



DASH Mentor: University of Pittsburgh
Center for Social and Urban Research and the
Urban Health Collaborative at Drexel University
School of Public Health

Mentor Team: Robert Gradeck, Project Manager, Western Pennsylvania Regional Data Center; Daniel Galpern, Project Coordinator, West Philly Promise Neighborhood

Mentor Areas of Expertise

- Developing collaborative local data partnerships
- Assessing and mapping local data ecosystems
- Community engagement and civic data literacy
- Creating or leveraging existing community indicator systems and data repositories

The University of Pittsburgh Center for Social and Urban Research (UCSUR) is a hub for interdisciplinary research and collaboration focused on social, economic, and health issues most relevant to our society. UCSUR hosts the Western Pennsylvania Regional Data Center, which provides an inclusive community open data infrastructure, and provides support to an ecosystem of civic data publishers and users. The Drexel Urban Health Collaborative (UHC) aims to improve health in cities by increasing scientific knowledge and public awareness of urban health challenges and opportunities. The UHC focuses on generating data on health inequities to train urban health leaders and partner with communities, policy makers, and other stakeholders to reduce health inequalities and promote environmental sustainability.

As a DASH Mentor team, staff from the UCSUR and the UHC will draw on their experience supporting local collaborative data sharing efforts as well as their participation in national networks of practice, including the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership.

Proposed Key Learnings / Objectives

Mentees will be supported in assessing and strengthening various aspects of their local data ecosystem, including relationships, capacity, and data infrastructure. To that end, Mentees may:

1. Conduct a data ecosystem mapping activity to help them identify strengths, gaps, and potential partnership opportunities;
2. Create activities designed to build civic data literacy and engage community members in civic data conversations;
3. Build data infrastructure and learn how to approach software development and procurement;
4. Craft inclusive data governance processes with multi-sector stakeholders;
5. Identify data sources and indicators that can inform community health strategies; and
6. Understand how to develop and use data visualization tools in their work.

Mentee Eligibility and Fit

This Mentorship is best suited for organizations looking to use administrative and survey data from a variety of sectors to address the social determinants of health and improve community health outcomes. Communities currently working with or planning to work with public data and that are interested in building and strengthening data collaborations are ideal candidates. Potential participants may include staff of local government agencies including public health departments, universities, health care organizations, local non-profits, etc. Communities in early stages of their work and organizations that want to establish formal mechanisms for governance or structures for developing a data repository are encouraged to apply. This mentorship would not be a good match for communities who are seeking guidance about handling sensitive data (matching individual datasets) or integrating protected datasets between government agencies.

Mentors will work with their Mentee cohorts to narrow the focus of program activities from the list of potential topics. At the end of the mentorship, each group will have the opportunity to share tools and resources developed throughout the program with the All In network.