

# PCORI Online: Research Awards Pre-Award Training Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



Updated as of 4/25/2018

*This FAQ document pertains to the Pre-Award Management System for Research Awards.*

## Getting Started

This section of the FAQ provides guidance on:

- Research Awards User Roles
- Logging In and User Access

Please keep in mind the following **Research Awards user roles** and definitions:

User Role	Definition
<b>Principal Investigator (PI)</b>	Institution's primary Point of Contact (POC) throughout the lifecycle of the contract award; responsible for the <b>programmatic conduct</b> of the research awards project.
<b>PI Designee</b>	An individual selected by the Principal Investigator (PI) to act as a <b>backup or alternate for submitting the LOI and Application.</b>
<b>Administrative Official (AO)</b>	Responsible for the proper <b>administration of the contract</b> , including overseeing the submission of the contract activation, contract renewals, and other required materials.

Question	Response
How do I log-in?	<p>If you are a current PCORI Awardee or have already created an account in the new PCORI Online, follow the steps to log in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigate to <a href="https://pcori.force.com/engagement">https://pcori.force.com/engagement</a></li> <li>• Enter your User Name (your User Name is typically the email address you use when interacting with PCORI)</li> <li>• Enter your Password</li> <li>• Click 'Log in'</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> If you are a current PCORI Awardee and have not logged in since September 2016, your account has likely already been added to the system and you will need to reset your password.</p>
Can I use my log-in information from the previous PCORI Online?	<p>Log-in information was not migrated from the previous system. Please register as a 'New User' to get started with the new PCORI Online:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigate to <a href="https://pcori.force.com/engagement">https://pcori.force.com/engagement</a></li> <li>• Click 'New User'</li> <li>• Complete the New User Form</li> <li>• Check your email for instructions on how to log-in</li> </ul>
The system doesn't recognize my User Name. What should I do?	<p>If you have any trouble logging in, please reach out to <a href="mailto:help@pcori.org">help@pcori.org</a>. As a reminder, your User Name is the email address you use when interacting with PCORI.</p>
Who should have access to PCORI Online and applicable Applications/Projects?	<p>AOs, PIs, and PI Designees should have access to PCORI Online. If any of these individuals does not have access to the correct Applications/Projects, please reach out to <a href="mailto:help@pcori.org">help@pcori.org</a>.</p>

<b>Who can be an AO? May s/he be a qualified, third party consultant?</b>	The AO must be part of the prime institution.
<b>Can there be more than one AO?</b>	No; there can only be one AO.
<b>Does the AO need to be a different person than the PI?</b>	Yes; the AO needs to be different than the PI.
<b>Are multiple PIs (or co-investigators) permitted for the Letter of Intent or full Application's research team?</b>	Yes; multiple PIs (or co-investigators) are permitted. The Co-PI is an individual recognized by the prime institution and the PI as someone who shares scientific and administrative leadership responsibilities for a project with the PI.
<b>What is the difference between project designee and Co PI?</b>	The Co-PI is an individual who the PI relies on to contribute substantively to the scientific development and direction of the project in addition to the execution of the project. The PI Designee is usually an administrator who helps the PI submit the LOI and Application.
<b>Can there be more than one PI Designee?</b>	Yes; there can be up to two PI Designees assigned.
<b>Can the PI and the Designee have the same log-in information?</b>	No; each will need his/her own account.

## LOI Submission

**This section of the FAQ provides guidance on:**

- LOI Navigation
- LOI Submission

**At the top of the LOI, you may find the following tabs which will assist with navigating the various sections of the form:**

LOI Tabs		
<b>Contact Information</b>	Add basic contact information for the Organization/ Institution, including the PI, AO, and any Designees.	<a href="#">Contact Information</a>
<b>Pre Screen Questionnaire</b>	Respond to initial screening questions.	<a href="#">Pre Screen Questionnaire</a>
<b>Resubmission</b>	Indicate whether the organization is resubmitting a previous Application, or has been invited to resubmit an Application from a previous cycle.	<a href="#">Resubmission</a>
<b>PI Information</b>	Enter detailed information about the PI's experience with research and grants management.	<a href="#">PI Information</a>
<b>Project Information</b>	Provide relevant project information, including the focus disease or condition, projected costs, target populations, and analytic methods.	<a href="#">Project Information</a>
<b>Project Personnel</b>	Add the names of Project Personnel who will make up the Awardee Project team.	<a href="#">Project Personnel</a>
<b>Project Personnel Partners</b>	On this tab, name all partner individuals or organizations as they should appear on the award project page.	<a href="#">Project Personnel Partners</a>
<b>Templates &amp; Uploads</b>	Download any applicable templates, and upload attachments to include with the Application.	<a href="#">Templates &amp; Uploads</a>

