Driven to Discover Research Facility at the Minnesota State Fair

2018 Research Opportunity Announcement

**Release Date:** October 17, 2017
**Due Date:** January 16, 2018

**PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

We invite faculty, students, and staff from the University of Minnesota, as well as other universities and institutions, to take advantage of this unique opportunity to quickly and efficiently recruit research participants for on-site, minimal-risk human-subjects research at the Minnesota State Fair from August 23 through September 3, 2018. An online application to reserve research space in the Driven to Discover Research Facility (D2D) for the 2018 State Fair is due January 16, 2018. The application is available here: [https://is.gd/d2d2018](https://is.gd/d2d2018). Please contact Pat McKee at d2d@umn.edu with questions.

The primary mission of D2D is to increase the pace, efficiency, and diversity of enrollment in new or ongoing human subjects research at the University, by bringing projects and researchers into closer contact with the Minnesota community. D2D provides access to approximately 2 million fairgoers each year. Many attendees return to the fair year after year, making longitudinal studies possible. Further, the fair attracts individuals from across Minnesota and so offers an efficient means of enrolling a more diverse group of participants from outside the metropolitan area.

In the four years since D2D was established in 2014, fairgoer awareness of the facility has grown steadily. In 2017, a new building was constructed, attracting over 60,000 visitors -- a **35% increase** from the previous year. Of these, over 17,800 fairgoers participated in at least one of the 30 on-site studies. Studies enrolling *adults* averaged 165 participants per shift (5-6.5 hours), with a range of 56-386. Studies enrolling *youth* averaged 75 participants per shift (range 35-119).

When D2D researchers were surveyed about their experience, nearly all respondents indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with conducting research at D2D, and most expressed interest in future participation. In summary, bringing your study to the Minnesota State Fair affords you the potential to reach a large, diverse, untapped population of potential research subjects, facilitating rapid and high enrollment.

**ELIGIBILITY**

Faculty, students and staff from all UMN campuses, as well as other universities and institutions across the state are eligible to apply. Collaboration is encouraged. Students must provide the name and signature of their academic advisor. Projects led by students and staff with no prior research experience must include a faculty member as principal investigator or co-principal investigator.
RESEARCH FOCUS

There is no specified research focus to which projects must adhere. Research from a broad array of disciplines is encouraged. The focus of the review is not on the research question, but rather on whether the research project is interactive with the public, involving human subjects by collecting data through surveys, focus groups, biospecimens, measurements, tests, or other means. Research studies should be appropriate for conduct within the fair environment. Projects must be minimally invasive, pose minimal risk, and require no more than 30 minutes of a participant’s time during the fair. Preference will be given to projects designed for on-site data collection. However, projects recruiting solely for off-site studies are encouraged to apply, at a reduced fee. Multiple-year projects are accepted.

RESOURCES PROVIDED AND FEES

The D2D Research Facility accommodates up to ten studies at a time, in curtained bays approximately 10’ wide by 12’ long. Studies are scheduled in two shifts, from 9am-2pm and 2:30pm-9pm, providing a total of 240 shifts over the 12 days of the fair. Research space and shifts are assigned after application determinations are made and participation confirmed. The average number of shifts per study in 2017 was 4.1 (median = 4, range = 1-10).

D2D is a self-supporting Internal Service Organization of the University of Minnesota. Fees support rent, facility maintenance, state fair licensing, admission tickets, furnishings, equipment & supplies, and staff support to organize the program. Studies with no UMN investigator are charged an additional 25% administrative overhead fee. Fees are as follows:

- Studies with on-site data collection and a UMN principal investigator: $806 per shift.
- Studies with on-site data collection and no UMN principal investigator: $1008 per shift.
- Recruitment-only studies with a UMN principal investigator: $250 per shift.
- Recruitment-only studies with no UMN principal investigator: $313 per shift.

In addition to research space, the following resources are included in the fee:

- Free admission to the State Fair for researchers and their staff (up to 4 tickets per shift);
- iPads linked to consent forms and survey instruments;
- U of M Secure high-speed wireless and hardwired internet access;
- Tables and chairs, basic anthropometric equipment, and supplies;
- Refrigerator and freezer space for on-site sample storage;
- Consultation with D2D staff on maximizing your recruitment goals, obtaining IRB approval, determining staffing needs, setting up your research area, recruiting subjects, working in the State Fair setting, and more;
- Compliance with State Fair rules and regulations.

