



## **PCORI Funding Announcement**

### Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Award: Dissemination Initiative

Published January 31, 2020; Revised March 23, 2020

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This PCORI Funding Announcement (PFA) applies to the LOI deadline of May 1, 2020, at 5 pm ET. Submission instructions, templates, and other resources are available at <https://www.pcori.org/funding-opportunities/announcement/engagement-award-dissemination-initiative>.



## 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.

### What Has Changed for the Engagement Awards May 2020 Funding Cycle:

- Due to the rapidly evolving nature of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, the LOI submission deadline for the Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Awards program May 2020 Cycle **has been extended to May 1, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. (ET)**.
- As a result, the name of the April 2020 Engagement Awards funding cycle has changed to the **May 2020 Cycle**.
- The contract start date should be planned for no earlier than December 1, 2020. This is one month later than previously stated.
- Applicants are encouraged to consider alternative plans for convening should an in-person meeting not be feasible. Successful LOIs will include this information in the 'Methods' section.

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## Overview

Published	January 31, 2020	
Letter of Inquiry Deadline	May 1, 2020, by 5 pm (ET)  Letters of Inquiry (LOIs) will be screened for responsiveness to this PCORI Funding Announcement (PFA) and for fit to program goals. Only those invited will be permitted to submit full proposals. Notification of invitation or rejection to submit a full proposal will occur within 45 days of the LOI deadline.	
Submission Instructions	See <a href="https://www.pcori.org/sites/default/files/PCORI-Engagement-Award-Submission-Instructions-May-2020.pdf">https://www.pcori.org/sites/default/files/PCORI-Engagement-Award-Submission-Instructions-May-2020.pdf</a>	
Key Dates	Town Hall: Online System Opens: LOI Deadline: LOI Status Notification: Application Deadline: Earliest Project Start Date:	February 13, 2020, 11:30 am (ET) February 14, 2020 May 1, 2020, by 5 pm (ET) Within 45 calendar days of LOI deadline 40 calendar days after invitation December 1, 2020
Announcement Type	Research Support Award	
Total Costs	Award total costs may not exceed \$250,000 The maximum budget includes all direct and indirect costs.  At the time of contract execution, PCORI sets aside all of 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.	
Maximum Research Project Period	2 years  This PFA does not consider exceptions to period-of-performance limits. PCORI will not review submissions exceeding the stated period of performance.	
Funds Available Up To	PCORI plans to award up to \$21 million in fiscal year 2020 as part of the Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Awards.	
Eligibility	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.	
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
Contact Us	<b>Programmatic Inquires:</b> <a href="mailto:ea@pcori.org">ea@pcori.org</a> or phone (202-370-9312)  PCORI will respond within three business days. However, we cannot guarantee that all questions will be addressed three business days prior to a Letter of Intent (LOI) or application deadline. Applicants are asked to plan accordingly; it is the applicant's responsibility to submit the LOI or application on or before the stated deadline.	
Other	Deadlines are at 5 pm (ET).	



## Table of Contents

<b>I. Introduction</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>II. General Requirements for Engagement Awards</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Engagement Award Priorities .....	5
Categories of Nonresponsiveness.....	5
Avoiding Redundancy .....	6
Required Education of Key Personnel on the Protection of Human Subject Participants .....	6
<b>III. Dissemination Initiative</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Funding Priorities.....	6
Dissemination Strategies .....	7
Materials Development .....	8
Targets for Dissemination.....	8
Evidence Available for Dissemination.....	8
Project Evaluation .....	9
Augmenting Existing Initiatives.....	9
Submitting a Successful Application .....	10
<b>IV. Review Process</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>V. Applicant Templates</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>VI. Applicant Resources</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Guides .....	12
Web Resources .....	12
<b>VII. Questions?</b> .....	<b>12</b>



## 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/clinical effectiveness research (PCOR/CER) enterprise.

The Engagement Award: Dissemination Initiative will give organizations and communities the opportunity to propose meaningful, active dissemination projects aimed at spreading awareness and increasing knowledge of new evidence from PCORI-funded research, targeted directly to patients, clinicians, and others who can use this information to inform healthcare decisions.

## 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 LOIs and applications. For information related to administrative and technical requirements for LOI and application submission, please consult the [Engagement Award Submission Instructions](#).

### 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

LOIs and 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](http://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. Dissemination Initiative

The Engagement Award Program is now accepting Letters of Inquiry for Engagement Award: Dissemination Initiative, a research support—not research—funding opportunity, for projects up to two years in duration, and up to \$250,000 in total costs.

- For the May 2020 Engagement Awards Funding Cycle, the contract start date should be planned for no earlier than December 1, 2020.