Question	Response
<b>Contact Information tab</b>	
<b>Do I need to complete the Contact Information tab before saving a draft of my LOI?</b>	Yes; you must provide your Organization's information (name, department, etc.) in order to save a draft LOI, as well as assign a PI and AO that are registered with PCORI Online. To assign a user, click the magnifying glass icon and search for their name. If their name does not appear, they must register in PCORI Online as a New User. Please note that the AO and PI cannot be the same individual.
<b>Should the individuals listed on this tab have access to the new PCORI Online?</b>	Yes; AOs, PIs, Co-PIs, and PI Designees on your Project Team should have access to PCORI Online. If they do not have an account, they must register as a New User. If anyone on your project team does not have access to the correct LOIs/Applications, please reach out to <a href="mailto:help@pcori.org">help@pcori.org</a> .
<b>Pre Screen Questionnaire tab</b>	
<b>What should I do if I respond 'Yes' to one of these questions?</b>	If you answer 'Yes' to one of the questions on the Pre Screen Questionnaire tab, we recommend you discontinue your LOI submission since your LOI will not progress past the review stage.
<b>Resubmission tab</b>	
<b>What is considered a resubmission?</b>	An Application is considered a resubmission after it has completed PCORI's merit review process (i.e., the PI has received a summary statement) and was not funded. A previous submission in the form of an LOI only (without a full Application) is not considered a resubmission. If an Application was deemed nonresponsive and did not progress through the full review process, the PI is required to submit a new LOI. If you are submitting the same Application to the same PFA, then this would be considered a resubmission. If you submit the same Application to a different PFA, this would not be a resubmission.
<b>How can I find the ID number of my previous submission?</b>	If you need assistance finding the ID number of your previously submitted Application(s), please reach out to <a href="mailto:pfa@pcori.org">pfa@pcori.org</a> .
<b>Project Personnel tab</b>	
<b>How extensive is the Project Personnel list expected to be?</b>	At the LOI stage, your project team does not have to be finalized; at a minimum, please include the PI during LOI submission. In general, project personnel should have expertise and background to successfully implement the Research Project. Please note that each PFA and project has different requirements. If you have more questions regarding your project personnel, you can always follow-up with us at <a href="mailto:pfa@pcori.org">pfa@pcori.org</a> .
<b>Who are 'Key Personnel?'</b>	Key Personnel include individuals who contribute to the scientific development or execution of the project in a substantive and measurable way. The contribution is independent of financial compensation.
<b>Do all Project Personnel have to have a PCORI Online user account?</b>	No; only individuals that are involved in the LOI/Application submission process will need a PCORI Online account, including the PI, AO, and PI Designees.
<b>Templates and Uploads tab</b>	
<b>Where can I access the LOI Template?</b>	LOI templates are available on our <a href="#">Funding Opportunities</a> page. Select the PFA you are interested in applying to, and templates are located in the "Applicant Resources" section of the page.
<b>Can we upload Word documents?</b>	We ask that Applicants submit uploads in PDF. This is in our Application guidelines and template instructions.

<b>Is there any naming convention for the LOI Template?</b>	Yes; the naming convention is PI LastName_(last five digits of LOI number)_LOI.pdf. These instructions are available in the Application Guidelines and templates.
<b>LOI Submission</b>	
<b>Can I create a PDF of the draft LOI to facilitate internal reviews?</b>	Yes; when you click 'Review/Submit,' you will have the option to 'Print' prior to final submission. We recommend you Print to either OneNote or PDF to save a read-only copy to your computer.
<b>Can a person other than the PI/PI Designee submit a LOI in PCORI Online?</b>	Only the PI or PI Designee can submit the LOI.
<b>Once the LOI is submitted, do I receive an email confirmation?</b>	Yes; the AO and PI will receive an email confirmation upon LOI submission.
<b>How will I be notified of the LOI decision?</b>	The AO and PI will receive an email notification indicating whether they have been invited to submit a full Application.

## Application Submission

**This section of the FAQ provides guidance on:**

- Application Navigation
- Application Submission
- Application Approval
- PCORI Information Requests

**At the top of the Application, you will find the following tabs which will assist with navigating the various sections of the form:**

