New Investigator Program

Request for Proposals and Application Guidelines

July 2022
Background
The Wisconsin Partnership Program at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health is committed to improving health and health equity in Wisconsin through investments in research, education and community partnerships. It was established at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health through a gift from Blue Cross Blue Shield United of Wisconsin as a result of its conversion to a stock insurance corporation and the equal distribution of the proceeds from the sale of the company to the two Wisconsin medical schools. Consequently, the Wisconsin Partnership Program has a significant endowment to carry out its work for the benefit of the people of Wisconsin by addressing the health challenges facing the state.

In collaboration with faculty and community-based organizations, the Partnership Program supports health-improvement and disease-prevention initiatives seeking to reduce morbidity, mortality and systemic disparities in health. The Wisconsin Partnership Program’s vision, mission and values as well as its goals and grant-making strategies are described in the 2019-2024 Five-Year Plan.

Goal and Description
Through the New Investigator Program, the Partnership Education and Research Committee (PERC) supports innovative research and education approaches that address Wisconsin’s health issues and span the spectrum of basic, clinical, social/behavioral or population sciences. Proposals should advance scientific understanding and have the potential to improve population health or reduce health disparities through prevention, diagnosis, treatment, or cure of disease. Each proposal must describe the potential to improve the health of the people of Wisconsin and must clearly explain the steps necessary to translate discovery to application in the clinical setting and/or in communities.

Eligibility
A Principal Investigator (PI) is required and must be a UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) assistant professor with a salaried appointment of at least 50 percent and an appointment start-date on or after the dates below based on their SMPH faculty track. For applicants with approved clock extensions, the appointment start-date is adjusted by the duration of the extension. Applicants with appointments below 1.0 full-time equivalent (FTE), or with eligibility questions, contact the Wisconsin Partnership Program at wpp@hslc.wisc.edu.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SMPH track</th>
<th>Appointment start-date on or after:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>August 1, 2018 (within four years of start-date)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical Health Sciences</td>
<td>August 1, 2016 (within six years of start-date)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinician-Teacher</td>
<td>August 1, 2016 (within six years of start-date)</td>
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Eligible faculty in all UW School of Medicine and Public Health departments, including the basic sciences, are encouraged to apply.

Although Collaborators are not required, up to two may be included on the project. Collaborators typically contribute specialized expertise to the project and have more narrowly defined roles than the Principal Investigator. Collaborators may have an appointment, for example, at any UW System campus, Marshfield Clinic, Gundersen Health System, Medical College of Wisconsin, Aurora Health Care, state and local government agencies or community organizations.

Funding Scope and Duration
The maximum award is $150,000 over two years. The level of effort of the Principal Investigator must be between five and 20 percent of full-time equivalent (FTE) compensation and must be fully justified in the budget justification. The PERC anticipates funding up to four projects this cycle.
**Submission and Review Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Release Request for Proposals</td>
<td>July 14, 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fluxx registration deadline</td>
<td>August 9, 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preliminary application submission deadline</td>
<td>August 11, 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review preliminary applications</td>
<td>August-September 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notify applicants of status/Invite full applications</td>
<td>September 13, 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full applicant information session (by invitation only)</td>
<td>September 29, 2022*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full application submission deadline (by invitation only)</td>
<td>October 11, 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review full applications</td>
<td>October-November 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notify applicants of status/Invite finalists for interviews</td>
<td>November 15, 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview finalists</td>
<td>December 12, 2022**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notify finalists of award decision</td>
<td>December 16, 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Earliest project start date</td>
<td>February 1, 2023</td>
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*Full applicant information session will take place 4-5 pm on Zoom
**Finalist interviews will take place 5-7 pm on Zoom

**Application Resubmission**

Applicants are limited to two submissions—an original and one resubmission—of the same proposal. Applicants submitting a revision must respond to the reviewer comments provided by the Partnership Program during the applicable funding cycle to explain how the current proposal differs from the original submission.

Applicants who have submitted two versions of an application and have not been successful may submit a new application. It must be substantially different in content and scope with more significant differences than are normally encountered in a revised application.

**Preliminary Application Guidelines**

**Fluxx Registration Deadline:** August 9, 2022 at 11:59 pm

The preliminary application is available in Fluxx using the following link: [https://wpp.fluxx.io/](https://wpp.fluxx.io/).

**New Fluxx Users:** Must register in Fluxx no later than 11:59 pm on August 9, 2022. Create your Fluxx account by completing the “Education and Research Registration Form” under “Create your Profile.” Once reviewed by our team, new users will receive an email with their username and temporary password and instructions to reset their password in order to log-in. New Fluxx registrations submitted after this deadline will not be processed and the applicant will not have access to the preliminary application.