#### Funding Priorities

The dissemination of research findings to targeted end users is an important part of promoting the



uptake of these findings into policy and practice. In many cases, the role of a “trusted source” in raising awareness of new evidence or placing it in an appropriate context is critical to enabling the incorporation of this evidence into practice.

Through this award, PCORI seeks to fund projects designed by organizations and communities with established relationships with end users to disseminate the findings from PCORI-funded studies—on their own or as part of the body of existing evidence relevant to the PCORI-funded research findings. For the purposes of this award, we define dissemination as the intentional, active process of identifying target audiences and tailoring communication strategies to increase awareness and understanding of evidence and to motivate its use in policy, practice, and individual choices. For applicants interested primarily in building capacity for dissemination through partnership development and understanding stakeholder interests, please see the Engagement Awards: Capacity Building funding opportunity.

Award funds are intended to allow organizations and communities to bring relevant PCORI-funded research findings to users in ways that will command their attention and interest, encouraging incorporation of this information in decision making.

### Dissemination Strategies

Strategies proposed for disseminating PCORI results will vary based on the results being disseminated, the groups identified as key users of the information, and the goals of the dissemination effort. Systematic reviews of research on dissemination have outlined a range of dissemination approaches that accomplish these goals (McCormack et al., 2013). These include strategies to:

- Increase the reach of evidence. These strategies purposefully distribute evidence to different targeted audiences and settings to increase the reach of information using different communication channels, such as mail, email, phone, text message, TV, radio, print, social media, webinar, and mobile apps.
- Increase people’s motivation to use and apply evidence. These strategies focus on increasing interest in the evidence among targeted audiences and within targeted settings, using local champions, community leaders or groups, thought leaders or groups, or experts to actively endorse or promote the evidence being disseminated.
- Increase people’s ability to use and apply evidence. These strategies enhance people’s ability to understand, use, and apply evidence, generally providing additional resources (how-to materials, training, etc.) relevant to the evidence.

These types of strategies may be used together—in combination or in sequence—to increase the reach of evidence and motivate and facilitate its use. Successful applicants will draw upon these approaches, as well as on their own experience and creativity, in proposing dissemination strategies most likely to be successful with their target audience. Equal consideration will be given to novel approaches—such as contests and challenges promoting awareness—if relevant for a particular target audience and accompanied by a sound rationale.



This funding opportunity is intended to support the active dissemination of findings; PCORI will not support projects that propose passive, untailored, and untargeted dissemination strategies, such as untargeted mass mailing, publication of study findings, and untargeted presentations to heterogeneous groups.

### **Materials Development**

Although the development of messages or materials to be disseminated—including evidence summaries, print materials, and modules—may be an allowable component of an Engagement Award dissemination project, they may not be the primary purpose of dissemination efforts. For this funding announcement, efforts must focus on increasing knowledge and awareness among a substantial group of targeted end users—not simply creating materials that could be used for this purpose. These activities may be supported under this mechanism, but should not be the main focus of proposed projects, nor should they command the primary use or allocation of personnel, time, effort, or budget.

### **Targets for Dissemination**

Targeted end users are those who will ultimately use the findings from research to inform their health or healthcare decisions. For example, patients may use information to decide on a treatment; community members may use evidence to decide on wellness approaches; clinicians may use research findings to update their recommendations or discussions with patients; or clinic administrators may use evidence to choose among peer-support programs.

Dissemination projects should target end users directly, although the focus of the dissemination activity may be on an intermediary. For example, training of providers who will communicate information to patients is within the scope of a dissemination activity.

### **Evidence Available for Dissemination**

The following PCORI-funded research evidence sources may serve as the basis for dissemination activities under this award:

- [PCORI-funded Comparative Clinical Effectiveness Research \(CER\) Results](#). These are papers resulting from PCORI-funded research studies that present comparative clinical effectiveness research results.
- [PCORI-funded Systematic Reviews and Systematic Review Updates](#). These compilations provide answers to specific clinical questions by analyzing published and unpublished results from all relevant studies on a given topic.
- [PCORI Evidence Updates](#). These briefs highlight some of the important research findings from PCORI-funded projects in a plain-language format for patients and other stakeholders.

Applicants must identify the title(s) of the completed PCORI-funded research study (including the institution name for identification purposes, the hyperlink from PCORI's website, and the specific evidence that will be the focus of the dissemination initiative) in the LOI and application.



All evidence that is the focus of a dissemination initiative must have been published (comparative clinical effectiveness research results) or posted on PCORI’s website (the other sources) by the LOI receipt date.

- All applicants must also include as part of their application (if invited) acknowledgment and/or support from the Principal Investigator (PI)—or another member of the original research team who played a significant role—of each PCORI-funded study whose **published findings** are being disseminated in the project, demonstrated by additional written letters of support (applicable for the dissemination of CER study results only).

