

## SCRA RESEARCH SCHOLARS 2026 PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT 2026

The SCRA Research Council is delighted to announce the application period for the 2026 SCRA Research Scholars Program.

1. The application period begins on Tuesday April 14, 2026, and **continues through Friday May 08, 2026.**
2. A primary goal of the SCRA Scholars Program is to advance the research careers of untenured community psychologists to help them successfully obtain tenure. Ultimately, through the Research Scholar Program, the SCRA Research Council seeks to enhance the intellectual contributions of promising community psychology scholars and increase the number of articles authored by community psychologists in AJCP and other community psychology journals.
3. Untenured faculty who may apply for the program include, but are not limited to community, community clinical, community social, community organizational, community health, and community developmental psychologists.
  - a. SCRA members who are tenure-track faculty in community psychology graduate programs, other graduate programs in psychology that include community psychology, or other graduate programs or schools in public health, social work, education, public policy, applied health sciences, or psychiatry that include community psychology are eligible to apply for a SCRA Research Scholar appointment.
  - b. Priority is given to untenured faculty in doctoral programs in or including community psychology as these faculty will be mentoring those most likely to become community psychology faculty.
4. For 2026, **the Research Council will have up to 4 funded Research Scholar appointments.**
  - a. In line with the SCRA Executive Committee's commitment to uprooting white supremacy, we encourage Black and other BIPOC scholars and scholars dedicated to justice, diversity, equity, inclusion and access to apply. One scholar appointment is designated for BIPOC scholars with a priority for Black scholars. Other appointments are open to all SCRA members including BIPOC scholars who qualify as noted in this announcement.
  - b. If there are more than 4 highly qualified applicants, the Research Council may consider awarding unfunded Research Scholar appointments that include Research Mentoring, Professional Development and Peer Support

### The Elements of the SCRA Research Scholar Program

The SCRA Research Scholar Program includes four major elements- mentoring, professional development, peer support, and funding:

1. **Mentoring:** Scholars will have a senior community psychology researcher mentor them on their research plan, progress and related matters for the duration of the Scholarship. Mentors are expected to have research interests that complement those of the Scholars and a commitment to facilitating others' professional development. Successful mentors for SCRA Research Scholars are community psychologists who can demonstrate a robust research career by having

published articles in high quality journals and successfully obtained external funding for their investigations. They are often SCRA Fellows and have some experience mentoring junior faculty.

2. **Professional Development:** Scholars engage in professional development sessions led by outstanding academic community psychologists and other accomplished scholars with relevant expertise. Scholars will have input into the topics and scholars who will lead these sessions. Some topics previously selected include publishing in community psychology, obtaining external research funding, developing an effective research group, preparing for third-year and promotion and tenure reviews, and pursuing innovative research in a toxic climate.
3. **Peer Support:** Peer Support involves meeting regularly as a cohort to discuss work-related issues of common interest and to engage in a writing circle. These sessions are organized by cohort members. They address mutual support which usually takes the form of regular (e.g., weekly) cohort calls for writing, discussion of work-related topics of shared interest, and/or sharing feedback on one another's work.
5. **Funding:** SCRA Research Scholars **may receive up to \$2,500 for research expenses** over the time they are Research Scholars, i.e., typically two years. Funding can be used for research and professional development expenses and will become available once Scholars have selected a mentor and developed an approved working budget and professional development plan.

### Application Materials to Submit

SCRA members who meet the criteria for application are strongly encouraged to apply. Each applicant must submit:

- A completed SCRA Research Scholar [Application Form](#)
  - A Research Proposal. The Research Scholar Proposal should be no more than 4 pages single spaced in 12-point font and uploaded to the Application Form on REDCap (Last page). In this proposal, the applicant must clearly identify:
    - The need for mentoring, cohort support and research funding
    - The research study (or studies) and/or related research activities to be undertaken during the program period, the time commitments, and any community-engaged research involved
    - The professional development activities to be undertaken during the program period
    - Specific budgeted costs including a brief budget justification describing how the funds will be used in service of the research and/or professional development of the candidate (Up to \$2500). See the SCRA website for policy regarding spending: <https://scra27.org/members1/reimbursement-form/>
    - How your research aligns with [SCRA mission, vision, and values](#), and the potential contribution to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- A current Curriculum Vita, **including grants/funding attempts, manuscripts in the pipeline (under review, in preparation), courses taught, relevant service to the field and to the community (e.g. journal review, mentorship) and conference presentations in addition to the usual items should also be uploaded with the Application Form.**

- The names and contact information of three references who can speak to the applicant's research ability and potential to make meaningful scientific contributions to community psychology.
- Three exemplars that illustrate the applicant's best scientific work in community psychology and related areas of scholarship. Publications may be published peer-reviewed manuscripts, chapters, or other public or field-facing accounts that exemplify the applicant's best scholarship.

