



JOHNS HOPKINS

21ST CENTURY CITIES INITIATIVE

**Johns Hopkins University
21st Century Cities Initiative (21CC)
Spring 2017 21CC APPLIED RESEARCH SEED GRANT PROGRAM
TO SUPPORT INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH ON CITIES**

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Letter of Intent Submission Deadline:	February 10, 2017, 5:00 p.m.
Full Proposal Submission Deadline:	March 24, 2017, 5:00 p.m.
Bidders' Conference and Networking Event:	January 24, 2017, 5-7pm at Open Works (1400 Greenmount Ave, Baltimore 21202) Click here to RSVP

I. Description and Purpose

The **21st Century Cities Initiative (21CC)** is a Johns Hopkins University Signature Initiative committed to supporting and facilitating cross-disciplinary research that examines and shapes the future possibilities of cities as dynamic hubs of opportunity, inclusion, and innovation. We are pleased to announce this Request for Applications (RFA) for the third round of the 21CC Applied Research Seed Grant Program.¹

II. Award Objectives and Urban Policy Priority Areas

The purpose for this round of the 21CC Applied Research Seed Grant Program is to support the development of new, cross-disciplinary research that meaningfully engages policymakers in cities and closely aligns with the urban policy priorities explored at 21CC's September 2016 inaugural symposium, [21st Century Neighborhoods: Research. Leadership. Transformation.](#) 21CC will prioritize, though not limit, seed grant awards that focus on research within one or more of the following urban policy areas: 1) mixed-income neighborhood development, 2) safe and healthy neighborhoods, and 3) economic opportunity, inclusion, and growth. Applicants are encouraged to view the video of the symposium panels that explored these topics to help inform project proposals.

A link to the videos for each session is in each headline below:

- [Shaping Vibrant, Connected, Mixed-Income Neighborhoods](#). The value of place in determining outcomes for individuals, children and families, including policies and programs such as increasing access to affordable housing, connecting neighborhoods and residents, and providing opportunities for mobility through vouchers or other mechanisms.

¹ For a list of seed grant projects awarded in the first two rounds visit:
<http://www.21cc.jhu.edu/what-we-do/research/2016-seed-grants/>

- **Maintaining Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods**. Models for supporting safe neighborhoods and/or promoting indicators of health through efforts such as community policing programs, violence reduction strategies, public health strategies, and enhanced use of data in directing public safety resources.
- **Economic Growth and Inclusion**. Expanding economic growth in cities in concert with expanding access to jobs and careers for all residents and neighborhoods through efforts such as community benefits agreements, local hiring and procurement, entrepreneurship and small business development, apprenticeships, and sector-focused career training and development.

Priority will be given to projects that focus on one (or more) of the above policy areas. However, 21CC is also open to accepting proposals for projects that cover topics not referenced above but that fit within the broader themes of neighborhood transformation, placemaking, and cities as dynamic hubs of opportunity, inclusion, and innovation. 21CC and the University recognize that scholars who conduct interdisciplinary research often need support to conduct preliminary studies before they can develop larger proposals for funding. As such, 21CC is committed to supporting faculty and research scientists by providing funding for new research that bridges multiple domains of expertise.

Project eligibility criteria include the following:

- Applicants must be led by JHU faculty. Priority will be given to research projects with the following characteristics:
 - Seek to advance understanding of an important research question with the potential to grow into larger, sustained lines of inquiry that can draw external funding for the Principal Investigators (PIs);
 - Represent jointly developed interdisciplinary research approaches by PIs from different schools or disciplines across the University; or from other universities or research organizations outside of JHU if a particular expertise is not available within JHU; and
 - Suggest new or novel approaches to policy areas that present persistent widespread challenges.
- Applicants must engage one or more applied research partners. This engagement may include government agencies, government officials, community-based or non-profit organizations, private-sector corporations, or community leaders or advocates that are active in the urban policy area of interest and express a clear intention of using the research partnership to inform specific policies or programs.
- Applicants may focus their research and applied partnerships on a single city, or multiple cities. Applicants can include the City of Baltimore as a city of focus, but partnerships with other cities are equally welcomed and encouraged.
- Projects must produce at least one research deliverable within 12 to 18 months of the award that can be used by 21CC in its dissemination activities. Deliverables may include but are not limited to: policy brief, dissemination event, or journal article.
- Projects that involve early-career tenure-tracked faculty at the Assistant and Associate levels will be given priority.

If a prospective applicant is not able to meet (or is unsure if their specific project would meet) the above eligibility criteria, they are encouraged to contact 21CC Program Coordinator, Mac McComas at 21CC@jhu.edu prior to submitting a letter of intent for assistance in meeting missing criteria. For example, if a prospective applicant lacks a cross-disciplinary research partner, 21CC might be able to assist in identifying potential researchers to help facilitate a research partnership.

III. Award Amounts and Use of Award Funds

21CC anticipates awarding up to 7 seed grants at an average amount of \$35,000. The maximum grant request is \$50,000. Only one application may be submitted per person.

- Funds are to cover direct project costs only (e.g., travel, printing materials, transcription of interviews, research assistance, limited faculty/researcher time) budgeted for up to a 12-month period.
- Please note that JHU Homewood-based faculty will not be granted salary support, except in exceptional situations.
- Funds cannot be used for lobbying activities or retrospective payments (e.g., travel or other costs that were incurred prior to the signed/agreed start date for a seed grant).
- The proposal review committee may seek budget adjustments before making final decisions.

