



## 2017 LETTER OF INTEREST REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The following document outlines our 2017 approach to Telligen Community Initiative (TCI) philanthropic support.

For next year, we are moving to a Letter of Interest (LOI) – an abbreviated initial application – to better honor your time and stage the grant review because of growth in the number of community organization and coalitions approaching us for funding consideration. This suggestion came from responses to applicant and grantee perception surveys. This voice of the customer input is valuable to TCI as we attempt to be a learning organization.

A subset of the Letter of Interest applications will be invited to complete additional elements of a finalist application. We think this two-stage application process will 1) provide better funding odds, 2) create a more equitable commitment of time on the part of an application, and 3) enhance our chances of creating a cohort of like grantees that might begin to interact and learn more from the experiences of one another.

The following is an outline of the document that describes our funding approach and application process. Thank you for your valuable community-based work and for considering how you might collaborate with TCI in 2017.

### TABLE OF CONTENTS:

About Telligen Community Initiative .....	2
2017 RFP Introduction .....	2
TCI Funding Priorities .....	3
Proposal Review Criteria & Assistance .....	4
How to Apply .....	5
LOI Proposal Elements .....	5
Appendices .....	6
2017 Grant Schedule .....	7
Contact Information & 2017 Changes .....	7

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## ABOUT TELLIGEN COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

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Telligen Community Initiative (TCI) is a private, non-profit foundation originated by Telligen, Inc. TCI works from a vision of helping empower organizations and citizens to improve their individual and overall community health. Our mission is to initiate and support innovative and forward-looking health-related projects aimed at improving health, social well-being and educational attainment.

Our philanthropy is done within the strategic funding priorities of:

- 1) Health innovation
- 2) Healthcare workforce development
- 3) Social determinants of health

### TCI works from the following guiding principles:

TCI wants to advance a framework that brings together health care delivery systems, public health agencies, community organizations and health educators to improve health. We seek to be a grant maker that works to create and sustain collaborations where health responsibility is shared and accountable by all. TCI philanthropy seeks to provide catalytic funding to those that share this belief and can spread its adoption. The following represents guiding principles for our approach to philanthropic support:

- Every person deserves health education and services, especially the most vulnerable members of our communities.
- Health promotion provides opportunities for the development of community and individual capacity.
- Many factors shape health and health outcomes (social determinants of health), putting a premium on prevention and integration of health with other community stakeholders and sectors.
- Active and intentional collaboration with others that share common ground, views and beliefs.

During our over 12-year history, we have funded many worthwhile projects and initiatives. We have learned the most effective way to make change and have the greatest impact is to foster and support collaborative efforts and initiatives that embrace and address the social determinants of health within their planning and work. This lens is what we hope differentiates us and forces a more upstream definition of health and explains our approach and resulting community support investments. To read about successful previously funded grants, please visit our website ([www.telligenci.org](http://www.telligenci.org)) or you are always encouraged to contact TCI staff to discuss your project idea to see if we have recently funded projects like what you want to pursue.

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## 2017 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

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### An introduction

TCI funding for 2017 will continue to focus on improving the health of communities within the context of specific funding priority areas. These priority areas were identified to more specifically define TCI's community responsive grant programming, to produce more defined themes within our priority areas, and to enhance the portability and replication potential of similarly themed projects across Colorado, Illinois, Iowa and Oklahoma communities.

We continue to believe in multiple funding mechanisms that try to meet an applicant where they are in their work and evolution. This could encompass multiple themes or forms of support:

- First-dollar, programmatic funding or seed funding to nonprofit organizations or governmental entities is a powerful contribution TCI can make to positively impact health status.
- This funding can also be positioned to support ongoing operational support for critical work of an organization in strong alignment with our funding priorities.
- Expansion or spread of already impactful and successful approaches you are doing to other populations or geography.
- This funding could also be evaluated by a potential applicant to support meaningful capacity building of an organization to better deliver its work or mission that strongly aligns with TCI funding priorities.

In all we do, TCI seeks to support projects that are at the intersection of and connect clinical and community-based work; build on collaborations to address underserved populations, and recognize the role of the social determinants of health within the design of project plans and proposal development. We want to meet you where your work is currently positioned and contribute to the successful achievement of your mission.

