



**UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP
MPOWERING THE STATE**

Notice of NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
MPower 2021 Seed Grant Challenge**

Issue Date: June 30, 2021

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 issues of paramount importance to the state of Maryland and the nation. To be considered, research proposals should 1) promote and further the strategic, collaborative research between UMB and UMCP; 2) have potential to provide a powerful influence on the research area; and 3) be likely to result in external funding.

2021 MPower Seed Grant Themes

The Joint Steering Council welcomes submissions that respond to the following themes:

1. Pandemic Readiness, Resilience, and Mitigation
2. Racial and Social Justice
3. AI + Medicine
4. Neuroscience and Aging
5. Violence and Crime Reduction
6. Cybersecurity, Homeland Security

Funding and Durations

Funding up to \$3 million (total) has been earmarked to support multiple large and small projects, with varying durations. Small projects will receive support up to \$50,000 each for a term of no more than six months; large projects will be considered for funding up to \$250,000 each for durations no longer than 24 months. The number of grants awarded will be determined based on the size of the awards.

Requirements for All Programs Funded by MPower

- Teams must have joint leadership with one Principal Investigator (PI) from UMB and UMCP.
- The proposed research project must address a) a problem in one of the identified Themes, and b) demonstrate outstanding rigor, merit and significant societal impact.
- It is expected that each funded project will submit at least one proposal to an external funding agency or foundation (ideally within one year of the award) directly as a result of this specific funded collaboration.
- Proposers should demonstrate how their teams' individual components will work in collaboration, harnessing the complementary missions of UMB and UMCP, to bring about results that would not be attainable or would be difficult to achieve if UMB and UMCP acted independently of each other.

Reporting Requirements

Awardees are required to provide periodic updates on the status and progress of the award, which will include the submission of an annual, detailed, joint report on how funds were used, and a description of outcomes and accomplishments. Guidance will be provided upon award.

Selection and Award

This is a multi-step proposal process. UMB and UMCP peer evaluators will review and rank all proposals and make recommendations to the MPower Steering Council. Awards are expected to be made in February 2022. The anticipated start date for awarded projects is mid-February 2022.

Questions

Please submit questions to Adrienne Arthur, Executive Director, University of Maryland Strategic Partnership: *MPowering the State* at aarthur@umaryland.edu.

Overview of the Proposal Submission Process: Key Actions and Dates

Submissions will follow a three-step process as defined below.

1. NOTICE of INTENT TO SUBMIT
Due August 2, 2021

Before August 2, 2021, 6 pm, interested teams should provide Notice of Intent to Submit a Step 1 Proposal by sending an email to Mpower@umaryland.edu

Within the body of the email, please provide the following three pieces of information in this order:

1. Intended theme (see page 1 for list)
2. Lead Principal Investigators' names – one each from UMB and UMCP.
3. Working title for your proposal.

2. STEP 1 PROPOSALS
Due September 8 -22, 2021

***** An online portal is currently in development to receive Step 1 Proposals. A site address to submit Step 1 Proposals will be emailed in August 2021 to all who have emailed their Notice of Intent to Submit. (See above) *****

Step 1 Proposal due dates are based on Theme: See Pages 4-6 of this document for submission requirements and due date by Theme. Complete the required fields and submit Step 1 Proposal documents by uploading a brief, two-page PDF to the MPower seed grant portal. *See note above: this site address will be shared in August 2021 to all that provide Notice of Intent to Submit.*

Step 1 Proposal Shortlist Announcement

*UMB and UMCP peer evaluators will review and rank Step 1 Proposals by Theme. On or about **October 20, 2021**, shortlisted teams will begin to be notified, and will be invited to submit Step 2 Proposals. At that time, shortlisted teams will receive an RFP for the Step 2 Proposal.*

3. STEP 2 PROPOSALS
Due December 13, 2021

Teams shortlisted from the Step 1 Proposal submission will receive an RFP for a Step 2 Proposal. Step 2 Proposals will require responses that are more detailed concerning project goals, impacts, and scientific or societal relevance, as well as information on the proposed team (including CVs), budget, schedule, and planned, future, external funding sources.

Before 6 pm on December 13, 2021, shortlisted teams should submit Step 2 Proposals by uploading documents to the MPower seed grant portal. The site location to upload documents will be shared along with the RFP for the Step 2 Proposal.

Award Announcement and Anticipated Start Date

UMB and UMCP peer evaluators will review and rank Step 2 Proposals by Theme. In February 2022, selected teams will be notified of award by email. Projects should anticipate a start date of mid-February 2022.