**Existing Fluxx Users:** Must initially log-in to Fluxx no later than 11:59 pm on August 9, 2022.

Once logged-in, start a preliminary application by clicking the “Apply for a New Investigator Program Grant” button.

**Preliminary Application Submission Deadline:** August 11, 2022 at 11:59 pm

A preliminary application is required and must be submitted in Fluxx no later than 11:59 pm August 11, 2022.

In addition to providing general information about the project, the preliminary application includes the following components.
Preliminary Application Project Abstract
The preliminary application project abstract provides an overview of the project, including the primary goal, the broader long-term objectives, specific aims, and a description of how the project advances the goals of the New Investigator Program. The project abstract must describe how successful completion of this project will advance the applicant’s career development, including plans to leverage future funding from federal or other granting agencies. In addition, the project abstract must address whether the Principal Investigator and, if applicable, the Collaborators currently possess or are seeking funding from other funders for the same or similar project.

The preliminary application project abstract must be uploaded as a PDF and cannot exceed two single-spaced pages with one-inch margins and a minimum 11-point font. Footnotes, references and up to three tables and/or figures are not included in the page limit and should be inserted after the project abstract.

Application Resubmission Statement (if applicable)
The application resubmission statement is required if the proposal is a resubmission of a preliminary or full application from a prior funding cycle (see page 2 for more information). Provide in the respective text field and in no more than 200 words: the year the original proposal was submitted, the highest stage of review to which the proposal advanced (either preliminary application, full application or interview), a response to the reviewer comments from the applicable funding cycle, and a description of how the current proposal differs from the original submission.

Biographical Information
Preliminary applications must include a biographical sketch for the Principal Investigator and the Collaborators in NIH format, including a personal statement, positions, scientific appointments and honors, and contributions to science. Collaborators from state and local government agencies or community organizations may submit a resume in lieu of a biographical sketch. Biographical sketches and resumes, each up to five pages in length, must be uploaded as a single PDF.

Designation of Confidential and Proprietary Information
The Wisconsin Partnership Program is required to operate in accordance with Wisconsin’s public records and open meetings laws. See the Wisconsin Partnership Program terms and conditions for more information.

Indicate whether the preliminary application includes proprietary and/or confidential information, and using the form provided, identify and request confidentiality for any trade secrets or proprietary information.

Full Application Guidelines

Full Application Submission Deadline: October 11, 2022 at 11:59 pm

Only applicants invited by the PERC may submit a full application. The Principal Investigator will receive a link to the full application in the invitation. Full applications are due by 11:59 pm October 11, 2022.

In addition to general information about the project, the full application includes the following components.

Abstract
The abstract is a succinct and accurate description of the proposed project. The abstract must state the application’s broad, long-term objectives and specific aims, design and methods for achieving the stated project goals, and alignment with the goals of the New Investigator Program. The abstract should be informative to other people working in the same or related fields and understandable to a scientifically or technically literate reader. Avoid describing past accomplishments and the use of the first person. The abstract must be uploaded as a PDF
not exceeding one single-spaced page with one-inch margins and a minimum 11-point font. Footnotes and references are not included in the page limit and should be inserted after the abstract.

**Impact Statement**
The impact statement describes how the outcomes of the project will lead to improvements in health, health care and/or health equity, particularly in the state of Wisconsin. This section should include details on the scope and significance of the health issue being addressed. Applicants must provide a brief synopsis of the project in succinct and plain language without scientific and medical terminology that can be understood by a general, lay audience. The impact statement must be uploaded as a PDF not exceeding one single-spaced page with one-inch margins and a minimum 11-point font. Footnotes and references are not included in the page limit and should be inserted after the impact statement.

**Narrative**
The narrative describes the project’s specific aims, significance, approaches and expected outcomes. This should include details of data analysis that address rigor and reproducibility and specific metrics to benchmark progress toward the stated goals and objectives. The narrative must be uploaded as a PDF not exceeding five single-spaced pages with one-inch margins and a minimum 11-point font. Footnotes, references and up to three tables and/or figures are not included in the page limit and should be inserted after the narrative.

**Proposal Review Criteria Statement**
Prepare a statement addressing the full application review criteria on page 7. This statement must be uploaded as a PDF not exceeding two single-spaced pages with one-inch margins and a minimum 11-point font.

**Application Resubmission Statement (if applicable)**
A response to the reviewer comments is only required if the proposal is a resubmission of a full application from a prior funding cycle (see page 2 for more information). Provide in the respective text field and in no more than 200 words: the year the original proposal was submitted, the highest stage of review to which the proposal advanced (either full application or interview), a response to the reviewer comments from the applicable funding cycle, and a description of how the current proposal differs from the original submission.

