



Community Research Fellowship
Application Materials and Instructions

1. Community Research Fellowship (CRF) InfoReady Application (online, see [website](#))
2. Project Proposal

A 2-3 page description of the project you propose to conduct if awarded the CRF. It must be typed (double-spaced, in 12-point font with 1-inch margins), have a title, and the header should contain your name and the page number. A reference page does not count towards the page limit. The project proposal is the key element of your application and a primary consideration in the review process.

Your research will be disseminated to a wide audience, therefore discipline specific jargon, and terms or acronyms common to your field, must be translated into commonly understood language. You should therefore regard your project proposal as an opportunity to demonstrate your interest in becoming a member of a broad academic community. Write your proposal in terms that are understandable to a smart and diverse audience. Students are encouraged to have peers in other disciplines review their proposals to ensure it is understandable. Your proposal will be reviewed by the committee composed of University Honors College staff, faculty, and past fellows.

In addition to meeting the above criteria, a competitive proposal must also include sections that deal, at least briefly with the following topics:

- A general introduction that provides the context for your project, with reference to previous research found in the field. Again, this context should be accessible to a broad audience.
- How your research addresses the community partner's needs.
- An answer to the "so what?" question (i.e. an explanation of why your project's contribution is significant in the context you described, both regarding field research and your community partner).
- The specific research questions/goals/objectives that your project aims to answer/achieve.
- An outline of the research methods you will use to carry out your project, and why the design is suitable for the project. (Examples include surveys, analysis of pre-existing data, interviews, focus groups, monitoring and evaluation, ethnography, photovoice, product design research, etc.)
- An assessment of the feasibility of completing your project within the time period of the fellowship.



- If your project is part of a larger group effort, you should clearly identify the aspect(s) of the project you will be responsible for and how you will work independently.
- What you expect to produce at the end of the project and how it will help the community partner.

*Please reach out to Stacie Dow, SMD164@pitt.edu, for examples of successful proposals.

3. Diversity Statement

An essay of 250-500-words addressing the question: How is the critical issue related to diversity, equity, and justice? Please discuss your personal experiences and how you bring a diverse perspective to the critical issue.

4. Resume (2 pages maximum)

5. Letter of Support from your Faculty Mentor

A signed 1-2-page confidential letter that addresses the following points:

- In what context and for how long have you known this student?
- Have you discussed the proposed project with the student?
- In your assessment, is the student prepared to carry out the proposed project?
- Will you have the time and resources to mentor the student during the project? What is the proposed schedule for periodic research meetings?
- What degree of independence will the student have in carrying out the project? To what extent was the student involved in developing the idea for the project?

The mentor should be a Pitt faculty member or qualified researcher/subject matter expert (ideally, someone who has taught undergraduate students). The mentor should also have an academic background appropriate for the student's project. The mentor must submit the letter via the online application system. Mentors will receive an automated email requesting their letter once the student's application has been submitted. If you are submitting your application at or near the deadline, your mentor will have an additional three days to submit the letter. **Students are encouraged to request this letter from their mentor well in advance of the application deadline.** The applicant should ensure the email provided for the research mentor is correct and that their mentor receives an automated request from the application system. (Note: Using Pitt alias emails may incorrectly route letter requests.)

6. Letter of Support from your Community Partner

A signed 1-2-page confidential letter that addresses the following points:



- What community and/or issue do you represent and what is your role within this community/issue?
- In what context and for how long has the student been involved in your organization?
- Is this project addressing a specific need within your community or organization?
- Will you have the time and resources to mentor the student during the project? What is the proposed schedule for periodic research meetings?
- What degree of independence will the student have in carrying out the project?
- What do you expect the student to produce as a result of the research?

The community partner should be a Pittsburgh nonprofit partner. The student should also have volunteered or collaborated with the community partner in the past and be familiar enough with the organization to address the partner's specific need. The Community Partner must submit the letter via the online application system. Community Partners will receive an automated email requesting their letter once the student's application has been submitted. If you are submitting your application at or near the deadline, your Community Partner will have an additional three days to submit the letter. **Students are encouraged to request this letter from their Community Partner well in advance of the application deadline.** The applicant should ensure the email provided for the research mentor is correct and that their mentor receives an automated request from the application system (Note: Using Pitt alias emails may incorrectly route letter requests).

FOR STUDENTS INTERESTED IN APPLYING FOR ONE OF THE POTENTIAL CRF PROJECTS LISTED AND IS CURRENTLY NOT PARTNERED WITH A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION:

Please ask an organization you've previously volunteered with or worked alongside to write you a 1-2 page letter of support to replace the above Community Partner letter. It should answer the following questions (and please send the organization the project description you are interested in):

- In what context and for how long was the student involved with your organization?
- What degree of independence did the student have while at your organization?
- Please describe why you recommend this student be involved with this project?

7. Submitting the Application

Submit your application online before the deadline stated on the website. Please do NOT mail your application or provide hard copies.