NEW OPPORTUNITY
Driven to Discover (D2D) Research at County Fairs in Greater Minnesota
2022 Request for Applications

Release Date: April 13, 2022
Due Date: May 1, 2022

We invite faculty, staff, and students from the University of Minnesota to take advantage of a new opportunity to engage rural voices in research via the Driven to Discover research infrastructure expansion to Minnesota county fairs (D2D-County) throughout summer 2022.

BACKGROUND & AIM
With the support of the D2D Research Facility at the MN State Fair, researchers have enrolled over 110,000 individuals in innovative research projects since 2013. However, we know 75% of these participants are from the metro area, representing a disproportionately high percentage of urban residents. Research that supports the needs of rural Minnesotans is of paramount importance in fulfilling the University’s land grant mission and demonstrating our value beyond the metro area. Thus we are expanding D2D’s reach to include county fairs; the aim is to pilot test the D2D infrastructure at multiple rural events over the next two summers, 2022 and 2023.

OVPR GRANT: POSSIBILITIES & CONSTRAINTS
D2D has applied for internal grant funding through the Office of the Vice President for Research. The award winners will be announced in June. Because fairs are doing their planning now to secure their vendors and activities, D2D is also proceeding with planning in the hopes we are awarded funding.

Seeing as taking ‘research on the road’ to county fairs has never been done before in a centrally-organized manner, we are treating the next two summers as a pilot test of the D2D infrastructure, costs/benefits, fair & fairgoer receptivity, and overall successes/challenges in a variety of rural locations.

• **Possibilities:** If D2D is awarded the OVPR grant, there will be NO COST to research teams to bring their studies to county fairs. D2D will conduct all planning and logistics, similar to the state fair, including planning for travel. The award will cover D2D staffing costs, fair/parking fees, equipment rental, travel & accommodations, and incentives.

• **Constraints:** If we are not awarded funding, we will need to scale back our plans due to funding constraints, which will mean fewer investigators will be able to participate. We will be in touch with researchers at that point. For now, we are proceeding with operations and logistical planning, and hoping for the best.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Because this new expansion of D2D will be grant funded, it is vitally important that we have your firm commitment that IF we are able to accommodate you and have funding to offset all of your shift fees, that you will participate. OVPR will require that we report on how the funds were spent. Once D2D commits your study to county fair(s), it is important that your team follows through and attends the event. We cannot have researchers pulling out of events; given the quick spring/summer timeline, we will not be able to fill your slot with another group. **If you are uncertain you can hold a commitment, please talk to Annie (d2d@umn.edu) about your application.** Together we will determine the best path forward.

D2D-COUNTY APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS
Apply online by May 1, 2022 at this link: [https://redcap.link/xteqs8vw](https://redcap.link/xteqs8vw). You will be prompted to upload the following information as a single PDF or Word document. Limit your submission to one page. Briefly describe:
1. Aims: your research goals and objectives
2. Study design: include eligibility criteria, data collection methods, & length of protocol with consent
3. Rationale: briefly describe why engaging with rural Minnesotans is important to your study

PROGRAM OVERVIEW
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. As stated above, enrollees at the state fair is largely made up of urban residents; the purpose of the proposed expansion to county fairs is to:

- increase access to research opportunities for residents of rural MN,
- reduce urban/rural health disparities,
- build collaboration opportunities with local communities,
- enhance outreach, engagement, & dissemination opportunities, and
- deliver on the UMN mission.

The county fair arm of D2D is separate from the state fair. You may participate in the state fair AND/OR county fairs. Every effort will be made to ensure communications are clear throughout the summer regarding this distinction.

WHO MAY CONDUCT RESEARCH AT D2D-COUNTY?
Faculty, staff, and students from all UMN campuses. Collaboration is encouraged. Projects led by students and staff must have a faculty member as principal investigator or co-principal investigator. Students must provide the name and signature of their academic advisor.

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 D2D-County application review is not on the research question itself, 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,
- appropriate for a fair environment,
- minimally invasive, posing minimal risk,
- requires no more than 30 minutes of a participant’s time during the fair,
- engaging for a rural audience.

RESOURCES PROVIDED
Facilities will vary depending on the fair. Indoor booth space will be secured to bring four studies to each fair. Booths (1 booth per study, 4 booths total) range in size from approximately 8’ x 8’ to 10’ x 12’. Space will be configured with partitions, tables and chairs provided.

In addition to research space, the following resources will be provided:

- Admission tickets for researchers, when necessary (2 per study);
- Parking passes, when necessary (1 per study);
- iPads linked to consent forms and survey instruments;
- Internet access;
- Office & cleaning supplies;
- Other equipment may be obtained upon request (work with Annie);
- String backpack incentives;
- Compliance with fair rules and regulations.
Travel related costs will also be covered:

- Mileage to and from the county fairgrounds (beginning & ending at 1367 Cosgrove, St. Paul, MN 55108 for those starting in the metro);
- Lodging – D2D will secure hotel reservations for two people per study (2 rooms per study);
- Food per diems for two study staff.

