UMass CCTS
Community Engagement and Research
Webinar
Tips for Developing a 2013 Community Engagement Research Proposal

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Current Pilot Project Grantees
Chioma Nnaji, MPH, MEd
Multicultural AIDS Coalition

Sherry Pagoto, PhD
UMass Medical School
Welcome!

Questions During the Webinar?
Send question to the chat box

Questions or Discussions After the Webinar?
Send your question to the listserv: CER@list.umassmed.edu
Send us an email: communityengagement@umassmed.edu
UMass CCTS Community Engagement and Research Section Can Help

• Website with information
  http://www.umassmed.edu/CCTS/Community/index.aspx
  • Pilot Project Request for Proposal
  • List of Past and Current Pilot Grantees
  • Access to national, state, and local health data: “Health Data” tab on left
• Request a Consultation: communityengagement@umassmed.edu
• Post Questions on the Listserv: CER@list.umassmed.edu
• Email a Question: communityengagement@umassmed.edu

Webinar slides and recordings will be available on our website
Community Engagement and Research Section
Pilot Proposals


Total: 47 proposals submitted
Overview

- Community-Engaged Research
- Proposal Strengths
- Proposal Concerns/Weaknesses
Community-Engaged Research

- **Partnerships** of community members, researchers, agency representatives and academics or institutional representatives
- **Shared research goals**
- **Respect, collaboration, equity and fairness.**

(Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, 2010)
How is Community-Engaged Research Different?

From: Researchers acting upon a community, such as a clinical trial at a community health center

To: Researchers, community agencies, and community members working side by side
Strengths
Strength
Level of Community Engagement

- Strong academic/community partnership
  - Partnership builds on past work
- Budget supports community partner’s full participation in the study
- Important community need
- Part of larger, community-wide effort
- Team has expertise and experience
- Multidisciplinary team
Strength
Methods

- Clear aims
- Use of validated survey instruments
- Approach well-described and justified
  - Methods fit the research
- Focus groups
  - In multiple languages (as necessary)
  - Facilitators are from the community
  - Careful descriptions of how focus groups will be carried out and analyzed
- Well thought out social ecological model
- Careful description of how data will be analyzed
Strength Dissemination

There are plans to disseminate findings:

• in the community affected
• in the research community
Strength
Plans for Future Funding

- Study is linked to potential future funding
  - Includes a list of potential funders and plans for future work
- The proposal will be used to supplement an ongoing effort
Strength

Overall Comments

- Well-written
- Solid review of the literature
- Important issue
- Study is very carefully described
- Strong partnerships
Concerns/Weaknesses
Area of Concern
Level of Community Engagement

- Partner is not really from the community, but rather a hospital, university, or private community practice
- Need clarity on role of community partner, real engagement of the partner
- No letter of agreement from partner organization
Area of Concern
Protection of Human Subjects

- Need clarity on informed consent and IRB
- Participant stipend higher than the norm ($100)
- Concerns regarding:
  - Protecting participant confidentiality
  - Lack of follow-up or referrals for patients
  - Lack of support for participants who may receive distressing information
Area of Concern

Methods

- Specific study hypotheses not stated
- Inadequate detail on research design
- No explanation of why/how specific data are being collected
- Focus groups not in languages reflecting the targeted population
- Survey respondent fatigue – too much?
- Need detail on data analysis plans
Area of Concern
Recruitment

- Concerns about:
  - Participant selection bias; convenience sampling
  - Recruitment methods
  - Small sample and effect size
  - Recruitment barriers not addressed
Area of Concern
Dissemination

Need detail on how to use the information learned for change

- Where/How will dissemination occur?
- Plans to measure effects of dissemination?
Area of Concern
Plans for Future Funding

No clear linkage to future funding.
Area of Concern - Overall Comments

- There are many typos; the proposal does not appear to have been proofread
- No discussion of study limitations
- No citations or background
- Difficult to differentiate between current proposal and another linked with it
- There appears to be no consideration of the diversity of the population
- Concerns about feasibility of timeline
Leadership

• Ira S. Ockene, MD; Director, UMCCTS Community Engagement Section

• Suzanne B Cashman, ScD; Co-Director, UMCCTS Community Engagement Section

• Stephenie C. Lemon, PhD; Co-Director, UMCCTS Community Engagement Section
TIPS FOR DEVELOPING A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Sherry Pagoto, PhD, Associate Professor of Medicine
Division of Preventive and Behavioral Medicine
KEY QUESTIONS

1. What is the larger grant you are preparing for?
2. What pilot data do I need for that larger grant?
3. What is the ideal community partnership?
WHAT IS THE LARGER GRANT?

- What are the aims?
- What is the design?
- What is the state of the literature?
- What do you need to know in order to proceed with confidence to the larger grant?
  - Needs assessment
  - Feasibility of an intervention or procedures?
  - Preliminary outcomes
  - Recruitment, retention estimates?
What questions should the preliminary studies section of the next grant answer?
What data do you (or collaborators) already have (avoid redundancies)?
What data do you need to show the reviewers that you can do this work?
WHAT IS THE IDEAL COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP?

