in the School of Medicine or School of Nursing, can I be a PI on a grant?

No, but you may participate as research team member provided that the research team has at least 50% of faculty from schools outside of Medicine and Nursing. Proposals may allocate up to \$10,000 in salary support, plus fringe, for any participating faculty in the schools of Medicine and/or Nursing.

4. Are collaborations with a non-Duke personnel eligible? Can they be listed as a co-PI?

Collaborations with outside Duke contributors are acceptable, and they can be listed as co-PIs.

5. Are any staff salaries allowable expenses?

Staff salaries are not supported by the grant. Staff can be compensated for contributing their disciplinary expertise to a project through an honorarium or a supplemental payment if their contribution is a necessary part of the project. This is particularly important for staff on grant support who have to report effort allocation.

6. Can I pay an outside consultant for training purposes, as a scholar activist or as a community partner?

Yes, you may establish payment through an independent contractor form as long as the individual complies with the independent contractor status. Non-Duke individuals can only be paid using The Duke Endowment funds by this method. Please review [this resource](#) and check with your business manager.

7. Can I pay a faculty member from another institution?

No. Paying a faculty collaborator from another institution is not an allowable expense.

8. I would like to build a strong research partnership with a local organization, but I don't know where to start.

We encourage you to discuss your ideas with the Office of Durham & Community Affairs staff, who may be able to connect you to potential partners. Contact Leslie Parkins at leslie.parkins@duke.edu for more information. You may also be interested in the upcoming workshop on community-engaged research on February 24, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (more details to come). Please also note that for early stage projects, the Provost's Office provides funding for [Intellectual Community Planning Grants](#), which may be used to cultivate both internal and external relationships.

9. Does covered faculty salary include fringe?

Yes, fringe is covered as well. Please check with your business manager for the current fringe rate and add it as a separate line item in your budget.

10. Is the \$10,000 faculty salary maximum (or \$20,000 if there are co-PIs who must cover their research effort) per grant proposal or per year?

The \$10,000 (or \$20,000) salary component is for the duration of the grant project, not per summer. The salary component can be split among several faculty or over multiple years.

11. Does the award support teaching buy-out?

No.

12. Does the award support graduate student tuition, tuition remission and fees?

Yes. However, it is recommended that support be moved to the summer months in order to maximize the use of grant dollars. Please check with The Graduate School for the current rates.

13. Do “materials” include equipment purchases?

Yes, you may request equipment, and it is recommended that the purchase not reflect a large portion of the project budget.

14. Can a PI make adjustments/modifications to the budget during the project year?

The PI may submit a formal request to modify a project’s budget during the funding period. The request must include a justification for the change, a project timeline and modified budget, and be submitted and approved prior to expenditures.

15. What deliverables or reporting will you expect from awardees?

An annual report for the duration of the project describing the use of funds, the outcomes of the project, and, if relevant, a description of the student and community engagement in the project will be requested in July and due in August. A report template for the submission will be provided.

16. Is this proposal restricted only to Durham?

We are giving preference to proposed projects that focus on issues relating to Durham and the Triangle region, but will consider projects that focus on other areas in North Carolina. For some proposals, comparisons to situations elsewhere may be important to illuminate local circumstances.