



Southwest Health Equity Research Collaborative (SHERC)

Pilot Project Program
Information Session

September 5, 2023

SHERC Overview

What is SHERC?

[SHERC](#) is a [National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities \(NIMHD\)](#) grant-funded cooperative agreement (NIH #U54MD012388) within the [Center for Health Equity Research](#) at NAU. SHERC is part of the NIMHD's Research Centers in Minority Institutions Partnership.

Overall Goal of SHERC

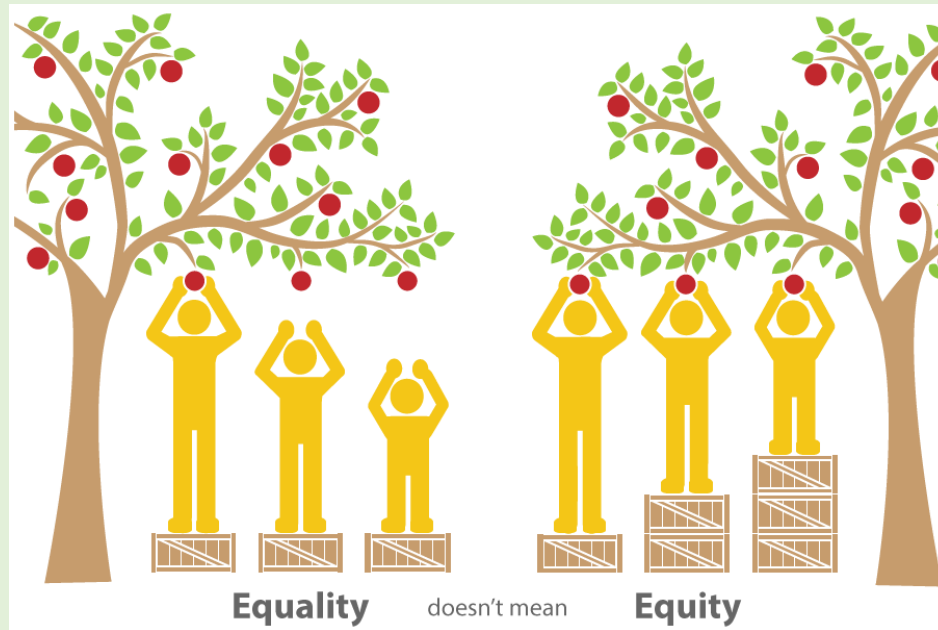
- To increase basic biomedical, clinical, and behavioral research at NAU to address **health disparities** and advance **health equity** among diverse populations of the southwestern United States. SHERC emphasizes working closely with community partners to achieve these goals.



Center for Health
Equity Research

What is Health Equity?

“Health equity” is the **assurance of the conditions** for optimal health for all people



Source: Saskatoon Health Region

Achieving health equity requires:

- Valuing all individuals and populations equally
- Recognizing and rectifying historical injustices
- Providing resources according to need
- Health disparities will be eliminated when health equity is achieved

Jones, C. (2014). Systems of Power, Axes of Inequality: Parallels, Intersections, Braiding the Strands. *Medical Care*, 52(10 (Suppl 3)), S71–S75.

SHERC Cores

- SHERC consists of five cores that all interact synergistically to promote health equity research.
- Each of the SHERC cores provides distinct opportunities to increase research capacity at NAU.
- Examples include research trainings, methodological software, technical assistance, and funding for research and development of community partnerships.



Investigator Development Core Team



Dirk de Heer, PhD, MPH
Professor, Department of Health Sciences
Role: Lead



Nicky Teufel-Shone, PhD
Professor, Department of Health Sciences
Role: Co-Lead



Christine Smith
Project Manager
Role: Organizational/Administrative Support



Investigator Development Core Pilot Project Program (PPP) Goals

PPP provides:

- 1) support and mentoring to early-stage investigators and underrepresented faculty in health equity research
- 2) seed funding to establish strong and successful programs on research in health equity

PPP objective:

To support scientifically rigorous research projects that will support investigators' competitiveness for NIH and other external health and health equity-related research funding

- *ESI (Early-Stage Investigator)*
- *Underrepresented faculty*
- *Team science and translational research*

Pilot Project Program

Investigator Eligibility & Funding

Projects will be funded for \$50,000 per year for 2 years. The PPP will fund up to 3 projects a year for the next 3 years.

