



## OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE


Marc Elrich  
County Executive

Tiffany Ward  
Director and Chief Equity Officer

### MEMORANDUM

March 25, 2025

To: Jennifer Bryant, Director  
Office of Management and Budget

From: Tiffany Ward, Director  
Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice 

Re: Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) for Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #25-66 UM3 Institute for Health Computing

- I. **FINDING:** The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that Supplemental Appropriation #25-66 *UM3 Institute for Health Computing* expands the capacity of the Institute, which was initiated with funding from Supplemental Appropriation #23-49, but it does not substantively alter the approaches or goals of the Institute. As such, ORESJ's main finding statement from its racial equity impact assessment (REIA) of supplemental appropriation #23-49 is applicable here and affirms that supplemental appropriation #25-66 *has the potential to advance racial equity and social justice in the long term*. In addition, the specific enhancements involved with this supplemental appropriation could accelerate work involved with technological and clinical discoveries used to help address racial health disparities.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** The purpose of Supplemental Appropriation #25-66 UM 3 - Institute for Health Computing is to allocate \$3,000,000 in Federal Congressionally Directed Spending/Community Project Fund (CDS/CPF) Grant to enable the University of Maryland Institute of Health Computing (IHC) to purchase advanced computational equipment. According to available information, "the equipment will significantly enhance the speed and breadth of analysis the IHC can provide in supporting its research in the County and in supporting local and regional health, technology, and innovation companies."

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Racial Equity and Social Justice

101 Monroe Street • Rockville, Maryland 20850 • 240-777-2550  
[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore)

# Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) for Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #25-37 Streets and Roads—Roadside Trees-Protection

March 25, 2025

Page 2 of 3

UMC-IHC, located in North Bethesda, combines the expertise and academic resources of the University of Maryland, College Park, the University of Maryland, Baltimore, and the University of Maryland Medical System to serve as a hub for health computing innovation in Montgomery County, Maryland<sup>1</sup>. UM-IHC aims to “improve well-being and quality of life, fight disease and enhance outcomes for all people across Maryland and beyond”<sup>2</sup>. Its research areas include applied AI, bioinformatics, immersive visualization, real-world evidence and adaptive clinical trials, population health, and therapeutic drug discovery<sup>3</sup>. In November 2022, the Montgomery County Council adopted Resolution 19-1480 which allocated \$15,000,000 in General Fund Undesignated Reserves to fund essential start-up costs and operational needs of the UM-IHC<sup>4</sup>. The UM-IHC also received funding support from the University of Maryland Strategic Partnership: MPowering the State<sup>5</sup>. To date, some of IHC’s accomplishments include the formation of 10 industry partnerships, publication of 150 scientific papers, submission of two scientific patents, employment of 70 research and support staff at its North Bethesda location<sup>6</sup>. Information provided along with this request states that “The IHC has in its first two years hired a high percentage of diverse researchers and staff, and in addition has made a significant number of hires of ‘groups underrepresented in science’, which recognizes the fact that in addition to racial and ethnic minorities who are underrepresented in science, women are also historically underrepresented in science”<sup>7</sup>. It is estimated that with expanded capacity, enabled by the CDS/CPF Grant, the UM-IHC will be able to hire an additional 30 employees by the end of 2025 and also increase the number of onsite internships and the number of local and regional companies served<sup>8</sup>.

III. **ANALYSIS:** In November 2022, ORESJ conducted a racial equity impact assessment on Montgomery County’s initial UM-IHC funding. In that REIA, ORESJ focused on the anticipated employment, education, and business development benefits of the Institute. Key considerations include:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ihc.umd.edu/about>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ihc.umd.edu/about>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ihc.umd.edu/>

<sup>4</sup> [https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/DownloadFilePage?FileName=11693\\_1\\_22683\\_Resolution\\_19-1480\\_Adopted\\_20221129.pdf](https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/DownloadFilePage?FileName=11693_1_22683_Resolution_19-1480_Adopted_20221129.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://mpower.maryland.edu/um-strategic-partnership/#:~:text=the%20State%20\(MPower\)-,The%20University%20of%20Maryland%20Strategic%20Partnership%3A%20MPowering%20the%20State%20\(MP,over,state's%20leading%20public%20research%20institutions.](https://mpower.maryland.edu/um-strategic-partnership/#:~:text=the%20State%20(MPower)-,The%20University%20of%20Maryland%20Strategic%20Partnership%3A%20MPowering%20the%20State%20(MP,over,state's%20leading%20public%20research%20institutions.)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ihc.umd.edu/news-events/second-anniversary-ribbon-cutting>

<sup>7</sup> Response to RESJ Template Questions. Exact demographics were not provided.

<sup>8</sup> March 10, 2025 Memo.

## **Education and Employment**

*From the colonial era to the present, racial inequities have characterized many aspects of the healthcare system and, by extension, the biotech (and life sciences) industry—the composition of the workforce as well as the treatment and outcomes of Black, Indigenous, and people of color within it. Persistent occupational and educational segregation, underinvestment in training and support for STEM teachers, and inequitable access to higher education attainment continue to limit the participation and advancement of Black, Latino, and women workers in STEM fields.<sup>9</sup>*

## **Small Business Development**

*Between 2007 and 2017, 3.6% of The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) applications were submitted by what the awarding agency calls socially or economically disadvantaged owners, and 2.5% of awards went to this group. For comparison, organizations led by white men had about a 20% chance of having their application granted, whereas, for women, socially and economically disadvantaged owners, the win rate was less. For socially and economically disadvantaged women the rate was 10%.*

For more background information and data about how racial equity and social justice were considered in the analysis of the UM-IHC's benefits, please read REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #23-49 Institute for Intelligent and Immersive Computing for Life Science and Medicine<sup>10</sup>.

Funding from Supplemental Appropriation #25-66 does not substantively alter the Institute's approach to addressing systemic inequities in employment, education, business development, and longer-term health outcomes, but the CPS/CDF does enhance its capacity to undertake additional research focused on factors that lead to racial disparities in medical outcomes in Maryland, expand virtual reality training used to reduce transportation barriers to employment and identify medical advances more quickly. Because these enhancements may speed up the development of medical insights, and clinical treatments, and grow the number of people employed in life sciences, it's possible that this funding could create benefits that help to reduce racial disparities in employment, education, and health outcomes identified in ORESJ's REIA of supplemental appropriation #23-49. As with findings from that REIA, benefits in the short run may be small in scale but could contribute in the long term to creating more equitable opportunities in life science fields as well as the development of drugs or technologies that can address health disparities.

cc: Thomas Lewis, Development Ombudsmen, Office of the County Executive  
Tricia Swanson, Director, Strategic Partnerships, Office of the County Executive

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/23-49.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/23-49.pdf>