INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECT TITLE: Equity in Health, Wealth, and Civic Engagement

PLANNING TEAM:

- Jennifer Allen, Community Health
- Bruce Boghosian, Mathematics
- Anna Dalby OVPR
- David Ekbladh, History
- Silke Forbes, Economics
- Kelly Greenhill, Political Science (and IR)
- Eitan Hersh, Political Science
- Ian Johnstone, Fletcher
- Peter Levine, Tisch College (and Civic Studies, Political Science, Philosophy, and CTSI)
- Melissa McInerney, Economics
- Thomas Stopka, Public Health and Community Medicine (and CTSI)
- Monica Toft, Fletcher

Chairperson: The project will be co-chaired by Jennifer Allen, Peter Levine, and Tom Stopka. To the extent that OVPR needs one faculty member to be a point person for this initiative, that can be Levine.

Additional Planning Team members: We propose to approach Penn Loh (UEP), Moon Duchin (Mathematics); Jerold Mande (Friedman); Lionel McPherson (Philosophy); Helen Marrow (Sociology); Margaret McGladrey (Tisch and Sociology, a postdoc); and others.

MISSION AND GOALS (1 page)

Research Priority Area Mission: Tufts will become the leading university in the world devoted to the study of equity, with a particular approach. The Tufts approach will involve a broad definition of the term that encompasses health, voice, and wellbeing as well as wealth and income; a normative debate about what constitutes justice; and attention to how active citizens can improve the world.
**Three-Year Vision:** The project will evolve into a Center on Equity with a building or other physical space and substantial resources for research projects, on the order of $25 million. It will be internationally known for its work on equity with a special flavor.

The center will support original, faculty-led scholarship and develop strategies for communicating to the policy world and public and developing partnerships with significant external organizations and entities.

**Objectives:**

1. The production of a considerable body of research that generates new knowledge and understanding of equity;
2. Resources to allow more faculty, postdocs, and visiting faculty to be hired at Tufts, and/or graduate programs to be established;
3. A distinctive Tufts flavor to this work that is understood both on campus and beyond;
4. A global reputation as an institution to consult on matters of equity;
5. More awareness within and beyond Tufts of the findings of Tufts research on equity;
6. Improved standing in the markets for prospective students (at all levels) and faculty, thanks to an enhanced reputation for high-impact research on equity;
7. Durable new areas of activity, funded by new resources, such as new faculty lines, graduate programs, or labs;
8. People who are educated at Tufts (at all levels) have knowledge and skills that equip them to improve equity. That may include graduates of new executive education programs and other programs aimed at visitors;
9. The Center is seen as the go-to institution for academics, policy makers, politicians, civil society leaders”;
10. Tufts experts on equity engage with communities at the local, regional, national and global levels.

**Specific Goals and Metrics for Phase II Funding (1 Year):**

The two overarching goals of the first year are:

1. To build a larger, more cohesive, and more diverse intellectual community within Tufts (and perhaps encompassing some key colleagues beyond Tufts) who are concerned with equity as described above. These people will understand each others’ work better and be more likely to exchange ideas and collaborate.
2. To write a detailed proposal/plan for Year II and beyond, supported by this substantial and diverse set of Tufts researchers.

**PROJECT PLAN** (2 pages)
A. Overall Approach and Rationale

A key strategy for Year 1 is a set of “curated conversations” about equity (see Milestone 3.3 under B, below). These will not be panels of prepared papers or formal presentations but rather planned and moderated discussions of focused topics, such as (for example) how scholars measure equity in different disciplines and contexts; what value-tensions and tradeoffs are provoked by an equity agenda; or what factors block equity of various types in various settings. Individuals will be recruited to participate in these conversations to ensure disciplinary, demographic, and ideological diversity. The events will be held on at least the Medford and Boston campuses and possibly at the SMFA and/or Grafton.

B. Activities and Expected Outcomes

Milestone 1. Designate team leadership/members/roles

1. Develop roles/responsibilities for team leaders and committee members
2. Establish group process for selection/membership leadership
3. Select leaders and identify committee members (outcomes: leaders, a committee with defined roles)
4. Coordinate with the Tufts Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI), which is considering a proposal for research on Health Equity.
5. Leaders convene committee to draft plan; leaders solicit input from advisory committee (below) and OVPR; committee finalizes plans, submits to OVPR for input/feedback (“outcome”: implementation and evaluation plan)

Milestone 2: Convene Advisory Committee

1. Define roles for advisory committee (outcome: a charge for committee)
2. Identify scholars whose scholarship is focused on equity in wealth, health and/or civic engagement based on data collected by OVPR (outcome: an inventory)
3. Reach out to faculty scholars identified through inventory by email, phone, in person to gather additional data re areas of research/scholarship and assess interest in/gather input on initiative (outcomes: communications, faculty feedback/recommendations on plans)
4. Identify important “nodal points” (i.e. potential advisory committee members across schools, departments and other units) and recruit to committee (outcome: composition, membership)
5. Schedule and convene meetings of advisory committee on a quarterly basis (outcomes: meetings scheduled, attendance, minutes)

Milestone 3: Internal outreach and engagement

1. Develop mechanisms for communication (e.g., listserve, etc) with scholars identified through inventory; develop plan for reaching those not initially identified by inventory
2. Establish and execute plans for “internal dissemination” of Tufts scholarship on equity (e.g., special emphasis in faculty notes, highlight scholars in Tufts media, post examples of scholarly work in equity somewhere

3. Plan “curated conversations” – interdisciplinary, cross-unit discussions on themes central to equity work: definition of equity, theoretical/conceptual underpinnings for equity scholarship in different fields, methods/measures across fields, existing data bases (or potential for shared)- this could take a variety of formats e.g., “pop up” faculty lounge, performances, symposium, “lighting talks”, “speed dating” of investigators from different fields (outcomes = conversations planned, executed, convened; attendance and composition; reports/summaries/synthesis of conversations).

4. Recruit additional members for committee (advisory or general), as appropriate

**Milestone 4. Develop initial implementation and evaluation plan for next phase (Phase 3 funding?)**

1. Identify specific collaborations that have potential for internal or external funding.
2. Through curated conversations, symposia,-or focus groups/interviews: Gather information regarding faculty/scholars’ perception of feasibility, desirability and potential strategies for eventual “center” or “zone” around themes of equity (to be further developed on next round of funding) (“outcome”: summaries, reports, recommendations)
3. Identify potential models/strategies for institutionalizing thematic scholarship at (e.g., TIE) and outside of Tufts – generate report of possible models for moving forward
4. Identify metrics/measures for alternative models

**Milestone 5. Convene retreat for committee members**

1. Generate summary report on “lessons learned” through initial Phase 2 process
2. Discuss and draft proposal for next phase

**Timeline of Proposed Activities with Milestones**

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<th>Year 1</th>
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