CBPR Partnership Academy: FAQs

Do partners have to be in the metro Detroit area, or can they be located elsewhere?
They do not have to be located in the Detroit area. The key thing regarding geography is that the partners are integrated into the community you want to focus on with the work of your CBPR partnership.

Is an existing coalition an acceptable community partner?
Yes, as long as you haven’t been doing research work together for years. With the Partnership Academy our goal is to foster CBPR relationships. Multiple organizations are not a problem, what is important is that the group as a whole is committed to research and action. With past cohorts larger partnerships selected one community partner and one academic partner to participate in the in-person program and those two people were responsible for bringing that experience back to the partnership as a whole.

If I am working with a state-wide or national group of community organizations should I select one organization to partner with on the application or can we partner with the larger group as a whole?
The key thing to consider, and communicate in your application, is what you are wanting to accomplish as a partnership. Is the partnership focused change at a local level, or are you aiming for more global influence? Bringing about change is critical to CBPR so it comes back to the goals of your partnership. Another approach may be to apply with one organization and use the experience to think about how to build your partnership out to include the larger group.

Can my community partner be a healthcare provider or center?
Absolutely, a Federally Qualified Health Center or local Health Department are great examples of potential community partners. They are often embedded in the community, interacting around issues important to the community, and seen as a community entity and not just a “service provider.

The academic and community partners in my partnership are currently located in different cities. How would I define our “community”?
In defining “community” we consider it a community of identity, not just geography. The shared issues and common priorities and goals of your partnership can also form your “community”.

Can partnerships working in rural areas apply for this program?
Absolutely. The key is that you are in a community context and you and a partner have identified strengths and issues that you want to work on together.

Does the work of the partnership have to be surrounding environmental issues?
In keeping with CBPR principles, our priority is supporting work that is focused on important issues as identified by the community.

Most of the people I work with do not have college degrees, are we still eligible to apply?
We are looking for partners who will be able to engage, be able to take best advantage of the program, and be able to sustain both their own work in the community and the partnership itself. The bachelor’s degree requirement is only one measure of experience and not meant to limit involvement. We have
found, due to the condensed nature of the curriculum, that the program is best suited to partners who have experience in community organized work.

**How are you defining early-stage and established investigators?**
How long you have been an investigator is not the sole defining factor, we welcome both early stage and established investigators. The program is designed to support partners who do not have extensive experience in conducting research using the CBPR approach specifically.

**Information about the program suggests the academic partner must have a doctorate to apply.**
Is there a youth, undergraduate, or master’s degree level application?
The program requires an academic partner who is a faculty member fairly new to a collaborative approach to research. We are less concerned with the educational degree than whether the academic participants are in a position where they will be able to apply the knowledge and skills gained throughout their career to their ongoing research with a CBPR approach.

**My partner and I have gotten funded separately but not together yet. How would we define the “stage” of our partnership?**
The application provides space to tell us your story so we can better understand your partnership development process so far and your goals together. If your partnership is hoping to move forward with a CBPR approach but do not have previous experience in the field you are just the type of “new partnership” we are hoping to bring together as part of the Academy.

**Does the week-long intensive course involve bringing a community partner?**
Yes, the curriculum for the intensive course is designed to support partnership work. Partnerships must commit to bringing one community and one academic partner participate throughout the week.

**Are there funds to support travel and lodging for community partners? How do you support the community partner being able to participate?**
The program is cost-free for participants. In addition to costs, the time commitment involves two virtual forums in June 2021, an in-person (COVID-permitting) shortcourse in Ann Arbor from July 11-16, and monthly ongoing learning activities for the year following the intensive course.

**What is the content of the intensive week-long course in July?**
Please feel free to review the outline of the curriculum available on our website. As you will see, the curriculum focuses on doing research in the context of a CBPR approach. The course materials have been developed by facilitators experienced in this approach and cover how to build, engage in, and evaluate and maintain your partnerships.

**What is the time commitment, outside of the week-long intensive course?**
The structured activities of the program will require 2-5 hours a month.

**What are the funds available for the project grant?**
Academy project grants are for $1500. These funds are often used for partnership development activities that may not be supported through other funding streams or as an opportunity to develop a secondary proposal to secure larger funding elsewhere. Going through the grant process allows partnerships to collaboratively think through their goals for the project year and prepare an application, providing valuable experience in writing and receiving reviews for grant proposals.
How are mentors matched with the teams?
We match teams and mentors based on information provided in your application. This allows each team to begin their mentor relationship during the week-long intensive course and carry it forward throughout the program year.

Can we recommend a mentor?
As a Detroit URC project the Academy selects all mentors from associated partners of the organization.

How have previous participants benefitted from this experience?
Using the experience, and the project grant funding past participants have been able to expand both their partnership to include additional partner organizations and their work within their community, secure grant funding, increase dissemination efforts in public health research publications and within the community context, and apply for faculty positions within their home institutions.
Please feel free to review the program from our Partnership Academy Symposium for an update on the work of past participants.