**Project Timeline and Metrics**
Using the required Gantt chart template, list milestones for each project aim and related activities to benchmark progress toward stated goals and objectives.

**Project Budget**
Using the required budget template, the project budget should clearly indicate how the grant funds will be spent. Expenditures must:
- be fully justified, reasonable and clearly related to the project’s goals
- reflect the activities listed in the proposal
- explain the sources and amounts of any cash match or cost sharing funds

Requests should be made by expense type (salary and fringe benefits, services, travel, supplies, etc.) and should provide sufficient detail for individuals unfamiliar with the project.

**Budget Justification**
A budget justification is required for purposes of describing in detail the major budget line items: salary and fringe benefits, travel, services, and supplies and other expenses. The narrative should provide specific information about why an expense is necessary to achieve the project’s goals and objectives. It must also describe the roles and responsibilities of the PI and Collaborators, even if uncompensated, and of additional support staff. The budget justification must be uploaded as a PDF with one-inch margins and a minimum 11-point font.
### Guidelines for Allowable and Unallowable Expenses

Guidelines for allowable/unallowable expenses are available for review on the Wisconsin Partnership Program website.

The budget should include at least five percent of the Principal Investigator’s full-time equivalent (FTE) compensation, but it may not include more than 20 percent. If cash-match or cost-share funding is being used to cover the Principal Investigator’s salary and fringe benefits, details about the funding sources and amount are required.

Funds must be used for project-related costs:
- Direct salary support for the Principal Investigator and Collaborator cannot exceed NIH salary limitations
- Support staff expenses, such as salaries and benefits or graduate student tuition
- Travel
- Services, such as consultant or contractual services
- Supplies and other expenses, such as participant support costs and equipment. Equipment is defined as items costing more than $5,000 with more than two years of useful life. The maximum amount allowed for equipment is $50,000.

Funds may not be used for:
- Pre-award costs
- Indirect overhead and administrative costs
- Lobbying
- Institutional Review Board fees (for more information, see terms and conditions)
- Supplanting (more information, see terms and conditions)

### Biographical Information

Full applications must include a biographical sketch for the Principal Investigator and the Collaborators in the new NIH format, including a personal statement, positions, scientific appointments and honors, and contributions to science. Collaborators from state and local government agencies or community organizations may submit a resume in lieu of a biographical sketch. Biographical sketches and resumes, each up to five pages in length, must be uploaded as a single PDF.

### UW School of Medicine and Public Health Department Chair Nomination Letter

The application must include a nomination letter from the Principal Investigator’s UW School of Medicine and Public Health department chair. This letter is a critical component of the full application content review. In addition to describing the applicant’s (PI) qualifications, the letter is required to:
- provide evidence of compensated protected time for this project,
- address departmental support and resources, such as facilities or other appropriate resources, for the successful applicant, and
- describe the impact that a New Investigator Program award would have on advancing the applicant’s career development.

There is no limit on the number of nominations from each department chair. The nomination letter must be uploaded as a PDF. There is no page limit for the letter.

### Letters of Commitment

Letters of commitment from the Collaborators are required and must show evidence of the collaboration with specific details about how they or their organizations will be involved in the project. The letters must be uploaded as a single PDF.
Letters of Support
Applicants may include letters from individuals or groups other than the Collaborators (letters of commitment are required from them) to demonstrate support for the project. The letters must be uploaded as a single PDF.

Optional Materials
Optional materials, such as consent forms or laboratory methods, may be submitted for use by the reviewers at their discretion. Such materials are limited to no more than 10 pages and should not be used to circumvent the narrative page limits. These materials must be uploaded as a single PDF.

Compliance
Indicate whether the project requires approval by the Animal Care and Use Committee, the Madison Campus Biological Safety Committee, UW-Madison Institutional Review Board, and/or the University Radiation Safety Committee. See the Wisconsin Partnership Program terms and conditions for more information.

Non-supplanting Questionnaire
Complete the non-supplanting questionnaire by responding to the questions and providing explanations as necessary. See page 8 for more information on supplanting.

Designation of Confidential and Proprietary Information
The Wisconsin Partnership Program is required to operate in accordance with Wisconsin’s public records and open meetings laws. See the Wisconsin Partnership Program terms and conditions for more information.

Indicate whether the full application includes proprietary and/or confidential information, and using the form provided, identify and request confidentiality for any trade secrets or proprietary information.

Review Process & Criteria

Preliminary Application

Technical Review
Partnership Program staff will review each preliminary application to confirm applicant eligibility and to ensure that all requirements are met. Preliminary applications that do not comply with the eligibility or submission requirements will not be reviewed and the applicant will be notified.