Application Tabs		
<b>Contact Information</b>	<b>Pre-populated from LOI</b> ➤ Review basic contact information for the Organization/ Institution, including the PI, AO, and any Designees.	<a href="#">Contact Information</a>
<b>Pre Screen Questionnaire</b>	<b>Pre-populated from LOI</b> ➤ Review initial screening questions.	<a href="#">Pre Screen Questionnaire</a>
<b>Resubmission</b>	<b>Pre-populated from LOI</b> ➤ Review whether the organization is resubmitting a previous Application, or has been invited to resubmit an Application from a previous cycle.	<a href="#">Resubmission</a>
<b>PI Information</b>	<b>Pre-populated from LOI</b> ➤ Review detailed information about the PI's experience with research and grants management.	<a href="#">PI Information</a>
<b>Project Information</b>	<b>Pre-populated from LOI + Complete for Application</b> ➤ Review relevant project information, including the focus disease or condition, projected costs, target populations, and analytic methods. ➤ Provide more detail regarding your proposed research, including abstracts, narratives, and goals.	<a href="#">Project Information</a>
<b>Project Personnel</b>	<b>Pre-populated from LOI</b> ➤ Add the names of Project Personnel who will make up the Awardee Project team.	<a href="#">Project Personnel</a>
<b>Project Personnel Partners</b>	<b>Pre-populated from LOI</b> ➤ Name all partner individuals or organizations as they should appear on the award project page.	<a href="#">Project Personnel Partners</a>
<b>Budget</b>	<b>Complete for Application</b> ➤ Provide details related to the budget of the project.	<a href="#">Budget</a>
<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Complete for Application</b> ➤ List concrete, specific events or accomplishments that will be documented as contractual tasks of your project.	<a href="#">Milestones</a>
<b>Templates &amp; Uploads</b>	<b>Complete for Application</b> ➤ Download any applicable templates, and upload attachments to include with the Application.	<a href="#">Templates &amp; Uploads</a>
<b>Certification</b>	<b>Complete for Application</b> ➤ Certify that the information provided in the Application is complete and accurate.	<a href="#">Certification</a>

Please note that any changes to the following information from the LOI submission will require PCORI's written approval prior to Application submission:

- **Principal Investigator**
- **Institution**
- **Study design**
- **Research question(s)**
- **Specific aims**
- **Comparators**

Question	Response
<b>Budget tab</b>	
The Budget Tab consists of the following eleven pages: 1) Personnel, 2) Consultant Cost, 3) Supplies, 4) Scientific Travel, 5) Programmatic Travel, 6) Other Travel, 7) Equipment, 8) Subcontractor Direct Costs, 9) Subcontractor Indirect Costs, 10) Detailed Budget – Total Indirect Costs, and 11) Budget Summary	
<b>Can we change the budget total from what we proposed in the LOI?</b>	Yes; the budget total can change from the LOI to Application phase as long as the budget stays within the limits of the funding guidelines. However, please notify us at <a href="mailto:pfa@pcori.org">pfa@pcori.org</a> if you plan to change your budget since you were invited to submit an Application based on the information provided in the LOI.
<b>How do you adjust for inflation in Personnel costs for subsequent years?</b>	Applicants will manually adjust for inflation in Personnel costs for subsequent years. To do so, copy the original personnel budget to all years, then manually update each year separately that is affected by inflation.
<b>How should Key Personnel be entered into the budget if salary is not requested but effort is devoted?</b>	Enter \$0 as the budget salary and clarify in the Budget Justification that they are committing effort without support. Please note that Budget Justification will be completed separately as a Word document, and uploaded to the <b>Templates &amp; Uploads</b> tab as a PDF.
<b>How do you enter a project budget for less than the 5 years?</b>	Each page of the Budget tab will allow you to edit up to 5 years. However, for a project that is less than 5 years, you will just enter the project budget for your project years. For example, if your study is only 3 years long, you would leave years 4-5 blank, with the exception of entering in the Start and End dates.  In order to save, Start and End Dates must be entered for all years listed on each budget page, regardless of the proposed project timeline. Please note that certain pages include an additional Peer Review Year. For projects that are less than 5 years, Applicants should still enter their Peer Review budget into the Peer Review Year.
<b>Should the End Date of Year 1 and the Start Date of Year 2 be the same date?</b>	The previous year end date and the next year start date should be consecutive days. For example, Year 1 end date would be 12/31/2019 and then Year 2 start date would be 1/1/2020.
<b>Is the Peer Review budget automatically completed?</b>	No; Peer Review budget is <i>not</i> automatically completed by the system. Applicants should input the Peer Review budget in the Peer Review Year, where applicable. For projects that are less than 5 years, Applicants should still enter their Peer Review budget into the Peer Review Year.  Please note that for Dissemination & Implementation Applications, there will be no Peer Review Period.
<b>Is there a cap on the Peer Review budget? What information needs to be included for the Peer Review Budget?</b>	No; there is no cap on the Peer Review budget. However, please note that the Total Budget includes the Peer Review budget, which must be below the maximum project budget for the PFA to which you are applying.  The Peer Review budget is to cover activities associated with completing the Draft Final Research Report along with submitting revisions as necessary to submit a Final Research Report. In creating the budget, please note that Peer Review-related costs are limited to Personnel, Consultants, and Sub-Contract costs. Percent Effort for staff should be calculated over 90 Level of Effort days. The effort of 90 days can occur over the course of up to 12 months. It will be a