A Facilities Page for inclusion in grant proposals is available for download on the D2D website.

LETTER OF SUPPORT

If you plan to apply for funding to cover shift fees, you may send us a letter of intent, including contact information and a few sentences on study aims, methods, enrollment goal and eligibility requirements.
If your project appears appropriate for D2D, we will provide a letter of support for your proposal and reserve space for you at the 2018 fair, given funding is secured by the D2D determination date.

**FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

Eligible UMN researchers may apply online for grant funding from the Masonic Cancer Center and the Department of Pediatrics during the D2D application. Announcements of any additional funding opportunities will be posted on the D2D website.

**Masonic Cancer Center Driven to Discover Grants, 2018**

1. Funding amount: $15,000 total, typically two grants up to $7,500 each.
2. Eligibility: At least one of the *principal* investigators must be an MCC member.
3. Projects must address one of the MCC Scientific Priorities for Growth:
   a. Expand recent discoveries in immunotherapy and cellular therapeutics to include solid tumors.
   b. Enhance functional genomics strategies to further our understanding of cancer and develop new therapeutic avenues.
   c. Translate new chemoprevention agents into clinical trials for populations at increased risk for cancer including cancer survivors.
   d. Use biomarkers to individualize cancer prevention and personalize treatment.
   e. Establish a new Minnesota-based cohort that includes the collection of biospecimens for investigation of genetics, epigenetics, microbiome, and immunity associated with cancer.
   f. Develop effective methods to disseminate evidence-based cancer prevention and treatment strategies to vulnerable populations with disproportionate cancer burden in MN.
4. Application: Included in the D2D online application. A budget worksheet is provided, and is also available on the D2D website at [http://d2d.umn.edu](http://d2d.umn.edu).

**Department of Pediatrics Driven to Discover Grants, 2018**

1. Funding amount: $6,000 to support one or two research studies.
2. Eligibility: At least one of the investigators must be a faculty member in the UMN Pediatrics department. Junior investigators are encouraged to apply. Fellows are eligible to apply, as long as at least one co-investigator is a UMN Pediatrics faculty member. Students are encouraged to apply, but must provide the name and signature of their academic advisor, who must be a faculty member of the UMN Department of Pediatrics.
3. These grants are designed to foster the development of, and provide support for, novel research ideas that aim to assess or improve pediatric health, utilizing the population attending the Minnesota State Fair. Studies funded through this mechanism must enroll and collect data from subjects at the Driven to Discover Research Facility at the 2018 Minnesota State Fair. It is important that funded projects will lead to publishable results and have promise for external grant support to demonstrate return on investment.
4. Application: Included in the D2D online application. A budget worksheet is provided, and is also available on the D2D website at [http://d2d.umn.edu](http://d2d.umn.edu).
D2D APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please apply online at this address: https://is.gd/d2d2018.

*Note: If you are not affiliated with the UMN, please contact Pat McKee at d2d@umn.edu to arrange access to the site.

When prompted, upload the following as a single pdf attachment (maximum two pages, excluding cover page and references). The use of lay language is encouraged:

1. **Cover Page**
   - Include project title and principal investigator name. (All other personnel information will be requested during the application.)
   - For student researchers, provide the name of your degree program, your academic advisor, your advisor’s signature with date, and your advisor’s email and phone number.

2. **Aims**
   - Describe your research goals and the specific aims for this study.

3. **Significance/Rationale**
   - Describe the potential impact of the proposed research on your field of study.

4. **Study Design**
   - Describe your research environment when designing your project. The building and fairgrounds are often crowded and noisy. Privacy is limited. The research area is a large, two-story room with concrete floors and drapery partitions between study areas. There is no vehicle access to the building during fair hours. There are no restrooms on the premises.
   - Describe your inclusion and exclusion criteria for participants.
   - Provide your desired sample size for each group of participants.

