Rural Innovations Cooperative Agreement Program
Request for Applications

RFA Release Date: January 25, 2021

Application Due Date: March 5, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.
Earliest Anticipated Project Start Date: July 1, 2021

Objective: Support and identify innovative programs and/or strategies that promote and improve health, access to care, or health outcomes for rural patients, populations and/or communities in South Carolina.

Such programs may include, but are not limited to:

- Improving access to or the delivery of healthcare services
- Enhancing the health professions workforce through recruitment, retention, or training
- Partnering with community organizations to improve access to care and care delivery
- Integrating health care and community programs to improve health, access, delivery, and/or outcomes

The Rural Innovations Program is interested in programs that will identify innovative solutions or best practices that can be adopted by other rural communities, expanded into a larger context, or informs public policy. We encourage the submission of a diverse group of proposals to enhance health in rural communities. Proposals that are led by, or have an established relationship with, rural communities will receive priority for funding. Projects should align with the South Carolina’s Rural Health Action Plan. Outcomes and measures should be easily measurable and follow the S.M.A.R.T format.

Key areas of emphasis for 2021 include, but are not limited to:

- Post-COVID-19 response
- Preventive Service utilization
- Pharmacy and Inoculations
- Behavioral / Mental Health
- Substance abuse disorders

Eligibility Criteria:

- Any public institution of higher education in South Carolina
- South Carolina Rural Health Networks
- SC Access Health programs
- Public or not-for-profit (501(c)3) organizations with an emphasis on health, rural health, or community services
- State government agencies
- Health Care organizations

If you are uncertain if you are eligible, please contact us at RuralInnovations@uscmed.sc.edu so we can assist you in determining your eligibility.
Application Process:

The Rural Innovations Application is a two-step process. The first step is an online application to ensure eligibility and that objectives and activities would align with SCCRPH’s mission and guidelines. Selected applicants will be advanced to step two and invited to submit a full proposal.

Award Categories:

Category I: Planning Projects. These projects would be smaller in scope and would support planning efforts and begin the process of implementing an innovation. Projects under category I would be limited to 12-months and up to $50,000 in total cost (Direct Costs only).

Category II: Intermediate projects. These projects would fall between the planning and implementation categories. Such projects have matured past the planning stage but are not quite ready for full implementation. These could include pilot programs. Projects under Category II would be limited to 12-months and up to $100,000 in total cost (Direct Costs only). Based on project performance, these projects can be fast-tracked into an implementation award the subsequent year.

Category III: Implementation Projects. These projects could implement a program that is well designed but not yet realized. These could include expanding a current program in new areas or adapting a program in new topic areas or locations. Projects under category II would be limited to 24-months and up to $200,000 in total cost (Direct Costs only).

What we fund:
We aim to fund programs that utilize innovative solutions or best practices to improve health access and/or health outcomes for rural communities, patients, or populations. We fund direct costs only.

We do not fund:
- Projects centered on one-touch events (health fairs, conferences, etc.)
- Programs or activities that target any non-rural populations
- Capital funds or funds for facilities or equipment such as medical
- Salaries for personnel not directly involved with the project

Important Dates:

January 25, 2021
Online application available on link or sc.edu/ruralhealthcare

March 5, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.
Online application due by 5:00 p.m.

April 2021
Applicants will be notified. Selected applicants will receive initial recommendations and be invited to submit full proposal.

May 1, 2021
Finalists submit full proposal.
Early June 2021
Finalists are notified.

July 1, 2021
Projects begin.