



PCORI Funding Announcement

April 2021 Cycle

Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Award:

Capacity Building

Published February 1, 2021

This PCORI Funding Announcement (PFA) applies to the Letter of Intent (LOI) deadline of April 1, 2021, at 5 pm ET. Submission instructions, templates, and other resources are available at <https://www.pcori.org/funding-opportunities/announcement/engagement-award-capacity-building-april-2021-cycle>.



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.

Key Information for the Engagement Awards April 2021 Funding Cycle:

- **Applicants should consider alternative plans for any convening activities within the project, should an in-person meeting not be feasible. Please consult [PCORI's Applicant and Awardee FAQs Related to COVID-19](#) to ensure your proposed project adheres to PCORI's guidance related to applicant pre-award concerns.**
- **PCORI is aware that there is an evolving context around the COVID-19 pandemic. We are committed to working with awardees to adapt projects and processes to the evolving context during this time so that deliverables are implemented fully as per the executed contract.**

Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute
1828 L St., NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202-827-7700
Fax: 202-355-9558
Email: info@pcori.org
Follow us on Twitter: @PCORI



Overview

Published	February 1, 2021	
Letter of Intent Deadline	April 1, 2021, by 5 pm (ET) Letters of Intent (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 to submit a full proposal or rejection of the LOI will occur within 60 days of the LOI deadline.	
Submission Instructions	See https://www.pcori.org/sites/default/files/PCORI-engagement-award-submission-instructions-april-2021-cycle.pdf	
Key Dates	Online System Opens:	February 1, 2021
	Applicant Webinar:	Recorded February 4, 2021
	Applicant Office Hours:	February 17, 2021, 12:00-1:00pm ET
	LOI Deadline:	April 1, 2021, by 5 pm (ET)
	LOI Status Notification:	Within 60 calendar days of LOI deadline
	Application Deadline:	July 12, 2021, by 5 pm (ET)
	Earliest Project Start Date:	December 1, 2021
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 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 \$25 million in fiscal year 2021 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	Programmatic Inquiries: ea@pcori.org 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.	



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I. Introduction

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) plans to award up to \$25 million in fiscal year 2021 as part of the [Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Awards](#). These awards are for research support projects. This program does not fund research studies.

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

The **Engagement Award: Capacity Building** aims to support projects that help communities increase their facility with and ability to participate across all phases of the patient-centered outcomes research/comparative clinical effectiveness research (PCOR/CER) process.

Within this announcement, we express a special area of interest in maternal morbidity and mortality. Please see below for further detail. In addition, PCORI accepts and welcomes Engagement Award: Capacity Building LOIs on **all** topics related to capacity building for PCOR/CER that fall within the guidelines of the program.

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/CER, PCORI, and the broader PCOR community. We are committed to using and broadly sharing this information. Please see the [PCORI Engagement Tool and Resource Repository](#) for examples of what this can look like.

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 healthcare 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
- Development of coverage, payment, or policy recommendations or guidelines
- Projects related to quality measures, quality improvement, 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 solely on social determinants of health, with no focus on patient-centered outcomes research/comparative clinical effectiveness research (PCOR/CER)
- Planning for dissemination or dissemination initiatives without including PCORI-funded research or related products
- Implementation of PCORI findings in a clinical practice setting (PCORI funds 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/comparative clinical effectiveness research (PCOR/CER)

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. This applies to all individuals listed as key personnel in the application. The policy and FAQs are available on the [NIH website](#).



III. Capacity Building

The Engagement Award Program is now accepting Letters of Intent for the **Engagement Award: Capacity Building**, 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 April 2021 Engagement Awards Funding Cycle, the contract start date should be planned for no earlier than December 1, 2021, and no later than May 1, 2022.

Funding Priorities

This funding announcement offers an opportunity for organizations and community groups to continue to build capacity and skills for patient-centered outcomes research and comparative clinical effectiveness research (PCOR/CER). PCORI is receptive to LOIs and applications to the Engagement Award: Capacity Building encompassing a wide range of research support project topics.