*** Dates may be extended ***

STEP 1 PROPOSALS: What to Prepare and Submit

An online portal is currently in development to receive Step 1 Proposals, however, the specific requirements for submissions are outlined below so that teams may organize now, and prepare materials in a PDF for uploading later. A site address for submitting Step 1 Proposals will be emailed in August 2021 to teams who emailed their Notice of Intent to Submit – see page 2 for directions.

Step 1 Proposal Submittal Details

Teams who complete the Notice of Intent to Submit (see page 2) will receive a site location to submit a Step 1 Proposal. The due dates will be staggered. Step 1 Proposal documents will be required to be uploaded as a PDF no later than 6 pm on the date identified below, by Theme.

DUE DATE	THEME
Due September 8:	Pandemic Readiness, Resilience, and Mitigation
Due September 8:	Racial and Social Justice
Due September 15:	AI + Medicine
Due September 15:	Neuroscience and Aging

DUE DATE	THEME
Due September 22:	Violence and Crime Reduction
Due September 22:	Cybersecurity, Homeland Security

PROPOSED LEADERSHIP

Identify Project Investigators – one each from UMB and UMCP. PIs must have an appointment as a UMB or UMCP faculty member. The on-line portal will link to the UMB and UMCP directories, which will allow certain contact information to be pre-populated (e.g., title, department, school, email, phone).

1. UMB Project Investigator
2. UMCP Project Investigator

THEME

Identify **one** Theme per submission. A drop down menu will allow you to select a Theme.

- Pandemic Readiness, Resilience, and Mitigation
- Racial and Social Justice
- AI + Medicine
- Neuroscience and Aging
- Violence and Crime Reduction
- Cybersecurity, Homeland Security

IDENTIFY PROJECT TITLE AND KEY WORD DESCRIPTORS

Provide a project title and key word descriptors to identify your Proposal. The on-line portal will include fields to populate as described below:

Project title: _____
(250 character limit)

Key words:
Provide three key words that best describe your Proposal’s discipline and subject areas.
_____ (character limit of 30 per word)

ENTER ESTIMATED PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST AND ANTICIPATED PROJECT SCHEDULE

Provide an estimated dollar amount of the request; and provide an anticipated project term in months. The on-line portal will include fields to populate as described below:

Estimated Project Budget: \$ _____

Anticipated Schedule: _____ (enter anticipated number of months).
Terms may range from as short as 6 months and as long as 24 months.

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Upload a *one-page* Project Abstract that addresses, at a minimum, the following topics:

- *Purpose, benefits, impact, outcomes.*
 - *Why is this a good idea?*
 - *Why is the problem important?*
 - *Why is your approach worthy of investment?*
- *Identify team members and describe involvement of individuals, Schools/Colleges.*
- *Describe how the team members will collaborate to bring about results not attainable or difficult to achieve if UMB and UMCP acted independently of each other.*
- *Describe any challenges to success.*
- *Discuss the planned sustainability beyond this funding.*

BUDGET & SCHEDULE

Upload a *one-page* explanation that provides the following information:

- Provide a high level budget request, with a general description of how funding will be used. Project funding may range from \$50,000 for small projects to up to \$250,000 for large projects.
- Provide a proposed schedule. (*For small projects, anticipate a 6-12 month term; for larger projects anticipate a 12-24 month schedule*)

STEP 2 PROPOSALS: What to Prepare and Submit

Step 2 Proposal Submittal Details

** By Invitation Only**

UMB and UMCP peer evaluators will review Step 1 Proposal submissions and provide rankings and recommendations to the MPower Steering Council.

On or about October 20, 2021, shortlisted teams will be invited to submit Step 2 Proposals, and the teams will be issued a Step 2 Proposal RFP, along with the site location to upload documents.

- The Step 2 Proposal RFP will require the presentation of project goals, impacts, and scientific or societal relevance, as well as detail on the proposed team (including CVs), budget, schedule, and planned, future external funding applications.
- Before 6 pm on December 13, Step 2 Proposals will be due. A PDF document should be uploaded to the MPower seed grant portal. The site location will be shared with the RFP for Step 2 Proposals.

*** Dates may be extended ***

About the University of Maryland Strategic Partnership: *MPowering the State*

The University of Maryland Strategic Partnership: MPowering the State (MPower) is a collaboration between UMB and UMCP, Maryland's two most powerful public research engines. The partnership is charged with strengthening and serving 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.