	back-and-forth process in which you bill for the time actually worked on the report.
<b>How do I enter sub-contractor budgets?</b>	In PCORI Online, detailed budgets are not required for sub-contractors. However, you will need to include the direct costs and indirect costs for each subcontractor. For more information on sub-contractor budgets, please review the Application guidelines for the specific PFA to which you are applying.
<b>Is there any place for Budget Justification?</b>	Yes; the Budget Justification will be completed separately as a Word document, and uploaded to the <b>Templates &amp; Uploads</b> tab as a PDF.
<b>Project Information tab</b>	
<b>Does the Projected End Date include the Peer Review period?</b>	Yes; the Projected End Date includes the Peer Review period. This is different from the research project end date, which does not include Peer Review.
<b>Is there a word limit for the Public and Technical abstracts?</b>	The suggested length for both abstracts is 500 words each.

<b>Milestones tab</b>	
<b>Will the milestones auto-sort by due date?</b>	No; the milestones will not automatically sort by due date. They will appear in the order you add them to the table.
<b>Will recommended milestones be given based on the funding opportunity?</b>	There will be a list of example Milestones in the Application Guidelines.

<b>Templates and Uploads tab</b>	
<b>Can we upload Word documents?</b>	We ask that Applicants submit uploads in PDF. This is in our Application guidelines and template instructions.
<b>Am I required to use the PCORI format for biosketches?</b>	You can submit biosketches in PCORI or NIH format. Both are accepted.

<b>Application Submission &amp; Approval</b>	
<b>Can the AO see the Application while it is being prepared?</b>	Yes; the AO can see and access the Application while it is being prepared through the LOI and Application Dashboard. If the AO does not have access to an LOI or Application, please reach out to <a href="mailto:help@pcori.org">help@pcori.org</a> .
<b>Can a PI submit multiple Applications for multiple projects?</b>	Yes; the PI can submit multiple Applications for multiple projects as long as s/he are applying to a different PFA for each different project.
<b>If a PI Designee clicks submit, will the Application go to the PI for review &amp; approval (similar to Progress Reports)?</b>	No; for the Application, the PI or the PI Designee will submit to the AO, and the AO will review and submit to PCORI. There is not a separate step for PI approval. Please note that for the LOI, the PI Designee can submit to PCORI without PI or AO approval.
<b>Does the AO have to approve the Application?</b>	Yes; the AO will receive an email notification when the PI has submitted the Application and AO approval is required. The AO will then either reject the Application for further updates, or approve the Application and submit to PCORI.

<b>How does the AO return the Application for revision?</b>	If the AO would like to return the Application to the PI or PI Designee for updates, s/he should 'Reject' the Application. Once the updates are made, the PI/Designee should then submit again to the AO for review, approval, and submission.
<b>Can the AO still see the Application once it has been returned to the PI for further edits?</b>	Yes; the AO will be able to see the Application in a read-only format. However, the AO will not be able to approve it until it is submitted by the PI again.
<b>Once the AO 'Approves,' is the Application sent to PCORI?</b>	No; the AO will 'Approve' the Application, click 'Save,' and lastly click 'Review/Submit.' From this page, s/he should click 'Submit' to submit the full and completed Application to PCORI.
<b>How and when can an AO withdraw an Application?</b>	The AO can withdraw an Application at any time, including after the deadline date has passed. To do so, s/he should return to the LOI & Application Dashboard and click the icon under 'AO Approve/Withdraw.'
<b>Can the PI view the Application after it is submitted?</b>	The PI will be able to view a read-only version of the Application after it has been submitted to the AO for approval. The PI and AO will also be able to view the Application in a read-only version after it has been submitted to PCORI for review.

#### PCORI Information Requests (PIRs)

<b>Who receives the PIR notifications?</b>	The PIR letter will be sent to the AO, PI, and PI Designee. A reminder to submit the PIR will be sent to the PI. Once the PIR response is submitted through PCORI Online, the AO and PI will receive a confirmation email.
<b>Does the AO have to approve the response to a PIR?</b>	No; there is no formal AO approval process for PIR responses.

### Additional Help & Resources

Question	Response
<b>What should I do if I get an error?</b>	You may receive an error if you did not answer all required questions on the previous tab. In order to avoid an error, please complete the LOI and Application tabs in order, and click 'Save & Next' to proceed to the next tab. For further assistance, reach out to <a href="mailto:help@pcori.org">help@pcori.org</a> .
<b>Who can I contact for assistance with my LOI/Application?</b>	For project assistance, please reach out to <a href="mailto:pfa@pcori.org">pfa@pcori.org</a> .
<b>Who can I contact for technical assistance?</b>	For technical or system assistance, please reach out to <a href="mailto:help@pcori.org">help@pcori.org</a> .