



**Pregnancy, Postpartum, and Postnatal Health:
Enhancing Quality and Access to Achieve Equitable Maternal and Infant Health (EQUATE)**

**Request for Applications (RFA): 2024 Pilot for Equity Research in Maternal and Infant Health
Outcomes**

PURPOSE: One of the goals of the EQUATE network is to promote equity in maternal and infant health outcomes by identifying innovative and cost-effective strategies to enhance access to quality health information, care, and experiences during preconception, pregnancy, and postpartum periods. The EQUATE network focuses on strategies for Black and underserved populations because they have disproportionately high maternal and infant mortality rates. To accomplish these goals, a team of investigators will collaborate with pregnant and postpartum people and their families, hospitals, and communities to discover ways to reduce racism and social issues that contribute to poor health outcomes.

EQUATE pilot equity research funds are intended to support impactful research that focuses on promoting health equity in maternal and health outcomes across the United States. This RFA is designed to generate preliminary data for future federal and other grant applications and initiatives. Interdisciplinary and multi-site collaborations are strongly encouraged. Applicants are strongly encouraged to demonstrate how they will leverage the P3 EQUATE Cores in designing and/or implementing their proposed project.

DURATION OF FUNDING: 12-24 months

RANGE OF REQUESTED FUNDS: \$10,000-\$50,000

NUMBER OF AWARDS: Up to 5

TIMELINE:

- RFA Released: **April 25, 2024**
- Earliest Submission: **May 15, 2024**
- Application Deadline: **June 25, 2024 (midnight CT)**
- Award(s) Announced: **July 25, 2024**
- Funding Start: **August 1, 2024**

ELIGIBILITY: The principal investigator (PI) of the application must be a member of the EQUATE network. Trainees, core members, community partners, and HBCU investigators are encouraged to apply. The potential research topics can include community-engagement, translational science, or clinical research questions but must focus on **equity in maternal and infant outcomes**. Funds can only be used for actual research project costs, (i.e., statistician/nurse effort, patient reimbursement, lab supplies, advertising, etc.) and not ancillary research activities or training. Funds cannot be used to cover investigator salary.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS: Submit the following components via email to equate@uabmc.edu by the application deadline at midnight (Central Time) on **June 25, 2024**.

1. Cover Page: Must include title of project, Principal Investigator's name, title, institution, EQUATE project, phone number and e-mail address; names, titles, and institutional affiliations of any co-investigators
2. Letter of Support: A 1-page letter from institutional division director or department chair affirming support for the proposal and potential co-funding

3. Specific Aims: One page overview of the proposal that outlines significance, innovation, specific aims and NIH/Federal funding plans
4. Project Proposal: Up to four (4) single-spaced pages including specific aims page, 11-point Arial font, ½-inch margins; critical elements are described below
5. Budget: Include the following budget categories as relevant: research support effort, materials and supplies, equipment, other research-related activities, and services needed to complete the project
6. Budget Justification: Justify the amounts requested for each category and explain what the funds will accomplish
7. Biosketch (strongly encouraged): Follow the NIH biosketch format for PI and co-investigators.
8. Submit a single PDF file with application components in the order outlined above.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF THE PROJECT PROPOSAL (Up to 4 pages including aims page):

Significance and Innovation. Provide an overview of the topic relevant to the specific aim(s) to demonstrate the public health significance and the need for this project. Describe how the project is likely to innovate health care.

Approach. Summarize the methodology/activities, data collection plans, and the timeframe that is proposed to address the specific aims.

Impact. Briefly describe the potential transformational impact of achieving these goals. Indicate how results will be used to enhance future research and to support NIH grant proposals. Provide specific benchmarks to evaluate progress and success.

Preliminary or Related Findings. Describe current and past efforts that are relevant to this project. Describe any already available resources such as institutional funds or support from co-investigators. Preliminary findings are encouraged but not required.

Future Studies and Grant Applications. Describe how the proposed research will provide data for future federally funded or other grant applications and initiatives.

Investigators. Briefly describe the expertise of investigators and how they will interact to achieve the goals of the project and future funding (attach NIH biosketch, not counted towards page limits).

Biosketches. All applicants and collaborators are strongly encouraged to submit NIH biographical sketches (5-page limit) with personal statements adapted to describe defined roles on the project. Use the NIH biographical sketch form approved through January 31, 2026. The form, instructions, and sample biographical sketches are available at [biosketch-blank-fellowship-format-rev-10-2021.docx \(live.com\)](https://live.com/biosketch-blank-fellowship-format-rev-10-2021.docx)

REVIEW PROCEDURES: Applications will be reviewed by investigators with relevant expertise within or outside the EQUATE community. The evaluation will follow the NIH scale (1-9) to assess overall Significance and Innovation (including targets for future funding), Approach, Impact, Preliminary or Related Findings, and Investigators (including involvement of trainees and junior investigators, as well as community partners).

FUNDS AVAILABLE: Final award decisions will be made by the EQUATE leadership and community partners. It is anticipated that up to five awards totaling up to \$50,000 will be awarded for this cycle based on scientific merit and promise. These awards are meant to accomplish small, concise projects that will lead to submissions for larger funded projects. Applicants should request only the budget that is reasonably needed to accomplish the stated goals.



AWARD DETAILS: Funding will be awarded from the EQUATE coordinating center. All questions regarding the awarding of funding should be directed to the contact listed in the notice of award. Prior to the awarding of funding, the following information must be provided, if applicable:

Institutional Review Board approvals, if applicable, must be obtained prior to **receipt** of funds, but are not required to submit an application. Prior to receipt of an award involving human subjects, IRB approval from all participating sites and human subjects training certification for all key personnel will be required.

For more information about human subjects approval, see:
<https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/index.html> and <https://www.uab.edu/research/home/irb>

Additional Details. Maximum award is \$50,000. Indirect costs are generally not covered but line items (e.g., IRB, communication, etc.) essential for the success of the project, should be included in the budget. Awards are one – two years in length. One no-cost extension may be requested at the end of the first-year budget period only.

Information about the P³ EQUATE Network Cores: <https://www.p3equatehern.org/cores/>

All costs must conform to the NIH Grants Policy Statement (GPS) and applicable U.S. Office of Management and Budget OMB circulars for necessity and reasonability, allocability, conformance and consistency, as well as allowability. Please follow the link for NIH cost principles:
https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/HTML5/section_7/7.2_the_cost_principles.htm

POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS: Awardees will be expected to provide semi-annual progress reports. In addition, awardees will be expected to present the details of their study at the Semi-Annual Equate meetings or other meetings to be announced. This will provide an opportunity to identify additional synergies within the EQUATE network, explore other means of support, and gather recommendations to enhance the project.

For questions or more information, please email: equate@uabmc.edu