Special PCORI Funding Announcement

Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Award Special Cycle: Supporting Engagement in and Dissemination of PCOR/CER in the Context of COVID-19

Published April 17, 2020

This PCORI Funding Announcement (PFA) applies to the proposal deadline of May 22, 2020, at 5 pm ET. Submission instructions, templates, and other resources are available at https://www.pcori.org/funding-opportunities/announcement/engagement-award-special-cycle-covid-19
About PCORI

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) was authorized by Congress in 2010 as a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization. PCORI’s purpose, as defined by our authorizing legislation, is to help patients, caregivers, clinicians, policy makers, and other healthcare system stakeholders make better-informed health decisions by “advancing the quality and relevance of evidence about how to prevent, diagnose, treat, monitor, and manage diseases, disorders, and other health conditions” and by promoting the dissemination and uptake of this evidence.

PCORI is committed to transparency and a rigorous stakeholder-driven process that emphasizes patient engagement. PCORI uses a variety of forums and public comment periods to obtain public input to enhance its work. PCORI helps people make informed healthcare decisions and improves healthcare delivery and outcomes by producing and promoting high-integrity, evidence-based information that comes from research guided by patients and other stakeholders.

Special PCORI Funding Announcement for Engagement Awards in Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

- Due to the rapidly evolving nature of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, the full proposal submission deadline for the Engagement Award Special Cycle: Supporting Engagement in and Dissemination of PCOR/CER in the Context of COVID-19 (hereafter referred to as Special Cycle: COVID-19) is May 22, 2020 at 5 pm ET.
- A Letter of Inquiry (LOI) is not required for this PCORI Funding Announcement.
- The contract is allowed to begin on July 1, 2020 or August 1, 2020.
**Overview**

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<tr>
<th>Published</th>
<th>April 17, 2020</th>
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<tr>
<td>Full Proposal Deadline</td>
<td>May 22, 2020 by 5 pm ET</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full proposals will be screened for responsiveness to this PFA and for fit to program goals. Notification of decision will occur within 20 days of the submission deadline.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Note:</strong> An LOI is not required for this PFA.</td>
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<td><strong>Key Dates</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Virtual Information Session:</td>
<td>Available April 17, 2020</td>
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<td>Application Open Date:</td>
<td>April 20, 2020</td>
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<td>Application Deadline:</td>
<td>May 22, 2020 by 5 pm ET</td>
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<td>Application Status Notification:</td>
<td>Within 20 calendar days of deadline</td>
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<td>Allowable Project Start Date:</td>
<td>July 1, 2020 or August 1, 2020</td>
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<td><strong>Announcement Type</strong></td>
<td>Research Support Award</td>
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<td><strong>Total Costs</strong></td>
<td>Award total costs may not exceed $150,000</td>
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<td>The maximum budget includes all direct and indirect costs.</td>
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<td>At the time of contract execution, PCORI sets aside all the funds associated with an awarded project to be made available throughout the contract's period of performance. This PFA does not consider exceptions to the budget. PCORI will not review submissions exceeding the stated maximum budget.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum Project Period</strong></td>
<td>One year</td>
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<td>This PFA does not consider exceptions to period-of-performance limits. PCORI will not review submissions exceeding the stated period of performance.</td>
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<td><strong>Funds Available Up To</strong></td>
<td>PCORI plans to award up to $21 million in fiscal year 2020 as part of the Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Awards.</td>
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<td><strong>Eligibility</strong></td>
<td>Applications may be submitted by any private-sector organization, including any nonprofit or for-profit organization; any public-sector organization, including any university or college hospital or healthcare system; or any unit of local, state, or federal government. The Internal Revenue Service must recognize all US applicant organizations. Organizations may submit multiple funding applications. Individuals are not permitted to apply. Nondomestic components of organizations based in the United States and foreign organizations may apply, as long as there is demonstrable benefit to the US healthcare system and US efforts in the area of patient-centered research can be shown clearly.</td>
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<td><strong>Review Criteria</strong></td>
<td>1. Program Fit</td>
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<td>2. Project Plan and Timeline</td>
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<td>3. Qualifications of the Project Lead</td>
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<td>4. Personnel and Collaborators</td>
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<td>5. Past Performance</td>
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<td>6. Budget/Cost Proposal</td>
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<td><strong>Contact Us</strong></td>
<td><strong>Programmatic Inquires:</strong> <a href="mailto:ea@pcori.org">ea@pcori.org</a> or phone (202-370-9312)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCORI will respond within three business days. However, we cannot guarantee that all questions will be addressed three business days prior to an application deadline. Applicants are asked to plan accordingly. It is the applicant’s responsibility to submit the application on or before the stated deadline.</td>
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<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>Deadlines are at 5 pm ET.</td>
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I. Introduction

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) plans to award up to $21 million in fiscal year 2020 as part of the Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Awards. These awards are for research support rather than a research funding opportunity.

The Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Awards support projects that encourage active integration of patients, caregivers, clinicians, and other healthcare stakeholders as integral members of the patient-centered outcomes research/comparative clinical effectiveness research (PCOR/CER) enterprise.

This Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Award Special Cycle Funding Announcement—Supporting Engagement in and Dissemination of PCOR/CER in the Context of COVID-19—aims to support projects that help communities increase their capacity to participate across all phases of the PCOR/CER process while responding to contextual changes as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is an opportunity to explore virtual/distanced methods of engagement and generate new questions and evidence needs across stakeholder groups.

II. General Requirements for Engagement Awards

This section includes language that is specific to PCORI’s requirements for programmatic responsiveness under this funding announcement. Applicants should use this section as guidance when preparing their full proposals. For information related to administrative and technical requirements for application submission, please consult the Engagement Award Submission Instructions for Special Cycle: COVID-19.

Engagement Award Priorities

The Engagement Award program supports PCORI’s Engagement Imperative—defined in our Strategic Plan—and provides a platform to increase engagement in research, that is, the meaningful involvement of patients, caregivers, clinicians, and other healthcare stakeholders throughout the research process. We expect projects selected for an Engagement Award to result in tools and resources that may be useful to other awardees for increasing patient and/or other stakeholder engagement in PCOR and CER, PCORI, and the broader PCOR community. We are committed to using and broadly sharing this information.

Categories of Nonresponsiveness

Applications will be considered nonresponsive for an Engagement Award if they propose:

- Projects solely intended to increase patient engagement in health care or healthcare systems rather than healthcare research
- Projects to design or test healthcare interventions
- Activities that involve the use of a drug or medical device
- Development of clinical practice guidelines, care protocols, or decision support tools
• Projects related to quality measures or engagement around quality measures
• Projects to recruit and enroll patients for clinical trials
• Projects that only involve patients as subjects (individuals enrolled into a study as participants)
• Research studies including randomized controlled trials, observational studies, and pragmatic clinical studies
• Development or maintenance of a registry, or recruitment to participate in a registry
• Projects designed solely to validate tools or instruments not created through a PCORI-funded project
• Writing research proposals or completing grant applications, grantmaking
• Projects focused on social determinants of health, with no focus on patient-centered outcomes research or comparative clinical effectiveness research
• Planning for dissemination or dissemination initiatives without including PCORI-funded research or related products
• Implementation of PCORI findings in a clinical practice setting (PCORI will fund dedicated implementation efforts through the Limited PCORI Funding Announcement: Implementation of PCORI-Funded Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Results)
• Projects or meetings without a clear focus on patient-centered outcomes research or comparative clinical effectiveness research.

Avoiding Redundancy

PCORI encourages potential applicants to review funded projects at pcori.org. We intend to balance our funded portfolio to achieve synergy and avoid redundancy where possible.

Required Education of Key Personnel on the Protection of Human Subject Participants

PCORI requires that all applicants adhere to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) policy on education in the protection of human subject participants in the conduct of research. This applies to all individuals listed as key personnel in the application. The policy and FAQs are available on the NIH website.

III. Special Cycle: Supporting Engagement in and Dissemination of PCOR/CER in the Context of COVID-19

The Engagement Award Program is now accepting full proposals for Special Cycle: Supporting Engagement in and Dissemination of PCOR/CER in the Context of COVID-19, a research support—not research—special funding opportunity, for projects up to one year in duration, and up to $150,000 in total costs.

• For the Engagement Award Special Cycle: COVID-19, the contract start date should be planned for either July 1, 2020 or August 1, 2020. No other start dates are permitted.
Funding Priorities

This funding announcement offers an opportunity for organizations and community groups to build capacity/skills for PCOR/CER as well as active dissemination of PCORI-funded research results during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Projects of interest will support organizations with strong ties to patients, caregivers, clinicians, and other stakeholders to equip them to engage as partners in PCOR/CER in the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic. These projects will focus on identifying and using effective methods of engagement to build the knowledge, competencies, and abilities of their community to be meaningful partners in research from topic selection through design and conduct of research to dissemination or implementation of results in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Supporting Engagement in and Dissemination of PCOR/CER in the Context of COVID-19 mechanisms include, but are not limited to:

