



HEALTH EQUITY ROUNDTABLE

INNOVATION FOR EVERYONE

PhRMA Collaborative Actions to Reach Equity (CAREs) Grant: *Addressing Inequities in Access to COVID-19 Testing, Therapeutics, and Vaccines*

The biopharmaceutical industry has made unprecedented rapid progress in advancing treatments and vaccines to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic. The industry's deep commitment to end this public health emergency, using decades of experience and learnings in coronaviruses, have given the world hope that science will help us move forward towards ending the pandemic.

But science can only take us part of the way there if all individuals cannot benefit from treatments and vaccines equitably. From the pandemic's early onset, data have shown that economically deprived neighborhoods have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.ⁱ Rooted in racism and structural inequalities, Black, Brown, and underserved populations have experienced greater mortality from the virus.^{ii,iii}

Long-standing health inequities in the U.S., brought into stark relief by the pandemic, are evident in racial and ethnic disparities in COVID-19 testing, therapeutics, and vaccine use. As of March 2021, the vaccination rate of Black people in the U.S. was half that of white people, with an even greater disparity for Hispanic people.^{iv} On the economic front, Black and Hispanic women have not recovered from declines in employment and workforce participation since the start of the pandemic.^v Lack of access to COVID-19 testing sites has been well documented across many economically deprived majority Black and Hispanic neighborhoods in major cities.^{vii,viii} Likewise, many COVID-19 vaccination sites are located in predominately white neighborhoods, compounding access issues for populations with barriers, such as lack of transportation and time off work, to reach distanced clinics.^{ix}

At PhRMA, we believe addressing these inequities at the rapid pace needed to combat the pandemic requires connecting with and learning from communities that are experiencing inequities, especially in areas where health disparities have been exacerbated by COVID-19. We seek to empower community-based real-world solutions to address systemic barriers to equitable access to COVID-19 testing, therapeutics, and vaccines. Recognizing that each community faces unique barriers, PhRMA aims to develop community-centered solutions, such as those deployed by health equity advocates, to meet this urgent crisis.

PhRMA is soliciting proposals for grant funding that can be used to enhance efforts to **improve equity in access to testing, therapeutics and vaccines in communities hardest hit by COVID-19**. Funding can be used to support ongoing or proposed community-based efforts as well as dissemination of lessons learned along the way to promote adoption of best practices in other communities across the country disadvantaged by the pandemic.

Eligibility:

- Open to all organizations and individuals in the U.S. seeking to or currently engaging in community or national efforts or research to advance health equity
- Preference will be given to applicants representing historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), community organizations, faith-based organizations, businesses, and academic institutions with a history of providing resources and/or services to communities impacted by structural racism and discrimination

How to Apply:

Applications for the PhRMA CAREs Grant, *Addressing Inequities in Access to COVID-19, Testing, Therapeutics and Vaccines*, are open and will be accepted on a rolling basis until June 1, 2021 at 11:59pm EST. Applicants must submit a proposal with:

1. Description of proposed or ongoing effort to improve equity in COVID-19 vaccine, testing, or therapeutics distribution (500 word maximum)
2. Proposed venues or communities to target for supporting adoption of best practices by other communities
3. Description of a paper for public dissemination of how activities utilizing the grant funds can inform “best practices” toward scalable, practical interventions that can be applied to other communities, disease states, or public health concerns to advance health equity (150 word maximum).

Additional details in preparing the submission:

1. Title, primary applicant name, and affiliated organization(s) of the applicant should be included in header
2. Name, email, and affiliated organization(s) of award applicant. Please note the name of the Project Lead.
3. Please submit all documentation in a single PDF file

All proposals must be submitted to CAREs@phrma.org by the specified deadline. PhRMA will evaluate all proposals that are submitted in compliance with requirements of this RFP. PhRMA has sole discretion to select the winning proposals.

Applicants with selected proposals will each receive a grant from PhRMA in the range of \$25,000 - \$50,000. The funding must be used to support the development of the paper and the effort to improve equity in COVID-19 vaccine, testing, or therapeutics distribution as described in the proposal, such as for research equipment, conference attendance, salaries, or other related expenses. Use of funding for indirect costs is limited to 20% of the grant. PhRMA has sole discretion over the final funding amount awarded.

Successful applicants receiving CAREs grants must submit an initial progress report to update on efforts within 3 weeks of receipt of the grant and provide additional progress reports as may be requested by PhRMA.

In addition, grantees will be required to participate in activities and submit materials in connection with the CAREs grant, such as, but not limited to:

- Present CAREs grant activities to PhRMA or other health related organizations
- Appear in media campaigns by PhRMA or related entities
- Participate/submit photos, videos, or other media
- A paper for public dissemination describing how the activities undertaken by the grantee can inform “best practices” toward scalable, practical interventions that can be applied to other communities, disease states, or public health concerns to advance health equity

All grantees will be required to enter into consent, license, and release forms provided by PhRMA. These forms will be provided to individuals and organizations following selection.

Learn more about PhRMA’s diversity and equity work [here](#).

ⁱ Grace Hauck, Mark Nichols, Miriam Marini, Andrew Pantazi. Coronavirus spares one neighborhood but ravages the next. Race and class spell the difference. USA Today News. May 2, 2020. (Accessed April 12, 2021)

ⁱⁱ COVID Data Tracker. Centers for Disease and Control. <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#demographics>. Updated April 11, 2021. (Accessed April 12, 2021)

ⁱⁱⁱ Juergen Jung, James Manley, Vinish Shrestha. Coronavirus infections and deaths by poverty status: The effects of social distancing. J Econ Behav Organ. 2021; 182: 311 – 330. doi: 10.1016/j.jebo.2020.12.019

^{iv} Pandemic’s Racial Disparities Persist in Vaccine Rollout. New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/03/05/us/vaccine-racial-disparities.html#methodology>

^v A More Inclusive Economy is Key to Recovery. <https://blog.dol.gov/2021/02/09/a-more-inclusive-economy-is-key-to-recovery>

^{vi} Nate Rattner and Thomas Frank. Black and Hispanic women aren’t sharing in the market recovery. CNBC. March 5, 2021. <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/03/05/black-and-hispanic-women-arent-sharing-in-the-job-market-recovery.html>

^{vii} Chicago Tackles COVID-19 Disparities in Hard-Hit Black and Latino Neighborhoods. NPR. June 9, 2020. <https://www.npr.org/2020/06/09/869074151/chicago-tackles-covid-19-disparities-in-hard-hit-black-and-latino-neighborhoods>

^{viii} Latino, Black Neighborhoods Struggle with Test Disparities. <https://news.wttw.com/2020/07/06/latino-black-neighborhoods-struggle-test-disparities>. July 6, 2020. WTTW.

^{ix} Across the South, COVID-19 Vaccine Sites Missing From Black and Hispanic Neighborhoods. NPR. February 5, 2021. <https://www.npr.org/2021/02/05/962946721/across-the-south-covid-19-vaccine-sites-missing-from-black-and-hispanic-neighbor>