



IQC Community Engagement Fellowship Application Briefing

The [OU Institute for Quality Communities](#) (IQC) is excited to announce the new Community Engagement Fellowship, through a partnership with the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments. The program has two goals: first, to partner with municipalities in Central Oklahoma to strengthen local economic resilience, and second, to foster a [community of practice](#) among the selected fellows and regional stakeholders committed to learning from each other and reflecting best practices for sustainable economic recovery and long-term resiliency. Each Fellow will lead an applied research project to carry out planning, design, or placemaking services in collaboration with a client community in Central Oklahoma. Fellows will have autonomy over the implementation of projects with support from the Institute for Quality Communities. Fellows may propose to incorporate portions of the project into courses they teach.

The fellowship will include several opportunities for shared learning and culminate in a presentation at a symposium in 2022, which will bring together stakeholders from across the region. Fellows will be part of a network to collaborate with each other on the symposium content and may choose to collaborate on additional research proposals or publication submissions.

Fellows will receive a stipend of \$4,000 and budget of approximately \$15,000. The budget should cover graduate assistants, travel, supplies, printing, and materials, and some expenditures to enhance the project, such as honoraria to invite additional guest experts.

Background

The Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) invited the Oklahoma Main Street Center and OU Institute for Quality Communities to collaborate on a program to provide planning, design, or placemaking recommendations to 3 communities in the ACOG region. The "[Community Economic Resiliency Initiative](#)" (CERI) offers municipalities the opportunity to develop plans that model strategic investment, sustainable economic recovery, and long-term resiliency. CERI emphasizes "Activity Centers" like town centers, commercial business districts, historic districts, transit-oriented development, corridor studies, parks and recreation projects, or others.

As part of the program, each Fellow will collaborate directly with a community partner ("Client"). Community partners have been determined by a competitive application process:

- **El Reno:** The City of El Reno seeks a corridor study of Route 66 west of downtown El Reno. The project will build on previous work in the El Reno Comprehensive Plan, and will explore opportunities for restoration and new development that "adds to the authenticity and practicality or Route 66 cultural heritage tourism in El Reno."

- **Guthrie:** The City of Guthrie seeks a plan for a proposed Noble Park Cultural and Recreational Area. The project site is located west of downtown Guthrie, in an area of historic and cultural importance to Guthrie's African American community. The area is now mostly vacant due to historical flooding of Cottonwood Creek. The work builds on some previous planning efforts, as well as Guthrie's long tradition of historic preservation work. The project is envisioned as a way to honor the history of Noble Park, to add new recreational spaces, and to create a bicycle-pedestrian connection between west Guthrie and downtown Guthrie.
- **Harrah:** The City of Harrah seeks a downtown plan. The plan will build on a 2017 Comprehensive Plan, and is envisioned to help Harrah manage growth and development, honor the town's history, and create stronger social spaces in downtown. Downtown is envisioned as a mixed-use main street area that is "an example to other communities for smart growth and sustainable investment."

The CERI initiative offers Fellows the opportunity to explore sustainable economic recovery and long-term resiliency in the wake of COVID-19, through the context of these local sites that have been identified by the community partners. The network of 3 Fellows will engage with these three places, small-size cities along the edges of the mid-sized metropolitan area of Oklahoma City. It will allow the group to ask important questions related to economic development practice, community identity, and public engagement. How have economic systems and policies been impacted by COVID-19? Which groups were more vulnerable to negative impacts, because of disparities in place before COVID-19 or as a consequence of the pandemic? How have communities adapted and survived? How are we shaping the challenges and opportunities communities face?

Values

This program values a spirit of reciprocity between the university and community partners. We believe community engagement is a mutually beneficial exchange between the university and community. On the academic side, we benefit because community partners provide a tangible context and constituency for our teaching, research, and creative activity. Our community partners labor to connect us with residents and stakeholders so our work can be informed by the powerful resource of local knowledge. In exchange, we aim to provide valuable and useful assistance to community partners, helping them to identify pathways to their goals.

Eligibility & Application Timeline

Faculty, adjunct faculty, and affiliate faculty in the Gibbs College of Architecture are eligible to apply. PhD candidates may apply with approval of their advisors.

March 30	Application Window Opens (via Qualtrics Submission) Link to Apply
April 26	Applications Due
May 5	Notification of Selection

Selection & Criteria

All applications will be reviewed by a panel consisting of IQC staff, GCA senior leadership, and OU-based community engagement specialists. The reviewers will rank the applicants based on the following criteria in the pre-qualification stage:

- Suitability for carrying out the responsibilities in the fellowship, as demonstrated by qualifications and experiences of the applicant.
- Fit with the applicant's engagement, teaching, research, or service agenda.
- Fit of the applicant's knowledge, skills, or abilities with a specific community project.
- Merit of proposed utilization of graduate assistants, classroom teaching, and/or discretionary funds to enhance the project.