Content Review
The PERC Executive Committee, which is advisory to the full committee and includes PERC members, will review the content of each preliminary application to determine if it warrants further development as a full application. The Executive Committee will provide the results to the PERC for review and approval.

The preliminary applications will be reviewed based on the following criteria.

- Shows innovation and has scientific or educational merit
- Appears feasible with high likelihood for acquisition or application of useful data
- Describes the process by which successful execution of this project positively impacts or translates to improved health, health care and/or health equity in Wisconsin
- Has the potential to advance the career development of the applicant, including the potential to leverage extramural grant support
Applicants will be notified by **September 13, 2022** whether they are being invited to submit a full application. The notification will include brief de-identified comments from the reviewers. More extensive comments are provided at the full application stage.

## Full Application

### Technical Review

Partnership Program staff will review each full application to ensure that all requirements are met. Full applications that do not comply with the submission requirements will not be reviewed and the applicant will be notified.

### Content Review

The Review Panel, which is advisory to the PERC and includes UW faculty and community representatives, will review the full applications. Each full application will be reviewed by two University of Wisconsin faculty reviewers — assigned based on the content and objectives of the proposal — who have expertise in biomedical research, health services research, health policy, community-based population health research and/or education. In addition, each full application will be reviewed by one community reviewer. The reviewers will independently review assigned applications based on the review criteria below. The review panel will discuss the applications and provide a ranked list to the PERC along with a written critique of each proposal that includes comments from the two UW faculty reviewers and the community reviewer. PERC will select the finalists for interviews.

The **full applications** will be reviewed based on the following criteria.

- **Project Objective and Scientific Quality**
  - Shows innovation and has outstanding rigor and merit
  - Advances the Wisconsin Partnership Program’s [2019-2024 Five-Year Plan](#) framework
  - Appears feasible with high likelihood for acquisition or application of useful data, and includes details of data analysis that address rigor and reproducibility
  - Describes specific metrics to benchmark progress toward stated goals and objectives
  - Describes plans for evaluating and disseminating research outcomes or project results
  - Has a leveraging potential for extramural grant support
  - As applicable, enhances interdisciplinary research or education and fosters collaborations among basic, clinical, social/behavioral and/or population scientists

- **Applicant Qualifications and Career Development**
  - Applicant is qualified to successfully execute and oversee the proposed research
  - Applicant brings expertise central to the project, and if applicable, there is synergistic value added by Collaborator(s)
  - Proposal has the potential to advance the career development of the applicant

- **Wisconsin Health, Health Care and/or Health Equity**
  - Describes the process by which successful execution of this project positively impacts or translates to improved health, health care and/or health equity in Wisconsin
  - Describes the scope and significance of the health issue being addressed and its relevance in Wisconsin
  - As applicable, describes community engagement efforts if it is the central component of overall project goal. Full application includes letters of support from community partners.

Applicants will be informed by **November 15, 2022** on whether they are being invited to make a fully virtual presentation to the PERC. The de-identified reviewers’ comments will be provided to each applicant.
PERC Review
Finalist presentations will take place at the December 12, 2022 PERC meeting. The presentations by the Principal Investigator typically take place between 5 and 7 pm and are fully virtual over Zoom. Collaborators may join to respond to questions. No exceptions to this date will be made.

The PERC will make a final determination of awards based on rank and alignment with the goals of the New Investigator Program. Applicants will be notified of whether they are selected for a grant award no later than December 16, 2022.

Supplanting Review
Supplanting means to replace, to take the place of, or to supersede. The Wisconsin Partnership Program prohibits any funds from being awarded that will supplant funds or resources otherwise available to applicants from other sources for the proposed project.

PERC’s award decisions are conditional on a review of nonsupplanting by the Wisconsin Partnership Program Finance Associate Director in consultation with the UW School of Medicine and Public Health Chief Financial Officer and the Wisconsin Partnership Program Executive Director. If a determination is made that supplanting will occur, the Principal Investigator and the PERC will be notified. PERC will take action in compliance with WPP’s nonsupplanting policy.

Applicants selected for awards by PERC are required to provide the following information for review by the Wisconsin Partnership Program:
- An up-to-date nonsupplanting questionnaire
- Principal Investigator’s Other Support information in NIH format with the following sections: Project/Proposals by status: Active and Pending; In-Kind Contributions; and Overlap. Principal Investigators must sign their Other Support page.

The committee’s decisions at each stage of the review are final and cannot be appealed.

Terms and Conditions
By applying for a Wisconsin Partnership Program grant, applicants agree to the Partnership Program’s terms and conditions.

Technical Assistance
For more information or assistance, please contact:

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