

JHU Exploration of Practical Ethics Round 2

Request for Proposals

Issued: March 13, 2017

I. Overview

The JHU Exploration of Practical Ethics Round 2 Request for Proposals aims to stimulate innovative work in practical ethics by Hopkins faculty members. **Practical ethics** is an interdisciplinary field of study that takes on ethical issues arising in professions and scholarly disciplines, within institutions, and in society. In so doing, it seeks to bridge theory and practice, and relies on many areas of expertise. Practical ethics encompasses a wide range of areas and topics in artistic endeavors, biological sciences, biomedical research, business, clinical practice, education, engineering, health care, human interactions with non-human animals and the natural environment, the humanities, international relations, the natural sciences, public health, public policy, and the social sciences. Practical ethics addresses the substance of ethical issues as well as questions about who in a society should decide what to do about those issues, and by what process. Depending on the context, inquiries in practical ethics may work at different levels, focusing on individuals, or on authorities, or on the political process. The field of practical ethics is not restricted to any particular society or culture, and sometimes has a cross-cultural component.

The deep disciplinary expertise at Johns Hopkins University, combined with a desire to address some of the world's most vexing social and ethical challenges, provides a unique environment in which to forge new understandings and new solutions in the realm of practical ethics. Within the University, the Berman Institute of Bioethics was established to address ethical challenges in clinical care, public health and health policy, and biomedical science. Through an initial round of funding launched in 2015, the University focused on developing the interest and capability of Hopkins faculty to engage with areas of practical ethics other than bioethics. **Following the success of the initial round of projects funded through this mechanism, the University now aims to deepen and broaden the entire portfolio of practical ethics efforts across all Hopkins faculty through the allocation of internal funds.**

This document announces a request for proposals (RFP) from faculty who wish to conduct original research, design novel educational experiences, or develop other innovative projects in practical ethics. The common attribute of eligible proposals is that they promise to advance President Daniels' vision of One University by leveraging faculty-led innovation to "contribute substantially to the world of ideas and action" in some domain of practical ethics.

- **Targeted subject areas:** Proposals may address any area of practical ethics within the disciplinary expertise of the applicant(s).
- **Project period and budget:** For an application submitted in response to this RFP, the total project period may not exceed 1 year; the total request amount may not exceed \$50,000 for single-division proposals and \$75,000 for cross-divisional proposals. Matching funds or other in-kind contributions, including faculty release time, from participating departments or divisions are



encouraged. Also encouraged is co-funding with other internal or external award mechanisms, provided that the proposed practical ethics project is for entirely distinct activities not already covered by another award.

- **Funds available:** A total of \$350,000 is available to fund project proposals submitted in response to this RFP.
- **Proposal submission deadlines:**
 - A brief **Statement of Intent**, to be submitted via this Google Form – <https://goo.gl/forms/c96CMqQX4XxWezOh2> – is due **Monday, April 24, 2017**.
 - The Program Officer, Dr. Maria Merritt, will use the Statement of Intent as a basis for providing constructive feedback to all applicants on their proposal ideas. Any applicant who submits a Statement of Intent will be welcome to submit a full proposal.
 - **Full proposals** are due **Monday, June 19, 2017**
- **Earliest anticipated start date for awards:** September 1, 2017

II. Funding Opportunity Description

II.A. Program Goals

The continuing specific goals of the JHU Exploration of Practical Ethics program are to:

- (1) Learn which topics and areas of practical ethics – including new topics and areas not already addressed in response to the earlier 2015 RFP (<http://bioethicsbulletin.org/archive/jhu-projects-explore-ethical-challenges>)– are of interest to faculty, and assess the extent to which these topics resonate across divisional lines;
- (2) Generate excitement and energy around the idea of a concerted and ongoing effort in practical ethics across the University; and
- (3) Define an ongoing program of activity in practical ethics that serves the needs of the divisions and the vision of One University.

II.B. Types of Proposals Solicited

Proposed projects responsive to this RFP may take a wide variety of forms and directions. Within applicants' domains of disciplinary, professional, institutional, and/or societal expertise, proposals should address important challenges in practical ethics. While the following examples may serve to illustrate such challenges, this list is far from exhaustive.

- how to understand right and wrong action (what is ethically required, permitted, or prohibited) in a particular disciplinary or professional context, sphere of public policy, or area of scholarship;
- ethical aspects of leadership, decision making, policy formation, and program implementation;
- relations between organizational cultures and the ethical behavior or character of their individual members;
- integrity, trust, and problems of corruption;



- ethical dimensions of the relations of individual citizens, neighborhoods, and communities to city, state, or national government;
- the ethics of the role of government in relation to private citizens and the private sector;
- the ethics of the role of a nation's government, institutions, the private sector, and individual citizens in relation to refugees, immigrants, and non-citizen residents;
- corporate governance and responsibility;
- the production, protection, and distribution of public goods;
- resource allocation;
- relations between localized goods and values and the forces of globalization;
- protections of, and the justification of infringements on, civil liberties;
- civil rights and the remediation of bigotry;
- reparations for historic wrongs; and
- intergenerational and global justice

The major categories of desired proposals are original research, novel educational experiences, and other innovations. Proposed projects may also involve various combinations of these categories. Examples of promising objectives under each categories are: for *original research*, to identify and advance the scholarly understanding of underexplored ethical issues in faculty's areas of expertise; for *novel educational experiences*, to identify essential but unfulfilled learning objectives for ethics competencies within or across academic disciplines and pilot-test a new approach to achieving them; for *other innovations*, to design a new policy or program solution to a problem of practical ethics. Again, these examples are far from exhaustive; applicants are encouraged to be creative. Under all three categories, applicants may propose to collaborate with appropriate stakeholder groups outside the University provided that those groups fund their own participation.