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## TCI FUNDING PRIORITIES

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*Priorities:* All three (3) funding priority areas are important to TCI. You will note that access to care for the underserved, as a funding priority area by name, has transitioned to a funding interest in advancing the social determinants of health and equity. That is not to say access is unimportant or solved. This change simply represents a greater emphasis on upstream and systemic conditions which immediately or eventually impact health. We are drawn to proposals with this emphasis as its core, true focus in our funding decisions. As a result, we have made the decision to lift it up to a funding priority emphasis. You'll note that many of the themes within this area still emphasize core tenants of health access.

Following are brief introductions to our thinking around each funding priority. Each priority introduction includes a brief description about the funding areas and a list of ways that initiatives and projects could be positioned for funding consideration – themes about the types of grants TCI might fund. We obviously want to foster innovation and creativity, but the themes that follow represent the ways in which TCI prefers to deploy its philanthropic support within our priority funding areas. We want to begin to more intentionally try to fund similar approaches so there could be the potential for cross-community learning opportunities and increased likelihood of simultaneously funding similar work in more of a cohort approach.



**Health Innovation:** *This area is encouraged to think creatively and differently regarding issues and opportunities that can bring innovation to the way we all envision to achieve and advance health.*

- Initiatives and projects designed to build leadership capacity, facilitate interdisciplinary and nontraditional collaborations with health stakeholders, or increase data transparency and consumer education.
- Efforts that advance a new or emerging process improvement or program delivery method for your organization or your field.
- Projects that infuse or use new technology or technology introduction into the internal or external operations of your organization to create an efficiency, process improvement or direct improvement on the work with your targeted population.
- Efforts to build community data infrastructures. Communities can have a greater chance of succeeding at health and well-being when organizations work together to create networks that integrate health with social and community services.
- Projects that advance theories of behavioral economics (the study of how people make choices, drawing on insights from psychology and economics) to investigate the promise of applying these techniques to the health sector (actionable behavior change).

- Telehealth efforts to advance or strengthen health delivery in new or non-traditional settings (mobile, use of technology to connect people to needed health services or to share health data or health promotional programming in unique ways to improve patient-provider interaction).
- Initiatives to creatively integrate primary care and mental health interventions.



**Healthcare Workforce Development:** *TCI believes the challenges of health workforce shortages and an aging population (health workforce and general public) will require progressive and a fundamental reshaping of the way in which patient care is delivered, especially for primary care. TCI also envisions change in the point of care and the roles of the inter-disciplinary direct care team of providers needing to be factored into the needs of our future healthcare workforce. TCI sees strategies to mitigate the geographic distribution of the healthcare workforce as a place for potential focus, as well as efforts to encourage new populations to consider health career opportunities.*

- Identify new models of health workforce development and deployment. This could and should include the related training and education that support new models either directly or through new infrastructure, spread or scale activities.
- Distance learning or efforts to integrate and use technology to create health education access in rural and frontier rural areas.
- Community Health Workers, community health navigators, targeted health apprenticeships or other unique and new disciplines that are emerging to specifically offer new paths into the health workforce. This is meant to include progressive programming to build engagements with regions to help committed health stakeholders acquire community health planning skills needed to improve health outcomes to more coherent, multi-stakeholder approaches.
- Initiatives (outreach and supportive programming) addressing underserved populations and first generation learners to consider how to become future members of the health workforce via the creation of viable health career pathways. This can include and pre-planning or programming necessary for the health workforce needs of the future.
- Career laddering and creative supports for career advancement strategies through education or practice (advanced degree planning or deployment, needed continuing education, etc.).
- Inter-disciplinary healthcare workforce education to advance care team concepts and unnatural partnerships that can work to transform both the educational experience (for the healthcare learner), as well as potentially create interesting, impactful community programming and care models (often addressing a health disparity, equity or an emerging need).
- Advance practice and policy development necessary to address the growing need for health workforce – due to aging, population change and workforce retirement.

**Social Determinants of Health / Health Equity:** *The social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. The social determinants of health can be most responsible for resulting health inequities. TCI believes in advancing health equity and achieving this requires novel approaches to positively address the social determinants of health. Catalytic funding is needed to foster new approaches to these upstream issues.*

