

Illinois Innovation Network
Supplemental Seed Funding Guidelines
Social Innovation and Impact (“SII”) Seed Grants - Summer 2023
June 1, 2023

The University of Illinois System, its Office of the Vice President for Economic Development and Innovation (OVPEDI) is committed to advancing the Illinois Innovation Network (IIN) by providing supplemental (operational) funding for several projects. IIN members are guided by the following principles:

- Drive inclusive innovation, equitable workforce development and sustainable economic growth throughout the state of Illinois
- Assess and meet regional needs through a combination of collaborative research, public-private partnerships, and entrepreneurship and training programs
- Collaborate with hubs across the state and share best practices
- Advocate for the value of higher education at the state and national levels

IIN hubs are encouraged to partner/collaborate with each other and the IIN will do its best to support and facilitate. As an organization, the IIN Council will facilitate collaboration that can be incorporated into a unifying theme with the umbrella concept of “*Social Innovation and Impact.*” *Social Innovation and Impact* has multiple meanings, including the broad economic, health-related, and social well-being of the state and its communities, and environmental sustainability of its food and water ecosystem, which includes addressing issues affecting groups who are underserved, under-represented, or under-resourced.

The *Social Innovation and Impact* projects may include capacity-building, applied research, evaluation, community-based participatory research, coalition building, social entrepreneurship, utilization of research and transfer, scholarship to practice, technical assistance, etc. Complex social problems generally involve interdisciplinary groups and multiple sectors. While for many that has meant demonstrating the impact on job creation and economic development, the spotlight is now extending to social innovation that translates research into projects that directly affect lives, address critical social problems, and build trusted partnerships in the community. Examples of this transformative work include proposals addressing health disparities, affordable housing, digital inclusion, and food deserts.

Within *Social Innovation and Impact*, these are potential themes or areas of interest for the project:

- (a) **Education and Workforce Development:** developing and sustaining the education of its citizens and developing a productive and inclusive workforce for the 21st century;
- (b) **Economic Development:** sustaining and developing the economy of the state, including understanding how best to support the growth of diverse entrepreneurship, business formation and non-profit capacity-building in Illinois;
- (c) **Health and Wellness:** sustaining and improving the general health and social wellness of all Illinois citizens, including local and regional communities.
- (d) **Water, Food, and Agriculture:** sustaining the water supply, with 20% of the world’s freshwater supply in the shores of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basin, the largest in the U.S. and 2nd largest in the world, and enhancing the home to a national leader in food and agriculture;
- (e) **Computing and Data:** under the umbrella of *Social Innovation and Impact*, there is a foundation of computing, big data, and artificial intelligence. This is an important area in its own right as Illinois

develops its high- tech industry, but in this context, it is seen as an enabler for all other aspects of sustainability as articulated above;

(f) **Arts and Humanities:** creating community arts or historical projects that orchestrate social action like documentaries, built environmental beautification, preservation of landscape, mural projects, documentaries, and similar projects to celebrate the health and cultural wealth of communities and create change through the arts;

(g) **Social Justice:** fostering racial justice, compassionate immigration, community policing, reduction of recidivism, access to critical services, etc.; and

(h) **Other:** could be a combination of themes or an area of focus within social innovation and impact not listed above.

Additional criteria should be incorporated into the proposal:

(a) **Organizational Capacity:** identify approaches to increase organizational capacity or to otherwise provide organizational assistance for community-based organization(s) (e.g., scaling, coordination, entrepreneurship, technical assistance with research and grant writing, etc.) for community-based organization(s).

(b) **Sustainability Plan:** identify how the programming will continue after the seed funding ends.

(c) **IIN Hubs Collaboration:** detail how the project will collaborate with another hub at the time of application or, if no other hub is previously engaged, how the project will potentially collaborate with another hub or community-based organization in another hub area during the grant period.

Eligibility:

- Lead PI must be from an IIN Hub in their official IIN hub role.
- Projects must also include a collaborator from at least one community-based organization.
- An individual may only submit one competitive application regardless of role as PI or co-PI. There is no limit on the number of individuals submitting proposals from any one Hub.
- Project must represent a “seed” concept not previously funded by the IIN Sustaining Illinois Program or in later stages of project development, regardless of "seed" funding source.
- The project must be completed within one year of funding.
- Preference will be given to new projects, including those not submitted more than 3 times in a 3-year period to the Sustaining Illinois Seed Grant Program.

Awarding of funding for projects will be considered according to the following criteria:

- *Social Innovation and Impact* must be the dominant theme.
- Proposals addressing multiple social innovation and impact elements are preferred.
- Interdisciplinary and multi-sector projects are also preferred.
- Equity, diversity, and inclusion must be addressed in all proposals. Key issues facing underserved, under-represented, and under-resourced groups should be identified and addressed. The target populations or representative group(s) must be specifically identified. Additional information is located in the appendix.
- The project name, scope of work, budget, and timeline must be provided. See attached document for additional details.

- The role and significance of collaborating organizations, including community-based organization(s), must be identified.