FEES
If we are awarded the OVPR grant in June, there will be **no fees for D2D-County in summer 2022 & 2023**. If we learn we are *not* awarded the grant, we will need to re-evaluate and significantly scale back our plans at that time. Until we hear, we will continue planning as if grant funding will cover all costs.

COUNTY FAIR DATES & SHIFTS
D2D-County will attend six county fairs in summer 2022; another two events are planned for 2023 but will be dependent on funding. Event selection was made based on fair board and faculty interest, and geographic diversity across the state. The six fairs for 2022 are as follows:

1. Cass County Fair - June 23-26
2. Fillmore County Fair – July 20
4. Faribault County Fair – July 28-30
5. Stevens County Fair – Aug 10-14
6. Beltrami County Fair – Aug 11-13

Shift hours will vary by fair as they each determine their own hours and each fair has varying rules around exhibitor hours. In general, shifts at the county fairs will be longer than at the state fair; study staff should be prepared for longer days but lower traffic volume than at the state fair. Shift hours are still being finalized and may be subject to change.

1. Cass County Fair
   - Thursday, June 23  4:00 – 8:30pm
   - Friday, June 24  11:00am – 7:00pm
   - Saturday, June 25  11:00am – 7:00pm
   - Sunday, June 26  10:00am – 3:00pm
2. Fillmore County Fair
   - Wednesday, July 20  1:00 – 6:00pm
3. Rock County Fair
   - Wednesday, July 27  6:00 – 8:00pm
   - Thursday, July 28  11:00am – 7:00pm
   - Friday, July 29  11:00am – 7:00pm
   - Saturday, July 30  11:00am – 7:00pm
4. Faribault County Fair
   - Thursday, July 28  11:00am – 7:00pm
   - Friday, July 29  11:00am – 7:00pm
   - Saturday, July 30  11:00am – 7:00pm
5. Stevens County Fair
   - Wednesday, August 10  5:00 – 7:30pm
   - Thursday, August 11  5:00 – 9:00pm
   - Friday, August 12  2:00 – 8:00pm
   - Saturday, August 13  12:00 – 8:00pm
Driven to Discover Research Facility
2022 County Fair RFA

6. Beltrami County Fair
   - Sunday, August 14 12:00 – 7:00pm
   - Thursday, August 11 12:00 – 7:00pm
   - Friday, August 12 12:00 – 7:00pm
   - Saturday, August 13 12:00 – 7:00pm

You are required to staff your shifts, two staff are required per study. This will allow for staff breaks periodically throughout the day.

INCENTIVES

As mentioned above, backpack incentives will be covered by OVPR grant funds. D2D-County will provide backpacks to studies who wish to give them away to fairgoers as a ‘thank you’ for their time and energy for study participation. If you choose a different incentive, you are responsible for the cost and transport of those items.

- Individual incentives: you are required to give an incentive of equal value, or a choice of incentives, to each participant.
- Prize drawing (e.g., gift card or electronics).
- Prize-wheel giveaways for participation.
- No incentive: Some D2D studies have not given incentives and still reached their enrollment goals. Keep in mind, however, the fair is a giveaway environment and people like to take something home at the end of the day. Getting people to engage with you without an incentive may prove to be difficult.

REVIEW PROCESS

A review team will evaluate eligible applications using the following considerations:

- Does the study qualify as minimal risk?
- 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 a fair venue?
- Is there a compelling reason for rural engagement?

Inclusion and exclusion criteria for a study may also be taken into account in the review process. The aim is to offer variety for fairgoers, have research teams be successful in their recruitment, and have studies that appeal to a rural audience and address rural issues.

In the online application you will be asked to select which fairs your team is interested in and available to attend. You may indicate you wish to attend one or more than one. You may also indicate which days of the fairs you are available for and the review team will consider this to ensure variety at each 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. The UMN IRB will hold a special session to review D2D applications, both county and state fair apps. Studies with currently-approved IRB applications and studies conducted at D2D either in previous years or in 2022 must also be approved. Researchers will be required to submit their applications by the deadline to be set forth by the IRB (see table below):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cass County Fair</th>
<th>Other County Fairs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial Submission</td>
<td>May 20</td>
<td>May 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>IRB Pre-Review &amp; Notification</td>
<td>May 27</td>
<td>June 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Studies Respond by</td>
<td>June 3</td>
<td>June 24</td>
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</tbody>
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4 of 5
IRB Complete by June 10 June 15

The Cass County Fair is one month earlier than the others, thus the earlier timeline.

**Please begin your short title with “D2D” so that it is easily routed to our IRB liaison.**

EVALUATION OF D2D-COUNTY
You will be asked to participate in an evaluation of this new branch of D2D. More information to come later in the summer.

FUTURE TRACKING OF SELECTED PROJECTS
Success of D2D 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-County. Please contact the D2D Manager, Annie Hotop, 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, visit the D2D website, http://d2d.umn.edu.

D2D DIRECTORS
Ellen Demerath, PhD, School of Public Health
Logan Spector, PhD, Medical School