

George Family Innovation Fund - Request for Proposals

Morrison Family College of Health

JANUARY 2024

Key dates

January 5, 2024	Request for Proposals (RFP) released
February 9, 2024	Final day to submit questions
February 29, 2024	Proposals due
April 1, 2024	Anticipated grant start date



1. Overview

The Morrison Family College of Health (MFCOH) is releasing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to award George Family Innovation Fund grants. The George Family Innovation Fund is intended to provide support for research and projects to explore, test, and learn from new ideas that may inform improvements to service-delivery, increase knowledge, or reduce barriers to accessing care, always with the aim of advancing health equity through whole-person care.

The Innovation Fund reflects the following values and guiding principles of MFCOH:

- **Whole-Person Health.** Ideal projects will consider multiple aspects of health and well-being: physical, mental, spiritual, and social.
- **Equity.** Ideal projects should recognize the unique needs, values, and priorities of communities to be engaged in or served by the projects and contribute to efforts that can reduce or eliminate barriers to care.
- **Innovation.** While expansion or adaptations of existing programs will be considered, the Innovation Fund will prioritize work to develop and implement new service delivery approaches.
- **Collaboration.** Projects that demonstrate collaboration across disciplines/sectors will be prioritized.

KEY DEFINITIONS

Whole-person health considers the many factors that contribute to health and mental, physical, spiritual, and social wellbeing. It means supporting individuals, families, communities, and populations to achieve optimal health by providing culturally responsive, person-centered care. It also requires a commitment to understanding and addressing the underlying social, political, economic, and environmental issues that contribute to disparities in opportunity and inequitable health outcomes. Whole-person health extends care beyond the treatment of illness or injury to restore all aspects of health, promote resilience, optimize wellbeing, and advance health equity.

- *Adapted from National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NIH)*

Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.

- *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*

Key timelines. Innovation Fund applications will open January 5, 2024. Applications will be accepted through February 29, 2024. Awards will be announced in March 2024 with grants anticipated to begin by April 1, 2024. Grantees may propose projects of up to 18 months (ending by September 30, 2025). Grantees will be asked to submit a final report and evaluation, using a provided template, within one month of the project completion date. Grantees will also be asked to briefly present their project goals, early impacts, and lessons learned at a MFCOH event (format TBD).

Funding available. A total of \$50,000 will be awarded to an estimated 5-7 organizations. Applicants may submit proposals for up to \$10,000.

2. Eligible applicants

This grant opportunity is available to community nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, social service organizations, Tribal governments, and community clinics located and serving communities in Minnesota. Applicants may, but are not required to, partner with University of St. Thomas (UST) faculty and staff to design and implement their proposed project. Each organization can submit only one proposal.

3. Examples of eligible projects

The Innovation Fund is intended to provide organizations with opportunities to explore, test, and learn from new ideas that aim to advance health equity through whole-person care. Innovation fund projects can seed something new or build on already established programs. Examples of some types of projects that could receive Innovation Fund awards are listed below. (NOTE: This list is intended to provide examples. Proposals for other project ideas are encouraged.)

- Developing and piloting a holistic assessment approach for new clients served by a community-based human services organization.
- Hosting a series of intergenerational learning sessions to inform strategies for integrating traditional healing practices into prenatal and postnatal care visits.
- Engaging with clients to create a patient-centered discharge planning and home-visiting model for clients returning home after a residential treatment stay.
- Creating and evaluating pilot program where mindfulness and movement practices are integrated into employee meetings to support well-being.
- Translating and expanding use of an existing screening tool to understand social and cultural factors that influence an interconnected aspect of mental, physical, social, or spiritual health.
- Conducting research to better understand the relationship between social media use and feelings of connection and belonging among young adults.
- Co-developing an intervention with a faculty member to improve spiritual health and well-being for the community served by the applicant's organization.

4. Eligible and ineligible expenses

Funds may be used for program and personnel costs to support work that will be completed during the grant period. (UST faculty or staff submitting proposals in collaboration with a community partner may allocate funds towards faculty, staff, or student worker time, following UST budgeting practices.)

Ineligible expenses include:

- Fundraising
- Lobbying, political contributions, voter registration drives¹
- Capital improvements
- Direct cash assistance to individuals to meet a personal or family need

¹ Funds may not be used to influence legislation of any kind, by any governmental body, or by means of a public vote. This includes directly contacting a legislator or any other governmental official or employee for the purpose of influencing legislation or attempting to affect the opinions of the general public about legislation.

5. Evaluation and reporting

Applicants who receive Innovation Fund awards will be asked to submit a brief final report, using a form developed in collaboration with the MFCOH Director of Health Equity Program Development. The report will focus on describing progress related to the goals identified by the applicant in the proposal, implementation challenges, and planned post-grant activities. Grantees will be asked to review and provide comment to the reporting form during the first quarter of the grant period (April – June). Applicants are not required to allocate a percentage of their funds towards evaluation.