IV. Application Procedure and Components

There is a two-stage application process. First, interested applicants must submit a brief letter of intent to apply. Second, if approved, applicants must submit a full proposal. Specific information required is outlined below.

STAGE 1: LETTER OF INTENT

The letter of intent is a brief letter of 1 to 2 pages that includes the following components:

- Research question and brief description of the project and area or areas of urban policy focus.
- Names, affiliations, and titles of interdisciplinary project team.
- Name of city or cities to be studied.
- Name(s) of city, community, nonprofit, or business applied research partner(s).
- Anticipated funding amount request.

STAGE 2: FULL PROPOSAL

Applicants must be invited by 21CC to submit a full proposal based on submission and review of the letter of intent. The full proposal must include the following:

COVER PAGE (1 page)

- Title of the proposal
- Contact information for the applicant(s)
- Abstract/Summary of the project no more than 100 words

Project Description and Supporting Materials

The project description should be 3 to 5 single-spaced pages (standard 1 inch margins, 11 or 12-point font) including figures, tables, and references. Be succinct, avoid jargon, and spell out acronyms when used for the first time.

All proposals must clearly include the following (use clear, recognizable section headers):

- **Project name**
- **Name of PI(s) and other investigators**
- **Specific project aims:** Briefly summarize the specific aims of the project.
- **Project overview and design:** Describe the project's scope and components. What methodology will you employ? How is your project cross-disciplinary? What is the project's duration and timeline?
- **State of knowledge:** What contribution will the project have relative to the current state of knowledge in its field?
- **Expected outcomes/impact:** What impact might your project have for future research, cities and community partners, and for 21CC and JHU?
- **Collaboration(s):** Please describe collaborations within JHU and with external partners.
- **Policy significance:** Please describe how the project will advance urban policy.
- **Availability of funding:** List funders to which you would submit a proposal should the seed project be successful and the estimated timeframe for future submission. Please affirm that this project represents a new line of inquiry and is not supplementing or supporting existing research funding.
- **Institutional Review Board (IRB) submission and review:** IRB approval or exemption is not required for submitting an application but it would be required in advance of the project start date. Please provide plans for IRB approval or exemption in the event of funding.
- **Curricula Vitae:** Please attach CVs for PIs and other key investigators.

Budget Description and Justification

Please complete the [budget template, Attachment 1 of this RFA](#), and provide a brief narrative justification of major uses of funds.

Letter(s) Confirming Collaborative Partnership and Support for the Project

Please attach letters of support from collaborators outside of JHU confirming their support of the project and explaining the role they intend to play (e.g. research site or partner, program or policy implementer, convener, faculty or other researcher outside of JHU, or other). The letters should describe how collaborators are to be involved in the project, and how they anticipate they will use knowledge gained from this project.

V. Application Review Process

All applications will be reviewed by an interdisciplinary review committee comprised of members of the [21CC Steering Committee](#), who represent eight of the nine academic divisions of Johns Hopkins, and supplemented by University or community professionals with expertise in the application's areas, as necessary. Applications will be judged on the following criteria:

- **Urban policy focus:** Whether the proposed research project fits within the key domains of urban policy and development identified for this RFA and discussed above and is of broad research and policy interest that is relatable to multiple cities.
- **Collaboration with policy makers or other decision makers:** Appropriateness and value of partnership and collaborative arrangements with decision makers.
- **Quality:** The rigor and fit of the methods used to address the research problem and the proposed project's feasibility.
- **Impact:** How findings of the project may inform academic, policy, and practice audiences.
- **Potential for external funding:** Likelihood that the project would lead to grant applications for external funding (with funders, timelines, etc. specified).
- **Adequacy and appropriateness of intended use of funds.**

VI. Requirements for Successful Applicants

All award recipients will be expected to commit to the following:

- Provide biographical statement(s) and project description for the 21CC website.
- Participate in 21CC-sponsored activities when possible, including attending Initiative sponsored events or meetings on topics related to the research project.
- Submit to the 21CC brief interim (6-month) progress and financial reports and final reports that outline the project's accomplishments including impacts on policy and plans for continuation of the research through applied for or received external funding, and a summary of use of grant funds at project completion.
- Provide copies of working papers/publications, policy briefs, or other deliverables identified in agreement with 21CC resulting from the funded project for posting, and within 12 to 18 months of the award.
- Notify 21CC of specific outcomes from the project (e.g., publications, further collaborations, further research funding, awards, legislative or policy actions, etc.).

VII. How to Apply

Please email letters of intent for potential project proposals to 21CC@jhu.edu no later than 5:00 p.m. on February 10, 2017. If invited to submit a full proposal, they will be due by 5:00 p.m. on March 24, 2017 via email to 21CC@jhu.edu. Award decisions will be announced by May 1, 2017.

Full proposals should be submitted as one PDF file in the following order:

Cover Page
 Project Description
 Supporting Materials
 Budget/Justification
 Letters of support
 CVs

VIII. Bidders' Conference and Networking Event

Please note that 21CC will host a **bidders' conference and networking event on January 24, 2017** at Open Works from 5pm to 7pm. Open Works is located at 1400 Greenmount Ave, Baltimore, MD 21202. Attendance is optional, but encouraged. If you would like to attend, please RSVP at [this Eventbrite page](#).