Eligible Rank:

- Assistant Professor (tenure eligible)
- Assistant Research Professor
- Assistant Clinical Professor
- Assistant Teaching Professor
- Assistant Professor of Practice
- Lecturer
- Post-Doctoral scholar

The PPP is open to investigators who:

- (1) are NAU regular, benefit eligible, employees;
- (2) are eligible to serve as principal investigator on extramural grants per NAU policy <https://nau.edu/university-policy-library/principal-investigator-eligibility/>;
- (3) and have not previously competed successfully as a PD/PI for a substantial NIH independent research award.

Eligibility Notes: *UR applicants are strongly encouraged to apply to the PPP, but it is not a requirement. Faculty at the Associate or Full Professor rank are not eligible.*

Pilot Project Program Research Projects Foci

Foci: Basic biomedical, behavioral, or clinical research

Strongly encouraged: Pilot projects that focus on research that address health equity of diseases/conditions and communities/populations affected

Tips for writing the LOI:

- Align research objectives to goals of SHERC. See LOI guidelines for SHERC goals and health equity framework.
 - Scientifically rigorous
 - Topic relevant to community priorities
 - Team science/ co-investigators from different areas of expertise.
- LOIs will be reviewed and if accepted, will be invited for full proposal submission.
 - PIs will receive individualized mentoring and a grant writing workshop prior to full proposal submission.

Individualized Mentorship

Individualized mentorship program

- **Grant workshop**
- **Individual mentorship** prior to full proposal submission
- **Building a mentorship team:** 2+ mentors (funded, specific need), brief individual development plan, flexible to accommodate schedules (10 hours over 2 years)
- **Workshops:** Team science (Dr. Salazar) and career development (Dr. Budge)
- **Community dissemination** of findings
- Facilitate external mentorship and partnership across other RCMI partner institutions
- Other career enhancement activities and resources

Outcomes: productivity, career advancement, mentorship quality



Pilot Project Program Timeline

Date	PPP Timeline
November 6, 2023	LOI Due Date
November 20, 2023	LOI Feedback and Full proposal notifications sent out
November 20 - December 15, 2023	Individual Mentoring Meetings with Full Proposal PIs
Early January 2024	Grant Writing Workshop
February 12, 2024	Full Proposal Applications Due
Mid February – March 2024	Proposals reviewed by committee
March 2024	Review committee meeting
April 2024	Proposals selected sent to NIMHD for final review
June 2024	Target award start date

Pilot Project Program Success

Since 2017, the PPP funded [22 pilot projects](#) with project leads across 4 colleges representing 11 academic units

Sample of PPP Awards Years 1-6

PI/Year Funded	Department	Title of Project
Cope, Emily Y1	Biological Sciences	Addressing asthma health disparities through diet-based manipulation of the gut microbiome-airway axis
Lindberg, Gerrick Y1	Chemistry	Developing room temperature preservation and storage strategies for medicinally-relevant biological molecules
Vigil-Hayes, Morgan Y2	School of Informatics	ARORA: Using augmented reality to gamify a universal social-emotional learning intervention in low-infrastructure environments
Ladner, Jason Y2	Biological Sciences	High throughput characterization of health disparities related to viral infections
Camplain, Ricky Y3	Health Sciences	Physical activity among women incarcerated in jail
Lee, Naomi Y3	Chemistry/Biochemistry	Multivalent display of HPV antigens using self-assembling peptides
Eaves, Emery Y4	Anthropology	Opioid Use Recovery Help in an Online User Support Environment (OUR HOUSE)
Edgeley, Catrin Y4	School of Forestry	Developing a methodology for exploring health inequities tied to wildfire smoke
Eddie, Regina Y4	School of Nursing	Examining school wellness in underserved American Indian communities.
Antoninka, Anita Y5	School of Forestry	Utility of biocrust restoration to stabilize soils and reduce Coccidioides abundance
Henderson, Davis Y5	Communication Sciences	Navajo children with and without speech sound disorders
Duval, Jared Y6	School of Informatics	Addressing Speech Health Equity Issues in the Southwestern US Using a Telehealth Speech Therapy Game
Cerino, Eric Y6	Psychological Sciences	The Roles of Daily Stressor Control and Social Determinants of Health in Cognitive Aging: Examining Modifiable Contributors to Cognitive Health Disparities in Daily Life

Thank You!

Questions?