### 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 their dissemination effort among the targeted end users and settings. Depending on the project, it will also be appropriate to document dissemination success, such as increases in knowledge or awareness of evidence among the target population. Dissemination projects aiming to increase motivation, use, and application of evidence should propose appropriate evaluation strategies for understanding the extent to which these goals were accomplished, using validated measures where available in, for example, pre- and post-tests, surveys, or interviews.

### Augmenting Existing Initiatives

In anticipation of the arrival of findings from PCORI-funded studies, the Engagement Award program has been funding projects to build a community of individuals and organizations better able to participate in PCOR/CER, and/or develop infrastructure and partnerships to disseminate PCORI-funded research results. The focus has been on laying the groundwork for the active dissemination of PCORI-funded research studies. While the Engagement Awards will continue to offer the opportunity for organizations to build capacity for dissemination (see the Engagement Awards: Capacity Building funding announcement), this proposed initiative will provide funding for communities and organizations to actively disseminate PCORI-funded published comparative effectiveness research findings and products.



The proposed Dissemination Initiative Engagement Award complements a body of activity occurring within PCORI's Dissemination and Implementation (D&I) program. The focus of D&I program initiatives has been to promote the sustainable integration of evidence generated from PCORI research investments in practical decision-making settings (i.e., the uptake and implementation of these findings in practice). The D&I program also supports initial steps in targeted dissemination, through PCORI-initiated continuing education activities and evidence updates to promote awareness of selected findings. The Dissemination Initiative Engagement Award offers a broader, stakeholder-initiated opportunity for dissemination of an increasing number of findings, one that will draw on the experience and expertise of organizations and communities in reaching specific end users of information and in capitalizing on a history of trust.

### Submitting a Successful Application

Successful applications will include:

- Why the end users proposed as the target for dissemination are important for PCORI to reach
- The organization's relationship to the targeted end users, and its experience and track record in bringing evidence to them
- Which findings will be disseminated, and why the findings are relevant to the specific end users proposed as the target for dissemination
- The potential impact of uptake of these findings by the targeted end users
- The specific strategies proposed for dissemination to these end users, and justification of the choice of strategies
- The reach of the proposed strategies (i.e., the number of people in each targeted group whose awareness and knowledge of the evidence disseminated will be meaningfully increased)
- Evaluation metrics for assessing the success of the dissemination strategies, including the Evaluation Reporting Tool (see Evaluation section below)
- Plans for sustainability after the project period has ended. Future funding from PCORI should not be assumed. If the project does not lend itself to sustained activities after the project period concludes, provide justification.
- Acknowledgment and/or support from the Principal Investigator (PI)—or another member of the original research team who played a significant role—of each PCORI-funded study whose **published findings** are being disseminated in the project, demonstrated by additional written letters of support (applicable for the dissemination of CER study results only)
- If applicable, applicants are encouraged to consider alternative plans for convening should an in-person meeting not be feasible. Successful LOIs will include this information in the 'Methods' section.



## IV. Review Process

Letters of Inquiry (LOI) should be submitted by the stated deadline. Full proposal submissions are by invitation only, after review and approval of the LOI. Letters of Inquiry will be screened for responsiveness to the call for applications and fit to program goals. Only those selected will be permitted to submit full applications. LOIs will be reviewed within 45 calendar days of submission. A full proposal, submitted upon invitation only, should be submitted within 40 calendar days of receiving the invitation. PCORI may request additional information from the applicant after the initial review of the full proposal. PCORI aims to provide a final decision on the full proposal, via email, within 90 calendar days of receipt. If the full proposal is awarded, a PCORI staff member will coordinate arrangements to begin contracting negotiations. Typically, contract negotiations take about eight weeks.

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 Letters of Inquiry (LOI) and 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 \(Two-Year Project\)](#)
- [Budget Template \(Two-Year Project\)](#)
- [Project Deliverable/Milestones Template \(Two-Year Project\)](#)
- [Project Workplan and Timeline](#)

## VI. Applicant Resources

### Guides

- [Dissemination Initiative PFA \(PDF\)](#)
- [Dissemination Initiative LOI Question Guide](#)
- [Submission Instructions](#)
- [Submission Checklist](#)
- [PCORI Online: Pre-award User Guides](#)
- [Evaluation Reporting Tool Template](#)

### Web Resources

- [Applicant FAQs](#)
- [Review Process](#)
- [Blog Post: Updates to Engagement Award Funding Opportunities](#)
- [Town Hall: Thursday, February 13, 2020, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm \(ET\)](#)
- [Funded Projects Portfolio: Engagement in Research](#)

## VII. Questions?

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