

SSRPCB-4: Building Pathways for Equity Focused Research in a Changing Funding Landscape

Thursday, January 21, 2027, 10:15 am – 12:15 pm

Presenters:

Katie Edwards, PhD (University of Michigan), Shanna K. Kattari, PhD (University of Michigan), Kim DuMont, PhD (WT Grant Foundation), and George Hoeber, PhD (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation)

Description:

1. What concrete skills/knowledge participants will get; what people will walk away with?

The session is designed to equip participants with a better understanding and new skills to navigate a difficult and evolving funding terrain. Participants will leave with a clearer understanding of the current funding landscape for equity focused and community engaged research, including the opportunities and limitations associated with federal funding, foundations, philanthropy, donor engagement, and community partnerships. Participants will gain practical strategies for identifying and pursuing diverse funding pathways while maintaining commitments to equity, social justice, and community centered research practices. The workshop will directly engage current tensions and complexities facing many scholars in pursuit of federal funding, including questions about adapting or reframing research language and priorities in response to shifting political and funding environments; the ethical and professional implications of these decisions; and strategies for navigating these realities without losing core values or commitments to marginalized communities.

The workshop will also provide concrete guidance related to building sustainable research programs, developing collaborative partnerships, navigating institutional and political pressures, and supporting career development during periods of funding uncertainty. In addition, participants will gain insight into how foundations are thinking about impact, partnership, innovation, and sustainability within the current research climate. Participants will also have opportunities to connect with scholars and practitioners navigating similar challenges and identify strategies for mentorship, collaboration, and professional support.

Led by researchers and foundation leaders with substantial experience navigating diverse funding ecosystems and sustaining equity focused work, this workshop is relevant to scholars at all career levels. Dr. Katie Edwards brings extensive experience leading federally

funded, community engaged research focused on violence prevention with minoritized populations (e.g.,

LGBTQIA2S+ youth and communities), including firsthand experience navigating recent funding and political challenges impacting equity focused scholarship. Dr. Shanna K. Kattari brings extensive expertise in LGBTQ+ health and wellbeing, disability justice, community engaged and mixed methods research, and building innovative research programs focused on marginalized communities. Their work includes federally funded, foundation supported, donor supported, and community engaged scholarship focused on structural inequities, health disparities, and translational research designed to directly benefit communities. The workshop will also include participation from leaders at the William T. Grant Foundation (Dr. Kim DuMont) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (Dr. George Hober), who will provide perspectives on philanthropy, foundation priorities, partnership development, and sustainable approaches to supporting community engaged and equity focused research.

2- What are the specific methods to engage participants to get the skills/knowledge

The workshop will use brief presentations from academic researchers and foundation leaders, facilitated panel discussion, structured audience question and answer opportunities, small group reflection and problem solving activities, and large group discussion. Presenters will share real world examples, lessons learned, and practical strategies related to funding navigation, partnership development, mentorship, and sustainability. Participants will also have opportunities to discuss challenges and collaboratively identify solutions relevant to their own research, practice, and career contexts.

3- Who is the audience? Need prior skills knowledge?

The workshop is intended for doctoral students, postdoctoral scholars, early and mid career researchers, practitioners, community engaged scholars, and others interested in equity focused and community centered research. The session will be especially relevant for individuals working with marginalized populations (e.g., LGBTQIA2S+ individuals, people of color), as well as those navigating uncertainty and precarity related to research funding and sustainability. No prior grant writing or funding acquisition experience is needed.

Agenda:

Outline with times and topics/activities/objectives of how the event will run

0–10 Minutes | Welcome, Introductions, and Framing the Current Funding Landscape Objectives:

- Introduce presenters and participants
- Provide an overview of workshop goals and structure
- Frame current challenges and opportunities impacting equity focused and community engaged research

Activities:

- Brief presenter introductions
- Interactive audience poll/discussion regarding participant concerns and goals for the session

10–35 Minutes | Understanding the Current Funding and Political Landscape Objectives:

- Discuss recent shifts in federal funding priorities and broader political pressures impacting research
- Explore current realities, opportunities, and limitations across funding ecosystems
- Examine tensions related to adapting or reframing research language, priorities, and approaches in the current climate

Activities:

- Facilitated panel discussion
- Audience question and answer discussion

35–60 Minutes | Foundations, Philanthropy, and Community Partnerships Objectives:

- Increase understanding of foundation and philanthropic funding opportunities
- Discuss how foundations think about impact, sustainability, innovation, and partnerships

- Explore practical strategies for building relationships with foundations, donors, and community organizations

Activities:

- Discussion led by foundation representatives from the William T. Grant Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Audience discussion and facilitated Q&A

60–85 Minutes | Mentorship, Career Navigation, and Sustaining Values Aligned Work Objectives:

- Discuss challenges facing doctoral students and early and mid career scholars
- Discuss challenges facing senior scholars who are having to change funding mechanisms
- Explore mentorship and collaboration strategies
- Identify approaches for navigating institutional pressures while maintaining commitments to equity and marginalized communities

Activities:

- Facilitated discussion
- Small group reflection and problem solving activity

85–110 Minutes | Interactive Problem Solving and Audience Engagement Objectives:

- Provide opportunities for participants to apply workshop concepts to their own contexts
- Foster peer learning and collaborative discussion
- Identify actionable strategies and next steps

Activities:

- Brief small-group breakout discussions and large group sharing/report out
- Identification of key takeaways/action steps
- Open audience Q&A

110–120 Minutes | Closing Reflections and Resources Objectives:

- Summarize key takeaways and practical strategies