- Projects that strengthen the skills of stakeholders to engage in PCOR/CER using thoughtful and creative approaches while following state/federal guidelines of social distancing measures
- Projects that will capture the emerging research needs, with emphasis on the PCOR/CER needs of frontline and end-user communities facing the COVID-19 pandemic, including, but not limited to, clinicians, policymakers, hospitals, and health systems
- Projects that equip organizations for ongoing adaptations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Projects that support organizations with strong ties to end-user audiences to lay the groundwork for disseminating and implementing PCOR/CER results. PCORI intends for these projects to focus on strengthening the infrastructure and relationships necessary to actively disseminate and implement research results or products derived from PCORI or related studies.
- Project activities that include developing, demonstrating, and evaluating the processes/pathways/learnings necessary to incorporate PCOR/CER results into decision-making settings while following state/federal guidelines of social distancing measures. We expect that projects selected for an Engagement Award will further PCORI’s goals of promoting the relevance of research to target audiences and the uptake of research results by end users. We are committed to using and sharing successful approaches.

The information and learnings generated by Engagement Award projects must be generalizable; they must be of interest or use not just to the applicant organizations but to others doing related work. The learnings and information will be made public so they can have a broader impact.

Project Evaluation

Applicants must include a completed Evaluation Reporting Tool as a deliverable at the end of the project period. The Evaluation Reporting Tool provides a template to collect information about Engagement Awards that can help with evaluation of our portfolio, as well as evaluation of individual projects. This reporting tool should be taken into consideration during proposal development and uploaded at the end of
the project period with the Final Deliverable Milestone. Awardees may use a different evaluation framework if there is one that is more aligned with their project proposal, subject to PCORI approval. Applicants adopting such an approach must identify the proposed alternate evaluation framework in their application.

The goal of this reporting tool is to ensure a standard set of reported information for Engagement Awards. Given the difficulty in applying metrics and a standard set of indicators around engagement best practices, this tool provides a baseline of outcomes to report on in Engagement Award projects.

At a minimum, evaluation plans should document the reach (in absolute numbers) of the engagement effort among the targeted end users and settings.

**Submitting a Successful Application**

Successful applications will include:

- Rationale for methods of stakeholder engagement to participate in PCOR/CER during the context of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Commitment from the patient and/or stakeholder communities to be involved in the project and clear patient and/or stakeholder involvement/leadership in all stages of the proposed work
- The potential impact of the proposed project
- Evaluation metrics (to be populated in the Evaluation Reporting Tool) for assessing the success of the proposed engagement strategies
- The organization’s relationship to the population and/or context and track record in engagement
IV. Review Process

Applying for this award is a one-stage process unlike applying for other Engagement Awards. A full proposal is required at the time of submission. An LOI is not required. Specific requirements and guidance to complete a successful application are found in the full funding announcement, submission instructions, and submission checklist.

Proposals should be submitted by the application deadline of May 22, 2020 at 5 pm ET. Proposals will be reviewed and final decisions will be made within 20 calendar days of the submission deadline. If the proposal is awarded, a PCORI staff member will coordinate arrangements to begin contracting negotiations. To select high-quality patient-centered projects, PCORI’s Engagement and Contract Management and Administration teams and internal and external subject matter experts (as necessary) will review all applications.

Review Criteria:

1. Program Fit
2. Project Plan and Timeline
3. Qualifications of the Project Lead
4. Personnel and Collaborators
5. Past Performance
6. Budget/Cost Proposal

For additional details on the review process, click here.
V. Applicant Templates

- Biosketch Template
- Board of Directors Template
- Budget Justification Template (One-Year Project)
- Budget Template (One-Year Project)
- Project Deliverable/Milestones Template (One-Year Project)
- Project Workplan and Timeline for Special Cycle: COVID-19

VI. Applicant Resources

Guides

- Special Cycle: COVID-19 PFA (PDF)
- Special Cycle: COVID-19 Proposal Question Guide
- Submission Instructions for Special Cycle: COVID-19
- Submission Checklist for Special Cycle: COVID-19
- Evaluation Reporting Tool Template
- PCORI Online: Pre-award User Guides

Web Resources

- Applicant FAQs
- Review Process
- Virtual Information Session: Posted April 17, 2020
- Funded Projects Portfolio: Engagement in Research

VII. Questions?

If you have any additional questions, please contact PCORI at ea@pcori.org or (202) 370-9312. PCORI will provide a response within three business days.