

Multiplying Resources: Impact and Return On Investment of 10 years of Community-Engaged Research (CEnR) and Partnership Seed Grants

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**Abstract**

Since its establishment in 2008, the Alliance for Research in Chicagoland Communities (ARCC) in the Northwestern University Clinical & Translational Sciences Institute (NUCATS) has spearheaded a seed grant program supporting collaborative research partnerships between Chicago communities and Northwestern. Over 10 rounds, the program has awarded a total of 51 grants, totaling more than \$771K, that have led to over \$10 million in external grants and 23 journal articles.

Grantees receive funds to build new partnerships or pilot research activities. A core goal is to build capacity and skills of communities and research teams to meaningfully engage at all stages of research. Collaborative data collection and analysis also facilitate competitive applications for external funding and continued partnership.

ARCC evaluates applicant experience and annually tracks outcomes. Data is collected from grantees, applicants, reviewers, as well as university leadership and community engagement program staff. This evaluation has contributed to program evolution and improvement over the program's successive rounds. This approach has also allowed ARCC to review institutional funding along with local health priority areas. For example, the most recent round encouraged applications focus on identified priorities of the Chicago Department of Public Health's strategic plan and the Northwestern Memorial Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment.

Value added features include a sustainable learning community for grantees as well as increased understanding and appreciation of community-engaged research approaches in the Medical School at NU and among community stakeholders. Awardees will describe program process and structure, grantee outcomes and impact from their unique perspectives.