- Advance patient navigation, case management and/or engagement with other community, wrap-around services. We strongly view health as more than what happens in a purely clinical setting and want to support the need for traditional health settings to connect to and with often fragmented approaches to health and social service integration.
- Strategies to better address health literacy, cultural competency and Limited English Proficiency.
- Improve the availability of resources to meet essential needs (safe housing, healthy foods, early childhood education, transportation).
- Efforts to increase public safety (exposure to crime, violence or toxic situations).
- Access and use of mass media and emerging technologies (cell phones, Internet and social media) for health-promoting purposes.
- Ensuring seamless and effective connections between medical provider and support for socioeconomic challenges, particularly focusing on two-generation efforts to help intentionally break the cycle of poverty.
- Efforts to identify and assist in the development of a culture of innovation in leaders – to better foster local community health capacity to creatively address upstream determinants of health in new or emerging ways. This is meant to embody characteristics of Public Health 3.0 (public health practice to emphasize cross-sectoral environmental, policy and systems-level actions that directly affect the social determinants of health and advance health equity).
- Work that promotes a higher-performing public health system that strives for better access, improved quality or efficiency – particularly focused on the most vulnerable members of our population through innovative programming or resourcing collaborative work with other non-health sectors or social service stakeholders (integrated referral or prescriptions to community resources – efforts to better connect the traditional health sector to other supports available to assist).

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## PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA & ASSISTANCE

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### Eligibility

To request a grant, your organization must be a recognized as a federally tax-exempt section 501(c)(3) charitable organization, an accredited school, or a public/governmental agency located in the states of Colorado, Illinois, Iowa or Oklahoma. Note: a public agency is an organization established and primarily funded by a unit of government. Examples could include a public school, public library, local public health department or state governmental agency. Note that TCI does not fund organizations with a pending 501(c)(3) status.

### Grant Review

An external committee of volunteer readers along with TCI staff reviews proposals. A scoring methodology is used that applies numeric values to the proposal sections outlined in this RFP with the scoring characteristics and points available by section. A copy of this score sheet may be found on our website, [www.telligenci.org](http://www.telligenci.org), or by contacting TCI staff. Please take time to review the scoring tool as it can be as valuable as this RFP in helping you assemble your narrative proposal and allocate space for your responses to correspond with point values by proposal section. More will be said later in the RFP, but TCI is transitioning to a Letter of Interest (LOI) as our initial application step. This more abbreviated application is meant to limit your time commitment to the act of grant development. A subset of the applicant field will then be offered an opportunity to complete a finalist application response (invitation only).

### Technical Assistance

Not only is contact with TCI staff acceptable, it is strongly encouraged. In 2016, approximately 70 percent of our entire applicant pool made contact with TCI staff to discuss some facet of their proposal prior to submission. This could take the form of a face-to-face meeting, phone meeting, email conversation, review of a draft proposal, or other desired assistance in helping you or your coalition consider an application. Making contact is not a requirement and your proposal won't be helped or hurt in the scoring process for having a pre-submission discussion (or not). Staff is in place to help you create as competitive a proposal as possible to compete for limited funding support. Consider how you want to use them.

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## HOW TO APPLY

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### General Proposal Submission Information

Please visit [www.telligenci.org](http://www.telligenci.org) to learn more about TCI overall, as well as to download the proposal/application shell (downloadable Microsoft Word document). You can save this file to your own computer/device so you can modify and complete it with information specific to your proposal concept. All the proposal elements are contained within this single document. There are requested/required appendices to submit with your overall application package, but this document will contain your core application responses. If you have any questions during this process, we encourage you to contact us directly with questions or proposal assistance. Matt McGarvey can be reached at either 515/554-2908 or [mmcgarvey@telligenci.org](mailto:mmcgarvey@telligenci.org) to talk through any aspect of your application/application planning process.

### Email Grant Submission Process

Upon completion of your application packet (in the Word document you downloaded), simply email your application and required appendix items to [mmcgarvey@telligenci.org](mailto:mmcgarvey@telligenci.org). This email submission needs to be received by TCI by the end of day on the deadline day applicable to each grant cycle deadline for 2017. End of day literally means the end of the day (email receipt by 11:59 p.m. of the intended application due date for each of the two (2) TCI grant cycles of 2017). Please visit our 2017 Grant Schedule section to learn more about our two (2) grant deadlines in 2017 and which one your proposed work fits best. This type of email submission is intended to minimize applicant work, time and expense related to proposal submission by making the process as easy as possible.

### Receipt

An e-mail confirmation will be sent to the proposal primary contact person upon an initial eligibility review and log in of your application. This is not an auto-generated response to your email submission. It may take time based on the level of the overall application cycle response. If you have not received an e-mailed confirmation within three business days of the deadline, then please contact TCI staff to inquire regarding the status of your proposal/receipt of your proposal.

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## LOI PROPOSAL ELEMENTS

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*LOI rationale:* Our ability and capacity to provide greater funding, outreach and geographic reach coincides with our increase in philanthropic resources and staffing since mid-2014 to the present. Below is a simple visual that demonstrates our profound increase in funding demand during the past four (4) years.

