



**MEDICAL
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KERN INSTITUTE
FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF MEDICAL EDUCATION

Transforming Medical Education through Collaboratories Request for Proposals

The Robert D. and Patricia E. Kern Institute for the Transformation of Medical Education at the Medical College of Wisconsin is pleased to release this request for proposals to build *Medical Education Transformation Collaboratories*, cross-institutional, multi- and inter-disciplinary, multiple stakeholder communities of practice that work together in a sustained effort around a shared project to transform medical education by engaging in both innovation and scholarship.

We seek submission from teams of 3 to 5 individuals who will devote compensated time to build a community of practice around medical education transformation. These collaboratories will serve as incubators for the creation of generalizable knowledge as we move rapidly into a new era of medical education. Eligible groups must include at least one member employed at an LCME-accredited medical school, with other members currently affiliated with institutions or organizations with a stake in health and healthcare. Full details follow.

Transforming Medical Education Through Collaboratories

As recent events have highlighted, physicians and our partners in the healthcare professions are ready and willing to care for individuals and the public in dire circumstances. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted a long-standing set of problems that need to be addressed if we are to have the health systems and healthcare workforce we deserve into the future. Independent of the pandemic, our national healthcare outcomes do not align with the fact that the United States has the most scientifically and technologically sophisticated healthcare system in the world. Too many Americans go without health care, the physician workforce is maldistributed geographically and with respect to clinical discipline, healthcare is too costly, financing is opaque, and health disparities on the basis of social class and race undermine the full flourishing of our communities. Access to medical education is limited by its cost, length, and other structural barriers.

“Guided by our triple aim for medical education – competence, character, and caring – the Kern Institute, along with our partners in the Kern National Network, aims to create a community of medical education leaders ready to transform medical education. We look forward to expanding our connections across the world through the collaboratories program.”

**Dr. Adina Kalet
Director of the Kern Institute**

While much has been done, there is still plenty of room for new and deeper thinking. New strategies are required, and we must implement them in community. This is why the Kern

Institute is committing resources to support building and strengthening *Medical Education Transformation Collaboratories*—actual and/or virtual communities of practice which will serve as incubators for the creation of generalizable knowledge as we move rapidly into a new era.

Ideal collaboratory leadership will include 3 to 5 individuals who will devote compensated time to the effort. At least one member of the group should be employed in good standing at an LCME-accredited medical school, and other members of the teams should currently be affiliated with institutions or organizations with a stake in health and healthcare.

Priority Topics and Preferences

1. *Best Practices in Medical Education.* The evidence base in medical education has become robust, but the impact of best practice medical education is lagging with limited influence on current policy and practice. We are interested in supporting projects that explore how to best tailor, implement, sustain, and disseminate best practices in medical education.
2. *Data Science in Education.* Most medical training programs do not make meaningful use of the large amounts of data collected on their learners, faculty, and programs. We are interested in innovative projects that demonstrate how to maximize individual and institutional learning through data collection, management, restructuring, analysis, visualization, and dissemination to enable learning.
3. *Linking Medical Education and Patient Health.* There are too few studies of how and why medical education impacts patient outcomes. We are interested in creative projects that link medical education to individual patient health or public health.
4. *New Models for Structuring and Funding Medical Education.* Philosophical and policy research is needed to inform the development of transformative models for organizing and staffing medical education. Outcomes of interest include entry and retention of students who are underrepresented in medicine, accountability models for training and compensating medical educators, and a sustained program of scholarship that drives substantive transformation of medical education.

Funding will be prioritized for proposals that:

- Include members of the Kern National Network as a partner
- Include patient representatives, such as community members, as substantive partners
- Have explicit focus on evidence-based integration of character and caring in medical education

Funding Frameworks

There are two funding options available.

Research Proposals (\$50K–\$100K): A team with at least one member with a track record of producing collaborative scholarship and publishing in peer-reviewed journals should propose a

research project involving data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Proposals with audacious goals balanced with feasible methods will be given priority.

Policy Paper Grants (up to \$10K): A multi-disciplinary team with at least one member with a track record of publishing scholarly work and one member who is early career with evidence of substantive interest in medical education should propose a policy paper that rigorously explores a focused problem and proposes policy solutions. Proposals that think broadly to include legislatures, health systems and insurers, medical school policy committees, and public interest groups, among others, will be given priority.