Each criterion will be scored using a 5-point scale with 5=Excellent, 4=Very Good, 3= Good, 2= Marginal, and 1= Poor. The applicants will be ranked by totaling all the points from reviewers. Reviewers will be asked to break ties by listing applicants in rank order after individually tallying scores. The reviewers will submit a recommendation for discussion and approval by Gibbs College of Architecture Deans & Directors. Successful and unsuccessful applications will be returned to applicants with review scores and any reviewer comments.

Anticipated Tasks and Timeline

Each Fellow will serve as a project manager with autonomy over the implementation of the project. The tasks below offer a preview of anticipated work, however we recognize that each Fellow will manage their approach based on the Fellow's preferred approach, the nature of the project, and the communication with the Client.

Task I - Establishing the Project (Summer 2021)

- Attend community of practice kick-off meeting hosted by IQC with all IQC Fellows (May)
- Assist with selection of Graduate Assistants from application pool (Summer)
- Host preliminary meeting with Client to refine project details and timeline (Summer)
- Request and obtain any necessary documents or data from Client (Summer)

Task II - Community Research and Engagement (Early Fall 2021 and Ongoing Engagement)

- Attend community of practice meeting hosted by IQC. Fellows will share and review methods of research and engagement.
- Manage research and analysis as needed to support the needs of the project. For example, field work, data collection, diagramming, or mapping to develop an understanding of existing conditions, trends, precedents, etc.
- Coordinate with the Client to implement a community engagement strategy, allowing stakeholders and residents to participate in shaping the project outcomes. For example, workshops, charrettes, surveys, interviews, or other activities. Activities may be ongoing or be revised as needed to ensure adequate time for community feedback.
- Summarize findings in narrative report, supported by maps, images, or graphics as needed.
- Host at least one meeting with Client to discuss findings.

Task III – Recommendations Development (Late Fall 2021)

- Attend community of practice meeting hosted by IQC. Fellows will share and review updates on projects.
- Develop design or planning recommendations, based on findings from research, engagement, and best practices.
- Develop suggested action items, with priorities for short- and long-term implementation. Actions are likely to include a spectrum from “lighter, quicker, cheaper” to more resource-intensive steps. Fellows can collaborate with IQC and ACOG to identify grants and other resources to support implementation.
- Summarize findings in narrative report, supported by maps, images, or graphics as needed.
- Host at least one meeting with Client to discuss recommendations.
- Revise or refine recommendations based on Client feedback.

Task IV – Final Report and Presentation (Spring 2022)

- Attend community of practice meeting hosted by IQC. Fellows will develop reflections on best practices for economic recovery.
- Compile a final report with support from IQC (PDF)
- Compile a final presentation with support from IQC (PPT)
- Host a meeting with the Client/public presenting results of project
- Respond to reflective evaluation by IQC staff

Task V – Present at Program Symposium (2022)

- Participate in a GCA symposium discussing observations and implications from this program for engaged teaching/research, and economic resiliency for mid-size metro areas.

Stipend and Budget

Each Fellow will receive a stipend of \$4,000. Each Fellow will also manage a project budget of approximately \$15,000 to include Graduate Assistant(s), supplies, and honoraria for additional experts as determined by the Fellow in coordination with IQC. The funding is provided to IQC by ACOG and supplemented as necessary by a sponsorship from IQC.

Questions?

Contact Shane Hampton, IQC Director, shanehampton@ou.edu

Application Form

You can expect the application form to ask the following details and questions:

- Name
- Email
- Phone
- Title
- Gibbs College of Architecture Affiliation
- Program/Division
- File Upload (CV or Resume)
- Which project(s) would you be interested in leading?
- What knowledge and experience do you hope to gain through participation in this fellowship, both as a project manager and as a participant in the Community of Practice/Symposium?
- What previous experiences (applied research, community engagement, planning/design practice, etc) have prepared you to take on this work?
- How might this fellowship advance your teaching, research, engagement, or service agenda?
- The project will include a budget to hire graduate assistant(s), the equivalent of two semesters at 0.5 FTE. Fellows have some flexibility in use of funds – Such as one semester at 0.5 FTE for two assistants, or dividing funds among 0.25 FTE assistantships. How do you create a meaningful experience for graduate assistants? Describe how you anticipate utilizing graduate assistants (or undergraduate student workers) in the work to complete the project.
- Do you see opportunity to include portions of the project in a course you teach (i.e., service learning component in a classroom or studio)? If you plan to pursue this, how would it enhance the project and your classroom?
- The project includes some discretionary funding for uses like supplies, group transportation, or honoraria for additional guest experts. How might you utilize discretionary funding to enhance the project?