CUMU-Collaboratory Research Fellow, 2023-2024
CALL FOR PROPOSALS
Proposals due November 12, 2023

Collaboratory and CUMU announce a research fellow opportunity utilizing a new data set on community engagement and public service activities conducted by higher education institutions in and with their communities. The research fellow will leverage Collaboratory data to advance knowledge around campus-community partnerships, with a focus on larger, more quantitative methodologies that examine larger trends and patterns, challenge assumptions, and clarify anecdotal evidence.

CUMU

The Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU) is the longest-running and largest organization committed to serving and connecting urban and metropolitan universities. CUMU focuses on strengthening institutions that are developing new responses to the pressing educational, economic, and social issues of the day. CUMU was formed in 1989 by leaders of metropolitan and urban institutions who realized their unique challenges and opportunities as they looked to the future of higher education. Today, CUMU is dedicated to its member institutions and to the creation and dissemination of knowledge on the issues that face our urban and metropolitan campuses and the communities we serve.

COLLABORATORY

Collaboratory is a one-of-a-kind software that helps higher education understand the landscape of their engagement – the who, what, where, when and why of activities designed with and for their communities. Institutions committed to community engagement are challenged to track essential aspects of activities and partnerships for the purpose of planning, reporting, and accreditation/classifications, as well as to build best practice and impactful outcomes. In Collaboratory, the specific details of campus-community activities are connected to a network of affiliated community partners, units on campus, courses, and institutional programs and initiatives. The resulting data enables administrators and scholars to develop institutional identity around community engagement, increase buy-in and understanding for community engagement and public service from internal and external stakeholders, advocate for its recognition in faculty rewards and institutional plans and policies, and demonstrate the value and impacts of their partnerships.

THE COLLABORATORY DATASET

Collaboratory's dataset is the largest dataset of its kind, representing data on community engagement and public service from 45 institutions across the United States. Collaboratory is not a survey; it is a dynamic software tool designed to facilitate comprehensive, longitudinal data collection on community engagement and public service activities conducted by faculty, staff, and students in higher education. Collaboratory utilizes a standard questionnaire developed by its co-founders (Janke, Medlin, and Holland, 2021) in the Institute for Community and Economic

Engagement at UNC Greensboro, which continues to be closely monitored and adapted by Collaboratory's staff and academic colleagues. It includes descriptive characteristics (what, where, when, with whom, to what end) of activities and invites participants to periodically update their information in accordance with activity progress over time. Examples of individual questions include the focus areas addressed, populations served, on- and off-campus collaborators, connections to teaching and research, pedagogies and student learning outcomes, the role community partners play in activities, and location of activities, among others.

- Collaboratory's Open Dataset is publicly available online in the CivicLeads repository. Review the codebook to understand the data structure and full scope of variables provided.

- Researchers also have access to identifiable data from Collaboratory beyond what is openly available. Examples of such data include locations, funding, and activity descriptions. Proposals using identifiable data will be subject to full review in collaboration with UNC Greensboro's Institute for Community and Economic Engagement.

RESEARCH FELLOW OPPORTUNITY

One research fellowship will be selected for 2023-2024AY. Fellows will leverage Collaboratory data to establish and examine the research question(s) under consideration.

Suggested topics include, but are not limited to:

- Examining common characteristics of community-based activities that involve multiple faculty, multiple disciplines, and multiple community partners
- Comparing data across institutional subsets via IPEDS characteristics or other publicly available datasets
- Exploring partnership quality throughout connections to teaching and research
- Refining understanding of the relationships among activity types, foci, populations served, and/or outcomes

Expected Deliverables

- The Fellow will provide a research brief which will be disseminated as a Collaborative Research Brief (See examples - Data-Driven Assessment Modeling of Partnership Data and Building Community Capacity via Place-Based Hyperlocal Engagement)
- Present a webinar sharing the findings of your research
- Meet with CUMU's Director of Learning and Engagement at least 3 times over the course of the award term

Funding & Support

Fellows will receive an award of $5,000. $2,500 at the initiation of the project and an additional $2,500 upon submission of the research brief which should occur no later than August 30, 2023. Funds may be used for any expense judged supportive of the fellow's research including staffing or subcontracting analyses, transcription, or other services; professional travel; project expenses; equipment; or salary support.

CUMU and Collaboratory will support the research fellow through ongoing consultation and technical assistance to support the research project.

Eligibility

- Submissions must be from a faculty member, staff, post-doc or graduate student from a CUMU member institution
- Fellows should have the ability to synthesize findings from complex datasets

Application Process

Submit your applications via google form at https://forms.gle/eNhreqHdsFf9DuyA7, including:

- A resume/CV detailing your experience and expertise
- A proposal not to exceed 1,000 words that includes the following:
    - Research question(s) to be answered via the project and significance of this research question to the field
    - Description of how the Collaboratory dataset will be used to frame and/or answer the research question(s)
    - How this/these question(s) fit into the interests, background, and prior research of the fellow
    - Description of any additional data sets and research techniques that will be used in the research
    - Description of any expected collaborators (such as methodologists or data scientists, for example) and research assistants, if applicable, that will be brought in to complete the project

RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP DECISION AND AWARD

- A panel of reviewers from CUMU and Collaboratory will review submissions
- One research fellowship will be awarded and the awardee will be notified by December 15, 2023
- The research fellow will be awarded $2,500 at the initiation of the project and an additional $2,500 at the time of acceptance for publication of the research report. Use of funds is at the discretion of the awardee.
- Use of the Collaboratory dataset is subject to the terms of Collaboratory's Open Dataset, or to those of Collaboratory's Research Partnership with UNCG
- The timeline for the Research Fellowship is as follows:
    - Proposals accepted until November 12, 2023
    - Research Fellowship announcement by December 15, 2023
    - Submission of research report for publication by August 30, 2024

CONTACT

For questions regarding the fellowship, contact:

- Valerie Holton, Executive Director, CUMU
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