Funding Year	Number of Applicants	Funding Awards
2013	33	10
2014	233	24
2015	283	44
2016	350	36

On the one hand, this reflects a TCI funding agenda that is clearly appealing and our success in becoming a more visible funder in the states in which we work. This also results in the very real feedback from our applicant and grantee surveying (voice of the customer) that this is simply becoming too competitive. Though we also consistently get feedback that our process is transparent and the application we ask you to develop and submit is very straightforward and not onerous, we need to evolve to better honor your time as an applicant and make sure the net-grant from TCI is worth your investment of time. As such, we have offered greater definition within the description of our funding priorities and the things we would like to fund, as well as use this RFP to introduce a Letter of Interest (LOI) as your initial application step. This more abbreviated initial application is designed to offer you a more timely response and less of a time commitment to be formally considered for funding. We will then invite forward a subset of that applicant pool to a finalist proposal round. Again, this will be by invitation only. For illustrative purposes, if we allocated \$350,000 to a funding cycle and our maximum per grant award is \$50,000, we'd be in a position to minimally fully fund approximately seven (7) awards. Let's say we received 75 LOI responses for that cycle. Our goal within this illustration would be to break that initial applicant pool down to a number that would represent a minimum of at least a 50 percent chance of funding (approximately the top 15 proposals). This finalist pool would then be asked to complete additional proposal elements. In this simple example, we just feel it better honors your time and hopefully will help TCI build a cohort of potentially similar grantees across states. We commit to be a learning organization and this change is being driven from applicant and grantee feedback. This is what we're going to try in 2017 to better refine our process to be more timely and fair to you and your work.

Again, the downloadable LOI format for you to save and customize is available at [www.telligenci.org](http://www.telligenci.org). TCI asks that your narrative be brief, but more importantly, provide a succinct and thorough presentation of the need or problem you have identified, the proposed solution, and your organization's qualifications for implementing that solution. This document has the following sections/elements:

- **2017 TCI LOI Applicant Cover Page** (required, but does not count against your LOI page limit)
  - Organization Information
  - Program/Project Information
- **Grant Narrative** Your LOI should be three (3) pages in length and include the following:
  - **Summary of your organization** – Provide a brief history and description of your current programs.
  - **Synopsis of need and project** – Provide a succinct description of the community need shaping the project, as well as the project intervention for which you are requesting funding, including goals, target population, and a brief explanation of your evaluation methodology and long-term impact.
  - **Organizational capacity** – Explain your organization’s qualifications to do this project and any collaborating organizations you’d intend to work with in successful implementation.
  - **Budget projection** – Include the amount you’d anticipate requesting from TCI and an estimate of the overall budget of the project (*both of these are subject to change and you’ll have an opportunity to go into greater detail if invited to the finalist application round. View your LOI response in this area as best guestimates at the time of submission*).

Again, the above represents the requested elements of the LOI submission. If invited to a finalist round, you will be provided with a secondary RFP that will request additional information on your project in the following manner:

- Target population and project design.
- A more robust evaluation plan.
- A detailed budget and rationale.
- Sustainability discussion beyond TCI support.

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## APPENDICES

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In addition to the core proposal narrative/application sections, please also be prepared to submit the following appendices to accompany and complete your LOI proposal package. These can/should also be emailed in with your overall application to [mmcgarvey@telligenci.org](mailto:mmcgarvey@telligenci.org). These required elements include the following:

- *IRS determination letter regarding 501(c)(3) status (or statement of governmental entity status if you are applying as a unit of government)*
- *List of board or governance structure members and their affiliations (or governmental board or community advisory body)*

These additional documentation materials are requested as part of your LOI application submittal process. Please include them as attachments with your email submission that accompany your application required format. All email attachments to formally submit your TCI grant request can be submitted in MS Word, JPEG, Adobe PDF or other electronic format to facilitate easy proposal transmittal by email. If you do not have these items and/or have questions, please contact TCI staff to discuss further.

