



Community Research Fellowship Application Materials and Instructions

1. Community Research Fellowship (CRF) InfoReady Application (available 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, should be translated into commonly understood language. You should regard your project proposal as an opportunity to demonstrate your interest in becoming a member of a broad academic community. Please write your proposal in terms that are understandable to a smart and diverse audience. Your proposal will be reviewed by the committee composed of Frederick Honors College staff, faculty, and past fellows.

In addition to meeting the above criteria, a competitive proposal must also include sections that address the following topics:

- A general introduction providing the context for your project, with reference to previous research found in the field. This need not be a literature review, rather, evidence and context supporting your research and why it is relevant.
- How your research addresses community partner's needs without assuming needs or making uninformed assumptions.
- 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, product design research, etc.)
- An assessment of the feasibility of completing your project within the timeframe of the fellowship.
- If your project is part of a larger group effort, you should clearly identify the aspect(s) of the project for which you will be responsible and how work will be distributed independently.
- What you expect to produce at the end of the project based on the *collaborative needs* of your community partner. Do not make assumptions; work with your partner to assist.

3. Civic Engagement Statement

An essay of 300 words or less addressing the question: How does your research contribute to civic engagement and social responsibility? Additionally, how does your research contribute to broader positive social change? In other words, please discuss how your interests in public policy are related to interests in creating a broader impact that contributes to the public good. Applicants can discuss how they bring a diverse or unique perspective to their issues, and, if applicable, describe any personal experiences or challenges.



4. Resume (2 pages maximum)

5. Required Letter of Support from your Faculty Mentor

The faculty 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 their 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 their 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.)

The letter of support includes 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?

6. Optional (Preferred) Letter of Support from your Community Partner

The community partner should be a Pittsburgh non-profit partner. If at all possible, the student should 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).

The letter of support includes 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?

7. Submitting the Application

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



Please contact Dr. Catherine Cordova, Director of Community Engaged Learning, cgc77@pitt.edu with any questions.

This award is generously funded by David C. Frederick, Honors alum ('83) and Pitt's first Rhodes Scholar. He also earned his PhD at Oxford and his JD at the University of Texas. He is as an appellate attorney in Washington, D.C., and has notably argued more than 50 cases before the U.S. Supreme Court. He has advocated for the public and communities in several high-profile cases and established this award to inspire and enable more undergraduates to enhance their careers in public service.