In the context of the Engagement Awards program, capacity building to support research refers to the following types of projects:

- Projects that support organizations with strong ties to patients, caregivers, clinicians, and/or other stakeholders who have a connection to, expertise in, or lived experience related to the focus area to equip them to engage as partners in PCOR/CER. These projects will focus on building the knowledge, competencies, and abilities of their community to be meaningful partners with researchers throughout the research process from topic selection through design and conduct of research to dissemination or implementation of results.
 - Activities might include, but are not limited to, educating and training stakeholders on the fundamentals of PCOR/CER; establishing a sustainable collaborative or learning community; engaging stakeholders to identify important patient-centered outcomes, prioritize PCOR/CER topics or themes, and/or develop a research agenda; capturing stakeholder perspectives on emerging PCOR/CER needs and barriers/facilitators to patient-centered research.
 - Applicants may wish to consider utilizing [PCORI's Research Fundamentals](#), a free, on demand, comprehensive training that offers different ways to learn about the health research process and be involved in patient-centered outcomes research.
- Projects that strengthen the skills of researchers to be better partners with patients and other stakeholders involved in PCOR/CER.
 - Applicants must clearly explain how the capacity that is developed through an award will be applied to existing or planned PCOR/CER partnership opportunities.



- Projects that support the expansion of use or adoption of existing [engagement tools and resources](#) whenever possible, rather than develop new products and tools. Projects may implement available tools, processes, or programs, alone or in combination, in a new population or geographic area—for example, a new network of clinicians, patient advocates, and academic researchers.
 - If this project is using a PCORI-funded engagement tool/resource, applicants should identify the existing engagement tool/resource that this project will be scaling or adopting by listing the: (a) Tool Name, (b) Project Title, (c) Project Lead Name, (d) URL to project page. Applicants should anticipate seeking a letter of support from the tool/resource originator should a full application be invited.
 - Applicants should identify and describe all tools/trainings/programs that will be used as part of the project, as well as share the evidence base for the resources that will be used.

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. Please see the [PCORI Engagement Tool and Resource Repository](#) for examples of what this can look like.

Related Opportunities

For applicants interested in projects focused on building capacity for disseminating and implementing PCORI-funded evidence, please see the [Engagement Award: Dissemination Initiative](#) funding opportunity.

For applicants interested primarily in multi-stakeholder convenings, meetings, and conferences that have a focus on, and commitment to, supporting collaboration around PCOR/CER, please see the [Engagement Award: Stakeholder Convening Support](#) funding opportunity.

While projects that enable organizations and communities to develop their capacity and skills to participate across all phases of the PCOR/CER process on topics uniquely related to the COVID-19 pandemic may be submitted under this announcement, we encourage organizations to consider the [Engagement Award Special Cycle: Building Capacity for PCOR/CER for Topics Related to COVID-19](#). This PCORI Funding Announcement will open on March 1, 2021.

While projects related to intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) may be submitted under this announcement, we encourage organizations to consider the [Engagement Award Special Cycle: Building Capacity for PCOR/CER in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities](#). This Special PCORI Funding Announcement will support projects to build capacity and skills for PCOR/CER in IDD, as well as projects to understand the impact of stakeholder engagement within different settings and stakeholder groups focused on this special area of interest. This PCORI Funding Announcement will open on March 1, 2021.



To discuss the funding announcement that best fits your project idea, please email ea@pcori.org.

Special Area of Interest: Maternal Morbidity and Mortality

Please Note: PCORI will accept and welcomes Engagement Award: Capacity Building LOIs on *all topics related to capacity building for PCOR/CER* that fall within the guidelines of the program.

PCORI's reauthorizing legislation in 2019 included two new research priority areas, one of which centers on maternal mortality. This priority area provides more focused support for engaging diverse stakeholders and facilitating patient-centered outcomes research and comparative clinical effectiveness research (PCOR/CER), which are critical for understanding and addressing the needs of those impacted by issues related to this topic. Because of our national priorities, LOIs focused on maternal morbidity and mortality are of particular interest to PCORI.

For organizations considering applying for an Engagement Award focused on topics related to maternal morbidity and mortality, please review the information available on the [Engagement Awards Special Area of Interest: Maternal Morbidity and Mortality](#) webpage.

