

# 2019 LETTER OF INTEREST REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The following document outlines our 2019 approach to Telligen Community Initiative (TCI) philanthropic support.

We continue to use a Letter of Interest (LOI)—an abbreviated initial application—to better honor your time and stage the grant review because of growth in our geographic focus, number of community organizations approaching us for funding consideration over the past five years. 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 and responsive to nonprofit input.

A subset of the Letter of Interest applications will be invited to complete additional elements of a finalist application. We experienced this two-stage application process 1) providing much better funding odds, 2) creating a more equitable commitment of time on the part of an application, and 3) enhancing 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 2019.

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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 14-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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## 2019 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

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### An introduction

TCI funding for 2019 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 applicants 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 provide core 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 advancement 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. We seek to place an 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.

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.



**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 pre-planning or programming necessary for the health workforce needs of the future.
- 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 practices necessary to address the growing need for health workforce – due to aging, population change and workforce retirement.

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**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. The range of personal, social, economic, and environmental factors that influence health status are known as determinants of health. It is the interrelationships among these factors that determine individual and population health. This interrelationship and connection to health is a connection we want to support with our resources.*

- 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).
- Test value-based health interventions that might happen across sectors or outside traditional health venues, but can use our funding to pilot and demonstrate how efficiencies and health improvements can be financed and sustained by reimbursement and payor support to reward shared savings between the health system and community-based organizations.

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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 Letter of Interest 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. This more abbreviated LOI 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). Since instituting a two-step application process in 2017, just under 20 percent of LOI applicants were then invited to the finalist proposal round. Once there, over half were then funded.

### Technical Assistance

Not only is contact with TCI staff acceptable, it is strongly encouraged. Approximately two-thirds of our LOI applicant pool contacted 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). That said, 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 2019. 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 2019). Please visit our 2019 Grant Schedule section to learn more about our two (2) grant deadlines in 2019 and which one(s) 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. Because of this, we needed 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 successfully instituted a Letter of Interest as the initial funding step in 2017. 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 TCI funding. We then invite forward a subset of that applicant pool to a finalist proposal round. This is by invitation only. Below is a simple visual that documents our experience with this approach over the past two years. We are pleased with how this process improvement performed. We are simply offering this to you to visually share the steps in our funding process and our experience in its initial year as a proposal vetting approach for TCI.

	<i>Social Determinants of Health / Health Equity</i> <small>(goal of ~1/3 of TCI funding)</small>	<i>Healthcare Workforce Development</i> <small>(goal of ~1/3 of TCI funding)</small>	<i>Health Innovation</i> <small>(goal of ~1/3 of TCI funding)</small>	<i>Totals</i>
<i>Total LOIs Received in 2017-18</i>	445 LOIs	178 LOIs	240 LOIs	863 total LOIs
<i>Two-Year Finalists Applications Invited</i>	57 finalist applicants	51 finalist applicants	51 finalist applicants	159 total finalist invitations
<i>2017-18 Grantee Awardees</i>	27 grantees	29 grantees	26 grantees	82 total grantees

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:

- **2019 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 and organizational capacity to do the work plan you'll be proposing.
  - **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 and target population.
  - **Collaboration and evaluation summary** – Introduce any collaborating organizations you'd intend to work with in successful implementation. Please also offer a brief overview of an evaluation/impact assessment plan for this LOI scope of work.

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- **Budget projection** – Include the amount you’d anticipate requesting from TCI and an estimate of the overall budget of the project (both 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.

## APPENDICES

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.



## 2019 GRANT SCHEDULE

*Geographic focus and grant cycles:* 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 onboarded Colorado and launched 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 2019. Applications from all four (4) states will function with a per grant request maximum of \$50,000. We see this funding range 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.

<i>LOI Event / Proposal Evaluation Event</i>	<i>Colorado or Oklahoma-based applications (\$50,000 / grant request ceiling)</i>	<i>Illinois or Iowa-based applications (\$50,000 / grant request ceiling)</i>
<i>LOI Proposal due to TCI (email submission)</i>	February 27, 2019	May 28, 2019
<i>Invitations extended to finalist applications</i>	Early April	Early August
<i>Grant period begins / funding released</i>	July 1, 2019	December 1, 2019

## TCI IN 2019 – CHANGES, FUNDING CYCLE ORGANIZATION & TOOLS

The following represent a few additional thoughts on the upcoming year that we'd like to offer:

**Alternative LOI approach:** TCI tries to be about honoring nonprofit time and opportunity cost of your time as it relates to the pursuit of philanthropic support and grant funding. As such, we're constantly evaluating what could reduce the time you have to commit to our grant funding processes. One improvement we'd like to institute in 2019 is the ability to use previously developed applications – for other funding streams – for TCI LOI submission. We'd ask you still utilize the TCI LOI downloadable cover page to summarize the requested elements of your proposal, but if you've already developed an application for another funding source for the same concept as you're apply to us for our LOI consideration, please feel free to share that application with us for formal consideration in our funding process. Because of the eclectic mix of states that we support with grant awards, there is no common grant application that covers our four states. We felt the next best approach would be to be open to accepting applications to other funders for our consideration – recognizing that most applications to us (because of our maximum award of \$50,000) are seeking to braid funding from multiple sources – there's no reason we shouldn't be open to taking already developed applications as a small way we can better honor your valuable time. Let us know if this creates questions.

**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, zip code 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 provides a representation of cumulative funding awards from TCI during the past three (3) years as it relates to geographic reach of funded projects. Projects with multi-county or broader geographic reach have received over 75 percent of our funding awards during this multi-year time period. We are continuing a desire to support and favor rural projects more intentionally when all else is equal.

<i>Geographic reach of applicant proposals</i>	<i>Percentage of funding awarded to projects in this classification</i>
Statewide	38.8%
Multi-county	38.8%
County	15.3%
City or smaller designation	7.1%

**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 deciding 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 like what you might be contemplating for an upcoming deadline.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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.