



Center for Environmental Health and Susceptibility (CEHS)

Environmental Health Disparities and Environmental Justice Planning Grants 2024-2025

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

DEADLINE: February 23, 2024

The UNC Center for Environmental Health and Susceptibility (CEHS) announces the availability of **\$5,000 planning grants** to support project teams in preparing proposals for future pilot projects focused on **Environmental Health Disparities (EHD) and Environmental Justice (EJ)**, as defined by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS): <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/supported/translational/justice/index.cfm>. These planning grants will lay the groundwork for future proposals that will include epidemiological or social scientific investigations of health conditions that burden people experiencing poverty or people with lower incomes, and those with health disparities. Planning grants may be used to build collaborations between UNC faculty members and community leaders and/or community-based organizations (CBO), conduct preliminary investigation into an EHD/EJ issue in a community, or build capacity within a community-based organization to conduct future research on an EHD/EJ issue. Review criteria for proposals are described below and will emphasize the overall goal and proposed objectives, the feasibility of the proposal, the importance of the problem, and the experience of the project team.

ELIGIBILITY: Any member of the **UNC Chapel Hill faculty** (tenured/tenure-track or fixed term), representative of a **community-based organization**, or **UNC postdoctoral scholar** with a collaborating faculty member as co-PI. Applications from community-based organizations are encouraged. These organizations may identify a UNC faculty collaborator at the time of their application or will be assisted in developing a partnership with a faculty member during the planning grant period. The absence of an identified collaborating faculty member will not count against a planning grant application.

We strongly encourage applications where the CBO leadership and/or faculty represent [groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in STEM fields](#). Likewise, we strongly encourage participation from CBOs that serve constituents that have been socially or economically marginalized.

BUDGET: Total budget requests cannot exceed \$5,000 and must be expended within a 12-month period: 03/01/2024 - 2/28/2025. Faculty members should prepare a budget following typical NIH format. CBOs may obtain assistance in preparing a budget. **Please contact CEHS Associate Director for Administration, Michael Sanderson** (sanderson@unc.edu) **for budget-related support and questions**. No carryover of funds past the end of the budget period will be allowed. Funding for food is not allowable under NIH rules.

Allowable expenses:

- Appropriate personnel expenses that are commensurate with effort and engagement
- Meeting costs including facility rental as required
- Travel reimbursements (e.g., hotel, airfare, personal vehicle mileage)
- Funds required to support active participation of community groups, including childcare expenses and participation incentives
- Supplies for meetings

- Printing
- Postage
- Wifi hotspot devices, monthly service fees

SUPPORT FROM THE CEHS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CORE (CEC): The CEC works with public health professionals and secondary science/health teachers in NC to increase understanding of environmental health sciences research and reduce harmful environmental exposures in homes and communities. The CEC also fosters dialogue between CEHS researchers and community partners to inform responsive research and effective science communication. CEC Director Dr. Kathleen Gray and CEC staff members are available to answer questions about this RFA, help interested applicants identify potential partners, and explain the CEHS research foci and current CEC activity. **If you have questions as you develop your application, please contact Dr. Gray (kgray@unc.edu).**

APPLICATION FORMAT: Please tell us your story, using the information requested below. If you would like to include images, audio files, videos, or other materials to support your application, you are welcome to do so. If you need support or assistance in developing your application, we suggest attending one of the information sessions identified below or contacting Dr. Kathleen Gray.

Please submit the following materials as a single PDF:

- **Application Cover Page.** This page should indicate the Principal Investigator (PI). For the purpose of this proposal, the PI is the faculty member or community group member who will be the recipient of the funds and will be responsible for ensuring that the objectives of the application are met. The PI can be a faculty member, community leader, and/or CBO officer. If there is more than one PI, please designate a single contact PI.
- **Project Overview.** This is part of the Cover Page and should be approximately 5 sentences in length. What are you trying to do in this planning period, and why? Why is this issue important?
- **Proposal.** (approximately 2 pages)
 - *Specific aims:* What are the goals of this planning grant? (approximately 1/4 page)
 - *Significance:* Describe the EJ or EHD issue that you propose to focus on in this planning grant period and its importance. (approximately 0.5 page)
 - *Approach:* What are you proposing to do in this planning period and how will you do it? Identify 2-3 objectives that will guide your proposed work. How will you determine whether your process has been successful? How will you evaluate your activities? (approximately 1 page)
 - *Impact:* What do you hope to achieve through this planning process? (1 paragraph)
- **Budget and Justification** (explanation of all proposed planning expenses, not to exceed \$5,000)
- Faculty applicants should submit an **NIH biosketch**, and community organizations should submit **resumes and background information on the history and accomplishments of the community organization and the constituents that the organization of community leader serves**. This information should not exceed 4 pages.
- If the proposal includes a collaboration with a specific community organization, a letter of support from the community partner, on organizational letterhead, is required. This letter should specifically state:

To: [Applicant]

From: [Printed name of the individual collaborator or name of the organization and name and title of the official submitting this memo]

Date: [Insert date]

By signing below (or transmitting electronically), I acknowledge that I am listed as a collaborator on [or that I will cooperate in helping support the activities of] the proposal entitled "_____(proposal title)_____" with _____(PI name)_____ as the Principal Investigator. I agree to undertake the tasks associated with me as described in this proposal, and/or commit to provide or make available the resources designated in the proposal.

Signature: _____

Organization Name: _____

We will hold two Zoom sessions to respond to questions from community groups who are considering submitting applications. There will be no formal presentations during these sessions, which will be held on **January 29, 2024, from 12-1pm**, and on **January 30, 2024 from 4-5pm**.

Zoom link for information sessions: <https://unc.zoom.us/j/9551697241> **Phone call option:** (929)436-2866 or (301)715-8592 Meeting ID: 955 169 7241

Applicants should submit a single PDF file with all written material. Any accompanying videos, images, or audio files should have the same file name. The file should be sent as an email attachment to the CEHS Associate Director, Michael Sanderson, sanderson@unc.edu. Applications are due by midnight **February 23, 2024**.

APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA:

Each application will be reviewed by the CEHS Internal Advisory Board and a member of the [CEHS Stakeholder Advisory Board](#). The following items will be scored.

1) Goal and Objectives

- Is the planning goal attainable in a one-year timeframe?
- Are the objectives specific, achievable, and measurable?
- Will this planning grant lead to a mutually beneficial, multi-directional relationship between a community group and academic institution? Are the environmental problems identified aligned with the mission of NIEHS (<https://www.niehs.nih.gov/about/strategicplan/index.cfm>)?

2) Significance/ Importance of the problem

- Does the applicant describe a current EJ/EHD issue?
- Have the applicants justified the inclusion of specific communities or community-based organizations?

3) Approach and Impact

- Is the proposed activity [activities] clearly described – Who, What, When, and Where?
- Has the applicant identified how they will know their planning process has been successful?
- Does this planning grant proposal demonstrate an approach that could be scaled into a broader pilot project that addresses the overall EJ/EHD problem?

4) Expertise of faculty and community group

- Does the faculty or postdoc have the expertise to steer the planning or community engaged research?
- Does the community partner/CBO demonstrate capacity to accomplish the objectives/aims in this proposal?

5) Demonstrated need (if applicable)

- The budget of the CBO is less than \$50K (or \$100K)
- The proposal describes a planning process that is community-driven and centers equity.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION:

Applications are due by February 23, 2024. Applicants should submit a single PDF file, **sent as an email attachment to CEHS Associate Director Michael Sanderson (sanderson@unc.edu)**. If you need assistance in submitting your application, please contact Mr. Sanderson. You may include links to videos, audio files, or other materials in the body of the email message.



Center for Environmental Health and Susceptibility (CEHS)
Environmental Justice Planning Grants 2024-2025

APPLICATION DEADLINE: February 23, 2024

APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Project type <i>(circle one)</i>	EJ Planning EJ Pilot
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Project Title	
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Principal Investigator <i>(Last name, First name)</i>	
Title/Academic Rank if applicable Community Organization affiliation or other title	
UNC Department/School (if applicable)	
E-mail address	
Telephone number	

Other Collaborator <i>(Last name, First name)</i>	
Title (if applicable)	
Agency/Organization	
E-mail address	

Names and Departments of Co-Investigators - <i>(Last name, First name, Academic Rank if applicable, Department if applicable)</i>

Project Overview