Grants are for 1 year with an option of ongoing funding if productivity in the first year meets or exceeds expectations. Grantees must make themselves available to convene with other grantees to present and discuss their work-in-progress at 6 and 12 months after funding. A final award of 5% of total grant amount will be made if a manuscript describing the work is accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal within two years of the award date.

Acceptable categories of spending include compensation for personnel time and incentives for participants. Budgets must not include money for equipment (e.g., computers), software (e.g., SPSS), supplies (e.g., pens, paper), travel (e.g., mileage, hotels), or overhead (e.g., facilities and administration costs). Budgets may include sub-awards as needed for collaboratory personnel at other institutions.

Proposal Components and Timeline

Letter of Intent (Due Wednesday, December 23, 2020)

Submit letter of intent (no longer than 3 pages, exclusive of attachments) that identifies the problem to be addressed, a description of the members, structure, and function of the collaboratory, the project and anticipated outcomes, and an estimated (or formal) proposed budget. Required attachments include a CV or NIH-style biosketch for each key member of the team and a letter of support from a leader at each participating institution acknowledging that the funding requires substantive, meaningful collaboration and shared credit taking. Please include other attachments as needed.

Feedback on the LOI to all applicants will be provided by the funders on or before January 29, 2021.

Formal Proposal (Due Friday, March 12, 2021)

Using the layout described below, submit a formal proposal (no longer than 30 pages, exclusive of attachments) that describes the project. Please also include the following required attachments:

- CV or NIH-style biosketch for each key member of the team
- Letter of support from an institutional IRB
- Letter of support from an institutional leader who can attest to support for the project if funded

- Letter from at least one community member/organization who agrees to consult on research design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation
- Formal budget (as spreadsheet)
- Other attachments as needed

Proposals will be reviewed as they are received. All funding decisions will be announced by April 30, 2021. All proposals will receive feedback regardless of funding decision.

How to Submit

To submit the LOI and the formal proposal, please email Dr. Michael T. Braun at micbraun@mcw.edu. Use the subject line “Kern Institute Collaboratories RFP Letter of Intent/Proposal.” Attach the submission as a single PDF file that includes both the required components of submission plus attachments.

Proposal Format

Structure the formal proposal as follows (including section numbering as specified):

Proposal Narrative

1. What problem does this project address? (1/2 page)
2. What are the relevant gaps in the literature? (2 pages)
3. Describe the project
 - 3.1. What is the overall goal? (1/2 page)
 - 3.2. What are the specific aims? (1/2 page)
 - 3.3. How will each specific aim be addressed? (5 pages)
 - 3.3.1. What methods, procedures, and measures will be used?
 - 3.3.2. What outcome measures will be collected? (1 page)
 - 3.3.3. How will data be operationalized, collected, analyzed, and interpreted?
 - 3.3.4. How will you approach ethical issues raised by the project?
4. What would success of this project look like? (1 page)
5. What are the anticipated challenges to success of the project? How will you address these? (1 page)
6. How is the proposed project innovative? (1 page)
7. Program evaluation: How will the team determine the impact of the project on individuals, institutional/organizational culture, and relevant communities? (2 pages)
8. Dissemination: How will the findings of the research be disseminated? Include details on audiences (including community members), as well as possible conferences and journals (1 page)

The Collaboratory and Personnel

9. Describe the collaboratory, emphasizing what makes it unique and likely to be successful (1 page)
10. Briefly describe each member of the collaboratory (1 page for each member; refer to NIH biosketch)

11. How will the group collaborate both structurally and functionally? (1/2 page text, 1 page organizational chart as attachment)
12. Describe how the team will communicate, share documents, and remain accountable to each other and the project. (1/2 page)
13. What challenges do you anticipate in forming this collaboratory, and how will you address these challenges? (1 page)

Workplan and Budget

14. Describe the overall workplan, including details on specific aims, responsible personnel, deliverable products, and monthly timeline (1 page)
15. Describe the overall budget (1 page; please refer to budget restrictions described above)