6. Application submission

Applications must be submitted through an online questionnaire, available here: <https://health.stthomas.edu/info-for/community-partners/innovation-fund-grant/index.html>. The questions to be answered are included in Section 9 of this RFP. The submitted budget form, also shown as an example in Section 9, should include lines for staff salary, contractual services, and supplies. Additional rows may be added to include other grant-related costs that do not fall within these categories. The budget narrative should provide a brief description of how the requested funds will be used to meet the identified project goals. UST faculty/staff-led applications must include a Letter of Support from the community partner describing the planned partnership which does not count towards the proposal page limit.

7. Application review and selection

All applications received by the deadline will be reviewed by a committee of UST faculty/staff and community advisors. MFCOH staff will be responsible for the final award decisions.

Applications will be reviewed and scored on a 5-point scale using the following criteria:

Rating category	Description	Rating
Need	The proposed project addresses or explores a pressing need	
Whole-person health	The project goals and objectives will address health and well-being holistically	
Innovation	The proposed project explores a new idea or offers an innovative strategy for expanding a promising approach/best practice to have greater impact or broader reach.	
Equity	The proposed project will benefit communities currently under-resourced and/or experiencing inequitable health outcomes due to systemic bias, discrimination, or exclusion	
Impact	The proposed project will lead to new learnings that can inform future instruction, research, service delivery, or community action	
Collaboration	The proposed project demonstrates coordination of services across sectors to support whole-person health	
Feasibility	The proposed project activities and timelines are feasible to implement within the grant period	
Budget	The rationale for the proposed project budget is clearly described and seems reasonable	
Sustainability	The proposal describes how lessons learned from the project can be sustained beyond the grant and/or inform future efforts	
Addresses criteria	For MFCOH faculty/staff-led applications - The proposal involves a community partner	Yes/No

Awards are expected to be announced in March 2024. All applicants will receive an email communication confirming whether or not they were selected to receive an award. In the event of delays in the review process, applicants will receive an email communication with an updated notification date.

8. Questions

Questions regarding this RFP can be submitted to the following email: WholePersonHealth@stthomas.edu. Please type “Question - Innovation Fund RFP” in the subject line of your email when submitting questions.

Questions will be accepted through February 9, 2024. Questions will be answered as received. The answers to all submitted questions will be made available by February 16, 2024 on the Innovation Fund application website (<https://health.stthomas.edu/info-for/community-partners/innovation-fund-grant/index.html>).

9. Proposal Submission Form

The proposal submission form is included on page 5 of this RFP and will be available on the Innovation Fund application website (<https://health.stthomas.edu/info-for/community-partners/innovation-fund-grant/index.html>). **While the application fields do not have word limits, applicants are encouraged to provide succinct responses to each question.** The proposal submission form includes an option for uploading a document instead of entering directly into the online fields. Applicants choosing to upload a proposal should clearly structure the proposal to follow the template below and respond to all application questions. Proposal narratives should not exceed four pages. A budget summary may be submitted as a separate document and does not count towards the page limit.

Innovation Fund Grant Proposal Submission Form

Project Title:

Project Lead(s) (name, title, affiliation):

Email:

Applicant Organization:

List any project partners (i.e., organizations, consultants):

Background

1. Is your project a new effort, an expansion, or a continuation of current efforts?
2. What is the need, challenge, or opportunity that you are trying to address through your proposed project?
3. What is the community or population likely to be impacted (directly or indirectly) by your project? [NOTE: Populations may be defined by culture, geography, health concern, age, etc.] If applicable, how will this community/population be involved in your project?

Activities and impacts

4. What are the primary goals of your proposed project (list up to 3)?
5. Describe your planned project activities.
6. What accomplishments or outcomes will demonstrate your project's success during the grant period?
7. How do you see your proposed project leading to new learnings that can inform future instruction, research, service delivery, or community action?
8. How do you envision your project being sustained or informing future efforts after the grant period?

Budget

Total budget request: _____

Budget Summary (The sum of all categories should equal the total budget request)

	Funds requested
Salaries	
Contracted services	
Project supplies	
Other expenses	

Budget narrative. Provide a description and brief justification for each category.

- Salaries
- Contracted services
- Project supplies
- Other expenses

If submitting a proposal in partnership with another organization, please submit a Letter of Support from that organization describing the planned collaboration.

About the Morrison Family College of Health

The Morrison Family College of Health – including the Susan S. Morrison School of Nursing, the Department of Health and Exercise Science, the School of Social Work, and the Graduate School of Professional Psychology – educates leaders to reimagine how we address the needs of the whole person and advance health equity. We are committed to addressing the shortage of culturally responsive health professionals who practice with social ingenuity and clinical excellence to improve health and community well-being while proactively advancing health equity and social justice.

The Morrison Family College of Health is guided by the University of St. Thomas' mission to educate morally responsible leaders who think critically, act wisely, and work skillfully to advance the common good.

For more information: www.health.stthomas.edu.