Questions about whether a given topic or project objective would be appropriately responsive to this RFP may be addressed to the Program Officer, Dr. Maria Merritt, at practicaethics@jhu.edu.

II.C. Eligibility

Proposals may be initiated by faculty whose primary appointment is in any one of the following:

Group A

- Berman Institute of Bioethics
- Bloomberg School of Public Health
- School of Medicine
- School of Nursing

Group B

- Applied Physics Laboratory
- Carey Business School
- Krieger School of Arts & Sciences
- Peabody Institute
- School of Advanced International Studies
- School of Education
- Whiting School of Engineering



5. Identification of Category of Proposal (original research OR novel educational experience OR other innovation OR specific combination)

Full Proposal (due June 19, 2017)

Proposals should be prepared single-spaced with 1-inch margins (minimum font size 11 point), and should conform to the following format:

1. PI or Co-PI Name(s) and Institutional Affiliation(s)
2. Co-Investigator Name(s) and Institutional Affiliation(s)
3. Project Title
4. Abstract (limit ½ page)
5. Narrative summary in lay language to use for publicizing project if funded (limit 150 words)
6. Identification of Category of Proposal (original research OR novel educational experience OR other innovation OR specific combination)
7. Project Description (limit 4 pages): statement of the practical ethics question or problem; specific aims or goals of the project; significance and potential impact; explanation of what makes the project innovative in relation to other work on similar questions or problems; summary of preliminary or pilot work underway (if any); plan for implementation; anticipated outcomes; and plan or vision for next phase of the work beyond the timeframe of the project.
8. Project Management Plan and Timeline (limit 1 page)
9. References Cited
10. Supporting Materials in Non-Written Media (where applicable; provide only in consultation with the Program Officer)
11. Budget (limit 1 page)
12. Budget justification narrative (itemized; limit 1 page)
13. Short bio-sketches of key personnel, emphasizing relevant expertise (limit ½ page per person)

III.B. Proposal submission procedure

Proposals should be submitted via email as PDF attachments to practicaethics@jhu.edu.

Any non-written supporting materials should be submitted in consultation with the Program Officer.

Deadline for submission of all materials: 11:59 p.m., Monday, June 19, 2017.

IV. Application Review Information

The review process will be administered by the Office of the Provost.

Review criteria include:

- Potential to leverage **existing strengths of JHU** in the service of **innovative and unique or distinctive contributions** in the field of practical ethics.

- **Strategic positioning** of proposed project in compelling **longer-term agenda** for further work in practical ethics.
- Feasibility with resources requested; **appropriateness of scope and fit of budget to scope**
- Specific to categories of proposal:
 - For proposals to conduct original research: realistic expectation that results, findings, or insights will be **published** in high-quality peer-reviewed venues.
 - For proposals to design novel educational experiences: clearly articulated pathway toward future **implementation** at JHU and promise of **transferability** to relevantly similar settings.
 - For proposals to develop other innovations: evidence of likely **feasibility** and potential for future **scalability**.

V. Funding Restrictions

Funding may be requested to support all activities justified in the budget. This may include, but is not limited to, salary support and benefits for faculty, staff, or students participating in the project, purchase of materials and supplies, and transportation expenses where applicable. No indirect costs may be charged to these grants. No funds may be budgeted for personnel or collaborating entities outside JHU.

VI. Award Administration

Award notices will be issued on or shortly after July 14, 2017. The earliest start date for funded awards is September 1, 2017.

VI.A. Reporting requirements for award recipients

Within 60 days of the completion of the award period, recipients will be expected to submit final narrative reports detailing outcomes, successes, and reflections on anything that did not go as planned. The final report should include discussion of future opportunities that can build on the outcomes of funded work.

It is anticipated that award recipients will present their findings, results, and/or products at a capstone Symposium to be held in October 2018. Funded projects might yield different products (article submitted to peer-reviewed journal for publication, white paper, artistic performance, pilot data for a future project, *etc.*), but all will inform the discussion of the pursuit of practical ethics at JHU. Projects will be publicized in JHU communications (such as “the Hub” and divisional magazines) in order to highlight the recipients’ work as well as broad practical ethics work at JHU.



VII. How to Obtain More Information

Potential applicants are encouraged to contact the Program Officer, Maria Merritt, Associate Professor in the Berman Institute of Bioethics and the Bloomberg School of Public Health, at practicaethics@jhu.edu.

Appendix

Topics addressed in first round of projects funded by the JHU Exploration of Practical Ethics:

1. Production, consumption, and disposal of disposable plastic consumer goods
2. Ethics education for undergraduates in engineering
3. University-community engagement and related educational curricula
4. Moral distress and moral resilience in selected occupational and professional settings
5. Islamic financial engineering
6. Educational organizations' responsibilities to students when offering highly specialized training
7. Mass incarceration and solitary confinement of African Americans; art and social activism
8. Mitigating conflict among water and food resource-constrained populations in Northern Kenya
9. Interactions among altruism, desire for economic gain, and tolerance for physical discomfort