## 2017 GRANT SCHEDULE

**Geographic focus and available funding:** Our entire TCI funding history has always encompassed support for work within the states of Iowa and Illinois. In 2015, we added Oklahoma to this funding footprint. In 2017, we are onboarding Colorado and beginning philanthropic support. These four (4) states represent our desired capacity for the foreseeable future. We do not anticipate adding additional states beyond where we currently stand as we enter 2017. Please also note that 2017 marks the initial year TCI is providing philanthropic support in Colorado. As such, we have both created a single-state only initial 2017 deadline for Colorado-based proposals and have a lower per grant award ceiling (\$25,000) in hopes of providing a greater number of Colorado-based grantees receiving TCI funding support. We are excited to introduce Colorado to the TCI funding opportunity and footprint in 2017, as well as continue support and important philanthropic work in Illinois, Iowa and Oklahoma. Applications from Illinois, Iowa and Oklahoma will continue to function with a grant request maximum of \$50,000. We see these funding ranges as the lower level of funding necessary to begin to create change and impact. We also see this level of funding as an amount that can hopefully be absorbed or additional funding secured to meaningfully sustain beyond the life of our initial TCI grant. All current TCI grants are for periods of one year. Approximately \$350,000 to \$400,000 is envisioned to be available in each TCI state during 2017. This is subject to change based on applicant pool and quality, but this represents this distribution envisioned for 2017.

LOI Event / Proposal Evaluation Event	Colorado Applicant (\$25,000/grant request ceiling)	Illinois, Iowa and Oklahoma Applicants (\$50,000/grant request ceiling)
LOI Proposal due to TCI (email submission)	March 1, 2017	June 30, 2017
Invitations extended to finalist applications	April 4, 2017	August 15, 2017
TCI Board review and grants awarded	Mid-June	Late November
Grant period begins / funding released	July 1, 2017	January 1, 2018

## TCI IN 2017 - CHANGES, AREAS OF PREFERENCE & TOOLS

This year marks the TCI addition of Colorado, a clearer and more refined discussion of our funding interesting within each of our funding priorities, and the introduction of two-step application process (LOI and invitational finalist) to better honor your opportunity cost of time pursuing funding. The following represent a few additional thoughts on the upcoming year that we'd like to offer:

**Local versus national organizations:** You can certainly identify TCI funded and very successfully implemented projects from national organizations with localized chapters or affiliates. That said, our belief is that those organizations have a different reach, influence and capacity that others often do not. As such, our funding preference when possible will be to support more localized nonprofit organizations and coalitions that are based in and doing work within one of our state footprints. The place where national organizations could be especially impactful is helping scale or spread successful models or capacity across multiple TCI states through a proposed scope of work.

**Geographic project reach and community definition:** As an applicant, TCI firmly believes in your ability to define what community means to you. For most of our applicants, this takes on some form of geography. An applicant could also decide to focus that definition or discussion around a group or type of person(s) or special populations. From a geographic standpoint, you are free to define community in the way you deem best fits your application and proposed grant work. This could be a neighborhood or census track, city, county, multi-county area or even statewide reach. All approaches will be welcomed and judged equally on their proposal merits. The visual below visual provides a representation of cumulative funding awards from TCI during the past two (2) years as it relates to geographic reach of funded projects. Projects with multi-county or more broad geographic reach have received about 70 percent of our funding awards during this time period. There will also be an increased desire to support rural projects more intentionally in 2017.

Geographic reach of applicant proposals	Percentage of funding awarded to projects in this classification
Statewide	34.3%
Multi-county	35.8%
County	19.4%
City or smaller designation	10.5%

Dashboard: The above information is an example of one of the many applicant characteristics we try to compile and monitor as part of our ongoing philanthropic dashboard that is maintained on an annual basis. This is a living document updated after each new award cycle. This is something initially built as a Board tool to create baseline monitoring of characteristics of our applicant and funded project pool, as well as the impact of individual funding awards. It has since also become a helpful tool to share with potential applicants or those approaching TCI for funding. For lack of a better way to characterize it, our dashboard offers a nice prospect research tool to you as an applicant making a determination if we're a good use of your opportunity cost of time. This tool is available by request from staff as a basis for planning, discussion and to vision-cast if we have or are currently supporting community-based work similar to what you might be contemplating for an upcoming deadline.

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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If you are considering a grant request or have questions about the grant process, please feel free to contact TCI staff for further assistance.

Matt McGarvey, Executive Director

[mmcgarvey@telligenci.org](mailto:mmcgarvey@telligenci.org)  
(for general correspondence and for eventual email submission of your proposal package)

515/554-2908

Upon release of the RFP, please feel comfortable and encouraged to reach out to TCI staff to discuss your proposal idea further and determine if you'll proceed in developing an application for one of our deadlines and/or how to make your concept as competitive as possible.

Please note all four (4) states are working from the same RFP guidance on developing a proposal, but have various proposal deadlines and maximum grant request ceilings based on the state you and your work reside in and is proposed.