- Do they have the bandwidth (e.g., resources, facilities, access to population) to do the larger project?
- What are they getting out of this research?
  + Is this addressing a big need of theirs?
WHAT IS THE IDEAL COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP?

- Do you have a longstanding relationship with them? Do your work styles mesh?
  - The pilot grant is like going “steady” so there is the expectation of a long-term relationship, make sure the compatibility is there before you exchange rings.
HOW TO MAKE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS?

- Explore connections within your network (e.g., Worcester County Prevention Research Center)
- Show up to events where you can network with community partners
  - Learn about their challenges and needs
  - Work together to solve a problem they are having

Annual Public Sector Psychiatry Conference,
June 29, 2013
HOW TO MAKE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS?

- The partnership and the idea should drive the application, not vice versa
- Build a relationship *before* you go on a long road trip together (i.e., diving into research)
  - Attend their meetings
  - Assess the fit (e.g., mission, values, goals, culture)
Don’t assign tasks to people without putting them into the budget
Don’t assign tasks to people who will be too busy to do them whether you can pay them or not
Be as exact as possible, no guesstimates
Consult with someone with experience about budgeting for your study
Consider expenses and staff needs on both sides (academic and community)
TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Include a CBPR expert in the grant if you are new to CBPR
- Have someone with CBPR experience review the grant
TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- The community partner may or may not contribute to the writing, but be sure they read and approve it.
- Design with sustainability in mind—do not plan anything that cannot realistically sustain
WHAT WOULD I DO DIFFERENT?

- Spend more time exploring “bandwidth”
  + Group exercise but only 1 shower in the gym

- Spend more time exploring the logistics and processes of care
  + Less flexibility in scheduling than expected, timing of busy seasons, how much the project could be prioritized

- Spend more time orienting the community partner to the research process (e.g., the realities of timeline, recruitment, how things don’t always go as planned)
  + Timelines are more ideals than realities
  + Can’t start a group until we hit a recruitment target
A Living Case Study: Doing Research As A Community Partner

Chioma Nnaji, Program Director
Multicultural AIDS Coalition
Who is the MAC?

www.mac-boston.org

• Long standing grassroots CBO
• Range of services to diverse stakeholders
  – Community mobilization
  – HIV prevention & screening
  – Capacity building & technical assistance
  – Research
  – Advocacy
• Experience with federal funding sources
2009...

Building Your Capacity (BYC): Advancing Research Through Community Engagement Program

• Better understanding of the research process
• Greater familiarity with research terminology
• Increase overall confidence in engaging with academic researchers

This training program is a collaborative effort of the Tufts Clinical Translational Science Institute (CTSI), the Harvard Clinical and Translational Science Center | Harvard Catalyst, Boston University, the Tufts Community Research Center (TCRC), the Center for Community Health Education, Research and Service (CCHERS), and the Immigrant Service Providers Group/Health (ISPG/H).
Being a BYC Fellow ...

**Initial Goal:**
Develop my expertise and MAC’s institutional knowledge of community-driven research and increase MAC’s capacity to train and engage community members

**Final Project:**
Draft a working document for MAC’s Community Planning & Research Department, which included Framework for Research and Framework for Research Guidelines for Research Partnerships
Working document for MAC’s Community Planning & Research Department

• Outlines Research within MAC’s Mission
• Framework for Research (CBPR)
• Guidelines for Research Partnerships
Being a BYC Fellow cont’d …

- Identified CBPR funding sources
- Access to CBPR academia practitioners
- Connection to a network of CBOs focused on CBPR
- Identified national and local resources and allies
2012 ...

UMass CCTS released the RFP

- Emailed Program Manager
- Wrote 1-paragraph on research interest
- Received 5 responses
- Interviewed 2 academics
2012 African Health Cup

The project was supported by Award Number ULIRRO31982 from the National Center for Research Resources. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Center for Research Resources of the National Institute of Health.

Academic Partner:
Carol Bova PhD, RN, ANP
Associate Professor of Nursing and Medicine
Graduate School of Nursing
UMass Worcester
The specific aims of this study are to:

1. Identify and document the community based processes involved in planning, organizing and running the African Health Cup intervention and develop a detailed intervention manual based on these processes.
2. Identify the components of the HIV education and testing initiatives that are most important and acceptable to the AHC participants (both players and spectators);
3. Describe attitudes towards HIV testing and HIV-related stigma.
4. Identify mechanisms to link AHC participants with health services in their community in preparation for a full-scale research study;
5. Develop a strong community-based research partnership.
Tip #1 ...

**Identify your research agenda**

1. How does research link to our mission?
2. Organization’s readiness
3. Organization’s experience
4. Staff capacity
Tip #2 ...

Know your surroundings

1. What are the local and national networks?
2. Who is funding CBPR?
3. What are the funding requirements?
4. What academics/universities are in my local area?
Tip #3 ...

Make the first step

1. Who are the CTSA – Community Liaisons, Program Managers, etc.?
2. Market yourself!
3. Prepare a short statement
Community-Campus Partnerships for Health promotes health equity and social justice through partnerships between communities and academic institutions.

Stay on top of the latest CCPH news through Facebook, LinkedIn & Twitter!

http://www.ccph.info
Any Questions?

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Multicultural AIDS Coalition
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