**Tips for a successful proposal: In a successful proposal, applicants will:**

1. Offer a persuasive rationale that their need for mentoring, cohort support and research funding will be addressed effectively through the Research Scholar appointment.
  - a. We recognize that applicants may have different needs around mentoring and may have different goals for how mentorship can support their professional journeys. We encourage applicants to describe what forms of mentoring, around what areas of professional development (e.g., publications, research team building, teaching, service, funding, etc.), and at what levels of intensity might best serve them. Scholars may choose to nurture relationships with existing mentors and/or explore new mentoring relationships with the support of the Research Council.
2. In addition to and separate from the need for mentoring, we encourage a description of specific ways in which support from peer scholars (i.e., cohort support) can benefit applicants. What professional goals will cohort support help the applicant achieve? The rationale will also present a compelling case that conveys how activities, specific budget items and time commitments are appropriate for: (1) developing particular kinds of expertise the applicant seeks and (2) enhancing the applicant's community psychology research program in a way that will increase the applicant's likelihood of obtaining tenure.
3. We also value a well-developed, succinct proposed research study or plan for development that is feasible, aligned with the mission of the program, and provides enough detail for reviewers to determine the rigor of the proposed plan. We understand funds may not be able to support a whole study but please provide enough context that allows the reviewer to assess how it fits into your overall research program and future plans.
4. More generally, the successful proposal will succinctly speak to how the applicant's research career will make a scientific contribution to the field of community psychology. Overall, we encourage applicants to make the contributions of their scholarship explicit and, to the degree that it is relevant, make it clear how your research advances justice, diversity, equity, inclusion and access

### **Selection Process and Considerations**

The applications will be reviewed by the SCRA Research Council. Considerations for selecting Scholars fall into two categories: applicant qualities, and Scholar plans and benefits.

**Applicant Qualities:** What qualities does the applicant bring to the Research Scholar role? These qualities may include:

- Untenured faculty member on the tenure track with community psychology research interests in a currently functioning community psychology graduate program or a graduate program that includes community psychology at an institution of higher education. Faculty in doctoral programs will be given preference.
- Research program and record to date
- Work in the research pipeline and future promise for making a scientific contribution to the field
- SCRA membership and SCRA involvements
- Performance on grants and other research support
- Contribution to diversity including but not limited to BIPOC identity, gender, sexual orientation, and disability

**Research Scholar Plans and Benefits:** What are the applicant's plans for the term of the Scholar appointment and what benefits will the Scholar appointment offer the applicant? These considerations include:

- Overall goals for the Research Scholar during their appointment and methods of seeking those goals
- Mentoring relationship envisioned including mentor strengths, mentoring activities, expertise mentee seeks to acquire from mentoring, and the nature and frequency of mentoring interactions for two active people. What could be barriers to effective mentoring (e.g., distance and busy schedules) and how they might be overcome?
  - Mentors: Applicants may know one or more mentors whom they think will be very appropriate and, if so, can mention them in their application. Alternatively, the applicant may know the kind of strengths sought but not specific people. In the latter instance, the Research Council will help anyone once selected as a Research Scholar obtain an appropriate mentor. The Research Council will prioritize being a tenured faculty, or a Fellow of SCRA, due to research contributions and other signs of a robust research career in community psychology in selecting experienced, talented research mentors.
- Research Funding: The applicant should include a proposed budget for the amount of the Scholar award that states the specific items to which the funds will be allocated and how such expenditures will enable the applicant to achieve their goals for the Scholar appointment.
- Benefits anticipated from the funding, the mentoring, professional development and the peer support dimensions of the Research Scholar appointment for the applicant's research career, especially being promoted and obtaining tenure.
- Particular importance is paid to:
  - Significance – what is the potential for the research to make a significant contribution?
  - Readiness – Is the candidate prepared and are the proposed activities feasible and well developed given their previous work?
  - Innovation – Is there novelty in the research question and aim or design?
  - Approach – Are the proposed activities feasible, appropriate and rigorous?

- Budget – Does the applicant provide enough specificity to highlight the benefits of the funding to the scholar and their overall research program?
- Impact – What is the likelihood that the appointment will enhance the candidate’s potential for independent research contributions to the field?

The Research Council reserves the option of offering fewer Research Scholar appointments if the funding is less than anticipated and/or if the applicant pool does not yield appropriate candidates. On the other hand, we may offer more unfunded, mentored Research Scholar appointments with cohort support if the applicant pool yields many very talented candidates.

The application deadline for all materials is Friday May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026. All application materials should be submitted on [REDCap](#). This is our first year using REDCap in attempt to streamline submissions, improve applicant experience, and assist with review. Please let us know if you encounter challenges with the submission process. Questions regarding the SCRA Research Scholars Program may be addressed to Samantha Reaves at [sreaves@som.umaryland.edu](mailto:sreaves@som.umaryland.edu). Presently, we anticipate that Scholar applicants will be informed of the selection decisions in June and that Scholar appointments may begin starting July 1, 2026.