Funding:

Total funding will likely not exceed \$60,000 and this funding will likely be limited to no more than \$60,000 from the University of Illinois System office in FY 2023. Funds not expended will be available for the fall 2023 application cycle.

- Up to \$30,000 will be available for each project. Match of least 50% is strongly encouraged. Matching funds may be in the form of cash, personnel time, or unrecovered indirect costs.
- No more than 30% of the requested funds may pay for full-time researchers'/professors' salaries and benefits.
- Funding for these projects does not allow for indirect costs; however, these costs can be used as matching.
- Funds will be advanced on a fixed price agreement.

Deliverables:

- A written report must be submitted electronically to the University of Illinois System OVPEDI six (6) months after the project starts and upon completion of the project.
- Interim reports and information must be submitted upon request.
- Lead PI and Co-PIs commit to present their project to the IIN and to participate in related IIN events as requested.
- Lead PI and Co-PIs commit to acknowledge IIN in outcomes and reports with the following statement or something similar: "This material is based upon work supported by the Illinois Innovation Network".
- Lead PI and Co-PIs commit to notify the IIN of publications and follow-on funding achieved resulting from this grant.
- Lead PI and Co-PIs commit to complete any funding documentation within the timelines set forth by the IIN and the University of Illinois System.

Submission:

Proposals will be accepted to the OVPEDI office via email at iincontact@uillinois.edu no later than 11:59 P.M. Central Time on June 20, 2023. Any questions should be submitted to iincontact@uillinois.edu prior to the deadline.

A review committee consisting of members of the IIN, including its Council, Committees, and OVPEDI or IIN staff, as needed, will evaluate all proposals received and will make recommendations to the University of Illinois Vice President of Economic Development and Innovation for funding. No IIN member will review submissions or make recommendations on proposals from its own hub.

Recipients of the awards will be notified no later than June 30, 2023.

**Illinois Innovation Network
Supplemental Funding Guidelines
Sustaining Illinois Social Innovation and Impact**

Proposal Outline

1. Cover page (Project Name, Lead Researcher with contact information, Co- Principal Investigators with contact information)
2. Social Innovation and Impact Abstract (no more than 250 words)
3. Project Description (no more than 2 pages, single-spaced, 12 font)
4. Scope of Work (no more than 1 page, single-spaced, 12 font) – note that only page 1 will be read from any submissions of longer than 1 page
5. If applicable, results from previous award and distinction of current proposal from previous award (no more than 1 page, single-spaced, 12 font)
6. Describe potential for future work and sources of follow-up funding (no more than one-half page)
7. Team bios (no more than one-half page per team member)
8. Budget (if matching funds, include here, no more than 2 pages, single-spaced, 12 font). Refer to the budget template on the following page. If University of Illinois Chicago, the University of Illinois Springfield, or the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign will receive funding as a collaborating organization, then up to 3 pages are allowed.

**Illinois Innovation Network
Budget Template for Supplemental Funding**

Category	Funding Request *	Match Provided
A. Personnel		
B. Fringe Benefits		
C. Travel		
D. Equipment		
E. Supplies		
F. Other* (Specify)		
G. Total		

Provide a written summary of the budget:

- A. Personnel:
- B. Fringe Benefits:
- C. Travel:
- D. Equipment:
- E. Supplies:
- F. Other (Must be specific):
- G. Match (Detail all sources):
- H. *Funding for UIUC, UIC, or UIS (specify recipient and amount):

*As noted above, please provide a separate budget page for collaborative funding directed to the University of Illinois Chicago, the University of Illinois Springfield, or the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

**Illinois Innovation Network
Scoring Matrix for Supplemental Funding**

The chart below identifies the area of review and total points maximum for each area of review. In addition, the strengths and weaknesses will be identified for each proposal.

Proposal Section	Evaluation Points*	Total Max Points	Total Score**
A. Project and activity alignment with IIN principles (equity)		10	
B. Project addresses Social Innovation and Impact area(s)		10	
C. Scope of work		10	
D. Collaboration component with community-based organization(s), other hubs, and/areas throughout Illinois		10	
E. Budget/Matching Funds		5	
F. Demonstrates potential for sustainably funding further work		5	

*Evaluation Points 1=lowest, 10=highest

**Total Score = Evaluation Points

TOTAL: 50 Maximum Points _____

Illinois Innovation Network
Appendix to Supplemental Funding RFP

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Focus:

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion discussion should address at least one of the under-represented, underserved, and under-resourced groups, which include, but not are not limited to:

- Women
- Rural Residents
- People of Color
- Individuals with Disabilities - both cognitive and physical
- Veterans
- Justice-impacted Populations
- Immigrant Populations
- LGBTQIA+ Community
- Homeless and Homeless Youth
- Low-Income and Lower-Income Individuals
- Foster Care Youth and Alumni
- Migrant and Seasonal Workers
- Recipients of public assistance
- Individuals who are basic skills deficient

Intersectional approaches and groups should be identified specifically.