

South Carolina Center for **Rural and Primary Healthcare**

Rural Innovations Cooperative Agreement Request for Applications

**RFA Release Date:
February 4, 2019**

Application Due Date: April 12, 2019, at 5:00 pm
Earliest Anticipated Project Start Date: July 1, 2019

Primary Objective: Support and identify innovative programs and/or strategies that promote and improve health, access to care, or health outcomes for rural patients, populations and/or communities in South Carolina.

Such programs may include, but are not limited to:

- Improving access to or the delivery of healthcare services
- Enhancing the health professions workforce through recruitment, retention, or training
- Implementing services/programs that promote improved health outcomes for rural patients, populations and/or communities.
- Integrating health care and community programs to improve health, access, delivery, or outcomes

Project outcomes and measures should target improvements in rural health outcomes in South Carolina. These outcomes should be easily measurable within the project time period, linked with the project activities, and have the capability for ongoing assessment. Furthermore, these projects should align with the South Carolina's Rural Health Action Plan (<http://scorh.net/rural-health-action-plan/>). Outcomes such as publications or presentations are desirable but are not the primary focus of this RFA. The Rural Innovations Program is interested in programs that will identify innovative solutions or best practices that can be adopted by other rural communities, expanded into a larger context, or informs public policy.

Priority will be given to programs which can demonstrate a path to sustainability and/or ability to obtain external funding.

Proposals can be submitted under one of two categories:

Category I: Planning Projects. These projects would be smaller in scope and would support planning efforts and begin the process of implementing an innovation. Projects under category I would be limited to 12-months and up to \$50,000 in total cost (Direct Costs only).

Category II: Implementation projects. These projects could implement a program that is well designed but not yet realized. These could include expanding a current program in new areas or adapting a program in new topic areas or locations. Projects under category II would be limited to 24-months and up to \$200,000 in total cost (Direct Costs only).

The Rural Innovations program will provide funding for multiple awards in the form of cooperative agreements. A **cooperative agreement** is a financial assistance mechanism where the Center has ongoing involvement with the recipient during the pursuance of the proposed project. Such cooperation will occur prior to notice of award, as the Center's team will assess proposed projects, and provide feedback on scope and budget prior to final approval.

In addition to the usual monitoring and technical assistance provided under the cooperative agreement, the SC Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare program involvement will include:

- Participating in the planning and development of each applicant's program budget, implementation plan, and evaluation
- Reviewing and, if necessary, commenting on an applicant's plans and methodologies presented in the project proposal.
- Reviewing each applicant's work products, including each project's methodology, analysis, results, policy implications, and format prior to public dissemination.
- Providing consultation, as appropriate, to each applicant's design strategies for disseminating the work to target multiple audiences
- Participating, as appropriate, in meetings, training activities, or workgroups conducted during the project period.
- Reviewing required quarterly reports and data collection/evaluation measures adherence

Eligibility Criteria:

- Any public institution of higher education in South Carolina
- South Carolina Rural Health Networks
- SC AccessHealth programs
- Public or not-for-profit (501(c)3) organizations with an emphasis on health, rural health, or community services
- State government agencies

If you are uncertain if you are eligible, please contact us at RuralInnovations@uscmed.sc.edu so we can assist you in determining your eligibility.

Application Process:

All components of the applications should be submitted to RuralInnovations@uscmed.sc.edu by the due date above. Applications that are late, incomplete or not responsive to the RFA will be disqualified and will not be reviewed.

Please note that the Center provides, at no cost, pre-award consultation for program appropriateness, project evaluation, budget, or partner identification for this RFA. We can also provide evaluation or other services as part of the proposed research plan and budget. Please contact Kevin Bennett, PhD, for more information: kevin.bennett@uscmed.sc.edu.

Application Components:

1. Title Page
 - a. Project title with the contact information of the project lead, as well as key personnel
 - b. Total amount of budget request
2. Targeted population, including populations served by the project (1-page limit)
3. Description of project including (3-page limit):
 - a. Health needs of the population served
 - b. Description of the program and/or methodology
 - c. Anticipated results
 - d. A detailed work plan, including the expected time frame of project
 - e. Justification for the requested funds
4. Description of key personnel qualifications (1-page per personnel limit)
5. Detailed budget and budget justification (See attached template)
6. Appendices with supporting material (10-page limit)

Review Criteria:

1. Need for the project – 10 pts
2. Program description – 40 pts
 - a. Methods / implementation clearly described – 15pts
 - b. Activities linked with objectives – 10pts
 - c. Objectives are reasonably achievable in the time described - 5pts
 - d. Program, as described, likely to meet stated need – 10pts
3. Inclusion of community partners – 10 pts
4. Evaluation / measures – 20 pts
5. Plan for sustainability – 10 pts
6. Adequacy of Budget, budget justification – 5 pts
7. Experience /capability of personnel – 5 pts

Cooperative agreement participants must use the funds to supplement, not supplant, existing funding for specified activities. Initial approval of a project does not indicate approval of the proposed budget as all project budgets will be reviewed and potentially revised. The decision to award a project, or to award at a particular funding level, is discretionary. The number and amount of awards are dependent on the availability of funding.

The South Carolina Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare at the USC School of Medicine is dedicated to supporting and developing rural and primary care education, delivery, and sustainability in South Carolina through clinical practice, training and research. The Center and the Innovations Program is supported through the legislative Rural Health Initiative proviso and in partnership with the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.