5. **Data Collection Methods**
   - Describe the data collection methods to be used (e.g., questionnaires, biospecimens). If necessary, clarify how these methods are feasible and appropriate for the fair.
   - Describe any large or sensitive equipment requiring special storage, set-up, or delivery considerations.
   - Provide the estimated length of your protocol, including consent.

6. **References**
   - Please include no more than 20 references.

**Estimating the Number of Shifts You’ll Need**

You will be prompted to enter the number of shifts you wish to purchase. Many factors can influence enrollment, including your protocol (length, methods and topic), eligibility criteria, incentives, staffing, recruitment efforts, and the other studies in the building. The weather, day of the week, and time of day can also affect fairgoer traffic through the building.

In 2017, average enrollment per shift was 165 (range 56-386) for adult studies with no other eligibility exclusions, and 75 (range 35-119) for youth studies with no other eligibility exclusions. To estimate the number of shifts your study needs, use the 2017 ranges, adjusting up or down based on your budget and
the factors described above. Alternatively, you may start with the following formula, and then adjust as described:

- \( \text{Number of shifts} = \frac{\text{enrollment goal} \times \text{protocol length}}{\text{number of participants (or iPads) your staff can manage at one time}} \times \frac{1}{300}, \text{i.e., the number of minutes in a 5-hour shift.} \)

Two staff are required per shift, but many studies have used more (e.g., 3-4) to accommodate more participants (iPads). We recommend that you recruit students as additional staff. Students benefit from the research experience and are often happy to work for the free admission ticket or a small stipend. However, keep in mind space limitations.

As mentioned, incentives can affect your enrollment. Your options include:

- **Individual incentive:** With this option, you are required to give an incentive of equal value, or a choice of incentives, to each participant. It’s a good idea to order extra incentives in the event you overshoot your enrollment goal.

- **Prize drawing (e.g., gift card or electronics):** This is a good option for those with a large enrollment goal but a limited budget. You will be required to hold the drawing during the fair and report the winner(s) to State Fair administration.

- **No incentive:** Some D2D studies have not given incentives and still reached their enrollment goals.

**SUBMISSION AND TIMELINE**

Applications will be accepted starting October 17, 2017 and are due on January 16, 2018. Applicants will be notified of acceptance no later than February 13, 2018, allowing researchers six months to coordinate their projects before the fair, held August 23-September 3. A complete D2D calendar is available on the [D2D website](#).

**REVIEW PROCESS**

Applications will be screened to confirm eligibility based on the criteria above. A review team will then evaluate eligible applications using the following considerations:

- Does the study qualify as a minimal risk study?
- Is the study interactive, engaging to the public?
- Is subject participation kept as brief as possible (no more than 30 minutes)?
- Is the study design appropriate for the Minnesota State Fair venue?

Inclusion and exclusion criteria for each study may be taken into account in the review process. Our aim is to offer something for every fairgoer who walks into the building. Studies with very restrictive eligibility requirements may have a more difficult time meeting recruitment goals. It is highly recommended that projects recruiting narrow populations consider targeted advertising of their project prior to the fair.

The D2D team will not conduct a full scientific review of your project. It will be expected that research projects have undergone adequate peer review through applicable mechanisms.

Researchers will be responsible for obtaining protocol approval, or exemption from review, from the University of Minnesota Institutional Review Board (or another IRB, for applicants not affiliated with the
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UMN). The UMN IRB will hold a special session to review D2D applications. Studies with currently-approved IRB applications and studies conducted at D2D in previous years must also be approved. Researchers will be required to submit their applications by the deadline to be set forth by the IRB (on or about May 1, 2018).

FUTURE TRACKING OF SELECTED PROJECTS

Success of the D2D Research Facility is measured by the number of research projects using the space, the number of fairgoers enrolled, and the number of peer-reviewed manuscripts published and grant applications submitted using data collected at the building. If your project is selected for participation, you will be asked to provide this information.

CONTACT US

Thank you for your interest in D2D. Please contact the D2D Manager, Pat McKee, at d2d@umn.edu with questions regarding this Announcement, or to be placed on our mailing list for future announcements and updates. For more information, go to the D2D website at http://d2d.umn.edu.

D2D DIRECTORS

Ellen Demerath, Ph. D., School of Public Health
Logan Spector, Ph. D., Medical School