Submitting a Successful Application

Successful applications will include:

- **Applicants should consider alternative plans for any convening activities within the project, should an in-person meeting not be feasible. Please consult [PCORI's Applicant and Awardee FAQs Related to COVID-19](#) to ensure your proposed project adheres to PCORI's guidance related to applicant pre-award concerns.**
 - PCORI is aware that there is an evolving context around the COVID-19 pandemic. We are committed to working with awardees to adapt projects and processes to the evolving context during this time so that deliverables are implemented fully as per the executed contract.
- Rationale that there is a need for additional patient and/or stakeholder capacity to participate in PCOR/CER with a clear and direct link to participation in research opportunities.
- The intended impact of the proposed project.
- The organization's relationship to the population and/or context, and track record in engagement.
- 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 project from LOI development to dissemination of project results.
- Evaluation metrics for assessing the success of engagement strategies.
- Plans for sustainability/next steps 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.



- If using or adopting a PCORI-funded engagement tool or resource:
 - Description of the engagement tool(s) or resource(s) selected and justification for its continued and expanded use. Provide information about prior use/implementation of the tool(s) or resource(s), including any data on its effectiveness to build capacity for patient and stakeholder engagement in PCOR/CER.
 - Approval to use and, if applicable, adapt tool(s) and resource(s) from the relevant copyright owner of the tool(s) and/or resource(s) in the form of a written letter of support with the full proposal submission. This will typically be from the awardee institution of the original PCORI award. The relevant owner must grant the applicant rights to the engagement tool(s)/resource(s) sufficient to carry out the project.

IV. 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.



V. Review Process

Letters of Intent (LOI) must be submitted by the stated deadline. LOIs will be screened for responsiveness to the call for applications and fit to program goals. PCORI will review LOIs within 60 calendar days of submission. Full proposal submissions are by invitation only, after review and approval of the LOI.

A full proposal, submitted upon invitation only, must be submitted by the stated deadline. PCORI may request additional information from the applicant after the initial review of the full proposal. PCORI aims to provide a final programmatic approval decision on the full proposal, via email, within 90 calendar days of the submission deadline. If the full proposal is programmatically approved, a PCORI staff member will coordinate arrangements to begin budgetary review and contracting negotiations. Typically, contract negotiations take about six-to-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 LOIs and applications.

Review Criteria:

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

For additional details on the review process, [click here](#).



VI. How To Apply

1. Read the full funding announcement
2. Follow the process outlined in the Submission Instructions
3. Submit a Letter of Intent
4. Submit an Application (if invited)

VII. Applicant Resources

April 2021 Cycle Resources

- Applicant Webinar: [Recorded Thursday, February 4, 2021](#)
- Applicant Office Hours: [Wednesday, February 17, 2021 - 12:00 pm to 01:00 pm EST](#)
- [Submission Instructions](#)

Preparing Your LOI

- [Capacity Building PFA \(PDF\)](#)
- [Submission Instructions](#)
- [Submission Checklist](#)
- [Capacity Building LOI Question Guide](#)
- [Applicant FAQs](#)
- [PCORI Online: Pre-award User Guides](#)
- [PCORI Online: Pre-award Cheat Sheet – LOI Submission](#)
- [Review Process](#)

Preparing Your Application

- [Capacity Building PFA \(PDF\)](#)
- [Submission Instructions](#)
- [Submission Checklist](#)
- [Applicant FAQs](#)
- [PCORI Online: Pre-award User Guides](#)
- [PCORI Online: Pre-award Cheat Sheet – Application Submission](#)
- [Review Process](#)



Required Application Templates

- [Biosketch Template](#)
- [Budget Template \(Two-Year Project\)](#)
- [Budget Justification Template \(Two-Year Project\)](#)
- [Milestone/Deliverable Table Template \(Two-Year Project\)](#)
- [Project Workplan and Timeline \(Capacity Building\)](#)
- [Board of Directors Template](#)

Additional Applicant Resources

- [Funded Projects Portfolio: Engagement in Research](#)
- [Evaluation Reporting Tool Template \(For Awarded Projects\)](#)
- [Glossary](#)
- [Cost Principles: Description of Allowable Direct Costs under a PCORI Award](#)
- [Standard Contracts for Engagement Award Projects](#)

VIII. 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.