

**Year 2 Public Description of Work for
Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education**

Center for Institutional Courage

**First Year Activities: Sharing and Advancing Research on Institutional
Courage**

Relevant Rubric Area(s): Trauma-Informed Response and Education Programs; Leadership Education and Skill Development; Improving Communication and Increasing Transparency.

Description of Work:

Overview: The Center for Institutional Courage¹ – *Courage* – was founded in 2020 with the mission to advance the world’s understanding of institutional courage and institutional betrayal through rigorous scientific research, wide-reaching education, and data-driven action – with the goal to create more accountable, effective, and equitable institutions for everyone. In our first year, we have established a number of initiatives that are relevant to the *2021 Rubric on Areas of Work for Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education*. Two initiatives discussed below, *The Courage Brief* and the 2021 Institutional Courage Research Grant, are the focus of this Description of Work. Both initiatives serve the larger mission of Courage to disseminate existing research on, and facilitate new research about, institutional courage.

The Courage Brief: We established a bimonthly newsletter, *The Courage Brief*, that serves multiple functions for Courage. First, *The Courage Brief* serves as a touchpoint with interested individuals and provides periodic updates on our initiatives and work towards our mission. Second, it provides an educational function for our audience. We feature individuals associated with Courage – academic researchers, DEI professionals, corporate professionals, and others – who discuss topics relevant to Courage and to the *2021 Rubric*. Topics have included: how diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives are a form of institutional courage; the importance of engaging the wider community when conducting sexual violence and other trauma-related research; and disseminating scientific research on institutional betrayal and institutional courage. Third, *The Courage Brief* serves a dissemination function. Relevant publications from individuals associated with Courage – Senior Advisors, Research Advisors and Associates, & Education Advisors and Associates – are aggregated and linked for ease of sharing, providing a digest of high-quality, often scientific, content related to institutional betrayal and institutional courage.

¹ The terms “Center for Institutional Courage” and “Institutional Courage” are registered trademarks.

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2021 Institutional Courage Research Grant: The goal of the 2021 Institutional Courage Research Grant program is to fund research on institutional courage and institutional betrayal, with a particular interest in funding previously unstudied institutions and/or marginalized populations. Applicants may request up to \$4,000 in funding for projects that directly address the Courage's [Knowledge Base and Research Priorities](#). Our *Research Priorities* for institutional courage and institutional betrayal are as follows:

- Institutional Courage
 - How can organizations that were developed within discriminatory ideals, such as police departments and universities, engage in institutional courage?
 - Once a leader has committed a betrayal, what do they need to do to show institutional courage? How will members of the institution know when that leader actually has made things right?
 - Institutional courage is often associated with prioritizing long-term goals vs. short-term goals, like avoiding lawsuits instead of addressing the actual problem (e.g., sexual violence). How do we instead incentivize long-term goals?
- Institutional Betrayal
 - How can we investigate overt institutional betrayal, as when a government orders children to be separated from their families or when a victim reports a sexual assault and the institution retaliates?
 - What are the roles of trust, dependence, and love in the harm victims experience from institutional betrayal?

We look forward to sharing with NASEM the projects that are selected for this inaugural grant program from Courage, and plan to offer an additional grantmaking cycle in 2022 as resources allow. Courage also plans on continuing to develop initiatives that provide an education/dissemination function about research on institutional betrayal and institutional courage, as well advance research on institutional courage and institutional betrayal.

More Information: More information about these initiatives and about Courage can be found at the website below, and we encourage Action Collaborative and Partner Network organizations to reach out if they are interested in our work.

Website for further information (if applicable): www.institutionalcourage.org

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