MPOWER COVID-19 RESPONSE FUND
Application Guidelines

The Joint Steering Council of the University of Maryland Strategic Partnership: *MPowering the State (MPower)* invites proposals from collaborators at the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) and the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

MPower is a collaboration between the state of Maryland's two most powerful public research engines: UMB and UMCP to strengthen and serve the state of Maryland and its citizens.

Since its creation in 2012, MPower has fostered hundreds of collaborations from across both institutions that are growing Maryland's innovation economy, advancing interdisciplinary research, increasing educational benefits, and addressing the state's most critical issues.

COVID-19 Pandemic: The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in unprecedented challenges to our communities and healthcare system. The ongoing impact of the virus' transmission throughout the population, including Maryland communities and health systems, is expected to continue through 2020.

The MPower COVID-19 Response Fund is designed to be a strategic and agile mechanism that supports innovative, responsive, high-impact projects. ***Funded projects should aim to improve the health of the people of Maryland by reducing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic through scientific, medical, public health,* social, behavioral, or policy/legal *approaches and/or by supporting those most at risk or experiencing the greatest disparities in care.***

Successful proposals will aim to reduce the impacts of COVID-19 (and/or future viruses or pandemics), by addressing the impact of the virus from a medical, scientific, public health or social, behavioral, or policy perspective. ***Proposals taking immediate action to address the COVID-19 pandemic are encouraged as are efforts to better understand and prepare for future pandemics.***

MPower will provide up to $500K in total funding to support faculty projects with investigators from both UMCP and UMB.

A Principal Investigator (PI) must have an appointment as a UMB or UMCP faculty member. Proposals must feature at least one PI or CO-PI from each institution. It is expected that MPower funding will be used to obtain data or information for larger follow-on proposals to external funding agencies, including NIH, CDC, DARPA, or other external funding sources. It is expected that at least one proposal will be submitted to an external funding agency (ideally within one year of the award) directly as a result of this specific funded collaboration.

Examples of eligible faculty-led projects include:

- A novel idea or approach to address, contain or understand COVID-19 (or future pandemics)
- Development of novel/improved pharmacological and non-pharmacological device or treatment approaches
- Advancing clinical knowledge, improved diagnosis or management of COVID-19
- Advancing knowledge regarding health policy or healthcare delivery issues related to COVID-19 (or subsequent pandemics)
- Innovative training and development of healthcare professionals and/or biomedical scientists to better address statewide needs and healthcare practice to address the COVID-19 (or a subsequent) pandemic
- Development of innovative models of patient care to improve COVID-19 outcomes (or to prepare for future pandemics)
- Projects that examine issues such as social inequities, civil liberties, and constitutional issues associated with the pandemic and society's response to it.

Funding Scope and Duration

Award amounts will range between $25,000 and $100,000 based on proposed budgets for a duration no longer than 12 months. Carry forward of funds at the end of the project will not be allowed. The exact number of awards and awarded amounts will be determined based upon the merit of the proposals received and the funding amount requested by successful applicants.

Submission and Review Dates

Request for Proposals released	May 15, 2020
Applications due	June 8, 2020
Applications reviewed	June 2020
Notify applicants of award decisions	July 2020
Anticipated award start date	July 15, 2020

Review Process

Each submitted proposal will be evaluated, reviewed and scored by two faculty members: one from UMB and a second from UMCP. The reviews will be provided to the MPower Steering Council. The Council will make all final funding decisions.

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

● Proposed innovation addresses the COVID-19 pandemic; has outstanding rigor, merit and significant societal impact
● Describes plans to improve the health of the people of Maryland by lessening the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic through scientific, medical, or public health approaches and/or by supporting those most at risk or experiencing the greatest disparities in care
● Strength of the proposed team members and ability to successfully execute proposed work plan
● Informs or enhances pandemic preparedness and responses.
● Likelihood of attracting outside funding in the future.

Application Guidelines

Timeline, Budget:

The proposals should provide a specific targeted timeline by which objectives can be reasonably achieved. The proposal should provide a budget that adequately reflects the intended use of the funds with respect to the proposed objectives.

A proposal must contain the items outlined below, under the page limitations provided. Proposals failing to meet these guidelines will not be considered for funding. Applications are due by 5pm June 8, 2020. Receipt of applications to this RFP will be conducted by UMCP's Division of Research on behalf of MPower.

To submit an application go to https://umd.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1814171

In addition to providing general information within the application portal (PI(s) info, title, abstract), please upload the following components as one PDF:

- Proposed Research (3-5 single space pages) including:
  - Overall aims:
    - Describe the overall strategy, methodology and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed and interpreted, as well as any resource sharing plans, as appropriate.
  - Project Description:
    - Project plan, expected outcomes
    - Describe the public health relevance of the project, its significance and innovation:
      - Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge and/or technical capability
      - Describe how the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services or preventative interventions that drive this field will be changed if the proposed aims are achieved
      - Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or intervention(s) to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation or intervention(s)
- Budget & Budget Justification (limit to 2 pages)
  - Total amount of Funds being requested and expected timeframe of project
    - be fully justified, reasonable and clearly related to the project's goals
    - reflect the activities/tasks listed in the proposal
  - Identified Future Funding Source - **be explicit;** please detail which programs in which agencies will be targeted for a future application
- Lead PIs CV/Biosketches

Allowable Expenses

Funds must be used for project-related costs, such as (but not limited to):
- Salary support for a temporary position, such as technicians, research associates (post-docs) and/or graduate students
- Research supplies, such as but not limited to, participant costs, equipment, etc.
- Salary support for PIs/CoPIs must be well justified for consideration

Expenses Not Allowed

Funds may not be used for expenses like the following:
- Indirect overhead and administrative costs, as secretarial support, general telephone services and postage

- Alterations or renovations of laboratory space
- Purchase of laboratory or office furniture
- Purchase of periodicals and books
- Dues and memberships in scientific societies

Assistance & Questions

For questions about this program, please contact Adrianne Arthur (aarthur@umaryland.edu), Executive Director, University of Maryland Strategic Partnership: MPower, or Eric Chapman, Associate Vice President for Research, UMCP (echapman@umd.edu). Technical questions about InfoReady and the application submission portal should be addressed to Hana Kabashi, UMCP (hkabashi@umd.edu).

Reporting Requirements

MPower COVID-19 Response Fund awardees will be asked to provide periodic updates on the status and progress of their award. Adrianne Arthur, Executive Director, University of Maryland Strategic Partnership: MPower will provide specific guidance to awardees subsequent to award notification.

Joint Steering Council Members
University of Maryland Strategic Partnership: MPower

Michele Eastman, MA, MEd, Assistant President and Chief of Staff, UMCP

Laurie Locascio, PhD, Vice President for Research, University of Maryland

Mary Ann Rankin, PhD, Senior Vice President and Provost, UMCP

Roger Ward, EdD, JD, MSL, MPA, Interim Provost, Executive Vice President, and Dean of the Graduate School, UMB

MPower Maryland