

Announcement

The Health Equity Research Advisory Council is now accepting applications for the Health Equity Training Awards.

The Health Equity Research Advisory Council (HERAC), a joint committee composed of research leaders from Novant Health and the University of North Carolina School of Medicine (UNC-SOM) are sponsoring up to ten awards to reimburse up to \$500-\$1,650 to fund training for investigators, or their students/research staff, who interested in conducting or already conducting health equity research relevant to Southeastern North Carolina.

To be eligible, applicants must either be:

- (1) employed by Novant Health and located in the coastal region (defined as the New Hanover Region and includes Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender counties) OR
- (2) employed by the UNC Chapel Hill School of Medicine, OR
- (3) a trainee or research staff (e.g., post-doc, coordinator, resident) who is DIRECTLY supervised by an individual who meets one of the above criteria. Trainees must submit a letter of support from the supervisor in question with their application.

Applicants must also demonstrate how the proposed training will support the stated health equity research goal.

Request for Applications

The Research Advisory Council (RAC) is an innovative, joint committee composed of research leaders from Novant Health, Novant Health New Hanover Regional Medical Center (NH-NHRMC), the University of North Carolina Health Care System (UNC Health), and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine (UNC SOM). The RAC was established according to the Academic and Clinical Affiliation Agreement (Affiliation Agreement) implemented in connection with the Novant-NHRMC Asset Purchase Agreement. The RAC and its sub-committee, the Health Equity Research Advisory Council (HERAC) are focused on promoting health equity research addressing issues relevant to Southeastern North Carolina.

The Health Equity Research Training Awards are designed to support current or potential researchers in growing relevant research skills necessary for conducting effective health equity research. Applicants should identify a specific training opportunity and demonstrate how skills from that opportunity will allow them to conduct high-level health equity research with relevance to the Southeastern region of North Carolina. Awards will provide up to \$500 to reimburse online trainings, and up to \$1,650 for in-person trainings.

If you are interested in applying and have questions, please contact Natara Dulaney at Natara.Dulaney@novanthealth.org.

1. Purpose

Despite notable improvements gained because of technological advancements in medicine, there continues to be an alarming disproportionate burden of illness among historically marginalized populations. The purpose of this award is to advance researcher skills to promote the development of high-quality, well-informed research that promotes health equity for groups who have traditionally been under-represented or excluded in health research or disproportionately affected by illness and lack of

access to medical care (e.g., people who live in rural areas, populations with low socioeconomic status; people with disabilities; people with mental illness and substance use disorder; older adults; the LGBTQ community; African American, Native American, Asian American, and Hispanic populations). We are seeking applications from investigators with a demonstrated interest in health equity issues AND a specific research goal that would benefit from the receipt of this award.

Examples of trainings that might be supported by this award include, but are not limited to:

- Training in participatory research methodologies, or other approaches that center community empowerment.
- Workshops focused on a specific methodology, such as statistics or qualitative methods, needed for a planned health equity research project.
- Attending a conference with a focus on a topic relevant to a planned health equity research project.

II. Key Dates

There is no singular deadline for this award. Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis until all funds have been awarded, or until June 1, 2025, whichever occurs first.

III. Funding and Eligibility

This funding opportunity is supported from the financial commitment set forth in the Affiliation Agreement and approved by the Affiliation.

Applications must:

- (1) come from an applicant employed by Novant Health and located in the coastal region (defined as the New Hanover Region and includes Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender counties) OR an applicant employed by the UNC Chapel Hill School of Medicine OR a trainee or research staff directly supervised by an individual who meets one of the above criteria, and
- (2) plan to engage in health equity research relevant to the Southeastern region of North Carolina.

Investigators eligible for this award include permanent faculty whose appointments allow them to serve as PI on externally sponsored research projects; non-faculty, such as research scientists and investigators, who are eligible to apply for investigator-initiated awards; and other research staff (such as research coordinators) or trainees, with a letter of support from the PI of the planned research project.

For virtual trainings, only registration/tuition costs will be reimbursed. For in-person trainings, funding may reimburse up to \$1,650 for registration/tuition, travel, lodging, and food. While applications may be submitted in advance of payment, funds will not be paid out until reimbursement requests from Concur are provided.

IV. Review Criteria

Applications should be presented in a clear and logical fashion and make a convincing case for how the training would support the proposed health equity research goals.

Primary review criteria include: (1) the likelihood that the proposed research goal would address health equity in Southeastern North Carolina and (2) the relevance of the training to the proposed research goal. A full research proposal is not required for this award; a brief summary of the research goal or planned study is sufficient.

V. Application Materials

- **Description of Training** – A short summary of the training desired, with topics covered, including direct program costs. Be sure to state if the program is online or in-person.
- **Applicant Statement** – Briefly describe your research goals, previous research experience, and how the training will support the stated research goals. Be sure to clearly describe how the stated research goals will contribute to health equity in Southeastern North Carolina. (500-1000 words).
- **NIH Biosketch or CV** – For the individual requesting training.
- **Letter of Support** – Required from trainees or other research staff who are not eligible to apply for investigator-initiated awards.