MIDWEST MOBILITY FROM POVERTY NETWORK
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS TO IMPROVE ECONOMIC MOBILITY

DEADLINE EXTENDED:
Friday, May 1, 2020 – 11:59 PM EST
*Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis

Purpose

The Midwest Mobility from Poverty Network (MMPN), housed by Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan, announces a grant funding opportunity for academic researchers and community-based partners throughout the Midwest. Funding for up to 6 grants of up to $25,000 each is available.

These grants seek to incubate and accelerate collaborative community-university projects that will leverage data and apply research to have real-world impact on economic mobility across a well-defined geography in the Midwest. Grants may provide early-stage investment in university-community partnerships to deepen relationships, sharpen project scope and develop outcomes, or enable existing partnerships to disseminate research to inform policy and practice.

We encourage a diverse pool of applicants from universities of all sizes and scholars at all stages of their career. Projects may span across geographies including rural, urban, and suburban as well as regional and statewide. Partners can be local, county, or state governments and/or high-impact nonprofits or community-based organizations. The strongest proposals will include discussion of how this investment will enable projects that would not otherwise be possible and how teams will leverage future funds to further their research and impact.

In light of recent events, we have added an additional call to action within the scope of the current funding mechanism. Applicants seeking to understand or address issues directly related to COVID-19 are strongly encouraged to apply. Time sensitive projects will be reviewed on an expedited schedule to meet the demands of the proposed work.

Midwest Mobility from Poverty Network Engagement Opportunities
poverty.umich.edu/projects/midwest-mobility-from-poverty-network/

MMPN is a collaboration of universities engaged in data and analysis to improve economic mobility and reduce poverty across the Midwest. Housed within Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan, the network is overseen by a Steering Committee of six institutional partners, all of whom have deep
partnerships with communities, local and state governments and policymakers. A full list of partners and their areas of expertise is available on our webpage.

Grantees will have opportunities to connect directly with the Midwest Mobility from Poverty Network of scholars for technical assistance on areas including data sharing and warehousing across a range of data sources, communications planning and design of effective dissemination tools, authentic community-academic partnership, and other strategies for accelerating real-world impact. Visit our webpage for existing MMPN publications on these topics.

All applicants are invited to attend the MMPN Journalism Conference on June 9th and 10th, 2020, where they will meet with journalists interested in covering poverty and economic mobility. Details are available on our webpage.

Submission Details

Proposed project activities may include (but are not limited to):
- Partnership building activities necessary for planning new projects, program or policy interventions, or submission of a large grant application;
- Community needs, strengths and resource assessments that lead to the identification of new program or policy strategies;
- Development, implementation and preliminary evaluation of a new pilot program or an adaptation of an existing program;
- Analysis of new or existing data to better understand the effectiveness of, or to strengthen, interventions, programs and policies;
- Evaluation of interventions, programs, and policies that seek to improve economic mobility;
- Dissemination of new or existing research to inform program or policy practice.

Proposed budget categories may include (but are not limited to):
- Staff time, including student research assistants;
- Honorariums and compensation for consultants or partners;
- Hosting expenses for planning meetings including meals, space rentals, and materials;
- Travel to meetings, conferences, public events;
- Marketing, publicity and communications.

The following terms apply:
- Applicant teams must include at least one academic researcher from an academic institution that will administer award funds, and one community partner representing a non-profit organization or government agency.
- Project teams must include publication and dissemination as a part of their work plan. This could include memos, policy briefs, working papers, and/or peer-reviewed publications. Publications do not need to be final by the end of the grant nor do they need to be eligible for peer-reviewed publication. They do need to be able to be shared publicly.
- Selected teams will attend a final, half-day session to report results, share accomplishments and lessons learned, and obtain feedback from peer teams of community-academic researchers in May/June, 2021.
Application criteria include:

- Quality and relevance of the project idea to poverty alleviation and economic mobility;
- Relevance of the project to the identified community as described in the narrative and a letter of support from the community partner;
- Degree to which one of the key goals is partnership development;
- Extent and feasibility of community and academic partner involvement;
- Budget’s alignment to achieving the goals of fair and equitable partnership between academic institutions and communities; and
- Feasibility of the proposed project to be completed during the funding period;
- Expected benefits to under-resources communities and partners;
- Potential to build long-term university capacity for community engagement.

We seek to proactively and positively address present day patterns of discrimination and create more equitable opportunities by funding projects from diverse teams including institutions of all sizes, academic researchers at all stages of their career and individual partners from diverse racial, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

**Application Instructions**

Submit proposal as a single PDF file to mmpnetwork@umich.edu by 11:59 PM Eastern Standard Time on May 1, 2020. Include the following in the order listed below:

1. **Cover sheet (1 page):**
   - Title of research project;
   - University and community partner names and organizational affiliations, including mailing addresses, email addresses, phone numbers, and identification of the academic investigator who will serve as principal investigator;
   - Contact information for university grant manager or financial administrator.

2. **Abstract (1 page):**
   a. Brief overview of the purpose of the partnership, initial project concept, and relevance of the project to informing strategies for mobility from poverty. Explicitly connect research to future interventions or policy implications.

3. **Project Narrative (up to 6 double-spaced pages, excluding figures and references):**
   a. Specific aims (1 page);
   b. Relevant literature (1/2 page);
   c. Community need, including extent of community involvement in identifying the focus and approach (1 page);
   d. Project scope, including how funding will support long-term partnership development and why it would not happen without this funding (1 page);
   e. Research methods, data and personnel (1 page);
   f. Role of university and community partners (1/2 page); and
   g. Description of how the project will build knowledge about the efficacy of interventions, programs and/or policies that seek to address poverty and how you foresee this project making a policy impact at any level (1 page).
4. Partnership (1 page):
   a. Frequency, location and structure of collaborative work;
   b. Experience and expertise that both community and academic partners bring to the project;
   c. Prior history the partners have collaborating on research projects; and
   d. Evidence of the feasibility to accomplish the proposed aims.

5. Itemized budget and budget narrative that explains each line item, with a minimum of 25% of funds designated for community partner organization(s). The department of the university principle investigator will serve as the fiduciary. Indirect costs can be no more than 10%.

6. Project timeline including specific milestones for study completion within the period May 1, 2020 through April 30, 2021.

7. Curriculum vitae for all academic researchers. Biographies or resumes for all community partners.

8. Letter of support from the university department accepting administrative responsibility for the grant.

9. Letter of support from each community partner organization that specifies the interest and commitment to engage in the collaborative research project.

**Important Dates**

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<tr>
<td>Proposal Deadline</td>
<td>May 1, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Award Notification</td>
<td>On or prior to June 1, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Start Date</td>
<td>On or prior to June 1, 2020</td>
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<td>Progress Report Due</td>
<td>November 6, 2020</td>
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<td>Project End Date</td>
<td>May 31, 2021</td>
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<td>Final Report Due</td>
<td>June 30, 2021</td>
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<td>Grantees Meeting</td>
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