Funding Opportunity Announcement
U.S. Tobacco Control Policies to Reduce Health Disparities
PAR-17-217 (R01) and PAR-17-218 (R21)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. I have a question about the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA). Whom might I contact for more information?

A. For questions of a scientific nature, you may contact the Scientific Program Contacts: Mr. Bob Vollinger (Bob.Vollinger@nih.gov) and Dr. Annette Kaufman (kaufmana@mail.nih.gov). For questions about peer review, you may contact Dr. Weijia Ni (niw@csr.nih.gov). For questions about financial or grants management, you may contact Ms. Rebecca Brightful (brightfr@mail.nih.gov).

Q. Are applicants who have not had prior NIH funding eligible to apply?

A. Yes. We welcome applications from new and early stage investigators. Investigators who are new to the NIH application process may consider working with a team of people that has experience with the NIH grants process for mentoring and guidance. They are also encouraged to speak with the Scientific Program Contacts for guidance.

Q. Does the National Cancer Institute (NCI) give first-time investigators special consideration?

A. Yes, early stage investigators are given funding priority. For more information, see https://grants.nih.gov/policy/early-investigators/index.htm#policy

Q. Does NCI favor multi-institution studies, or are single institution studies responsive?

A. Both multi-institution studies and single institution studies would be responsive to this FOA.

Q. Can one organization or department submit more than one application?

A. An organization or department is welcome to submit more than one application if the research questions are distinct from one another.

Q. Are foreign institutions or partners eligible to apply?

A. As noted in the FOA, non-domestic (non-U.S.) entities (foreign institutions) and non-domestic (non-U.S.) components of U.S. organizations are not eligible to apply. Foreign components are also not permitted. Please consult the Scientific Program Contacts if you have further questions.

Q. Is funding available for student researchers under this FOA?

A. This FOA is limited to research project grant (R01) and exploratory/developmental research project grant (R21) applications. Applications for research training, career development, or fellowship support are not eligible for this FOA. However, students may contribute as part of the research team. Additional information about NCI's support for research training is available at https://www.cancer.gov/grants-training/training/funding.

Q. Are there limits on available funds, or is there a set number of grants that can be funded under this opportunity?

A. No.

Q. Does it make a difference which of the receipt dates I apply for? Is there a set number of grants to be awarded from each receipt date?

A. There is not a set number of applications to be funded per receipt date. All responsive applications, regardless of the receipt date, will be reviewed and considered for funding. Applicants should carefully consider when their proposal is ready for submission; it is generally better to submit when the application is well prepared, rather than rush to meet the first submission date.

Q. Are these applications being reviewed by a special emphasis panel?

A. Yes. Review will be conducted by a special emphasis panel having the appropriate expertise, convened by the Center for Scientific Review (CSR) at NIH. Investigators can assist NIH in selecting reviewers by submitting letters of intent and by writing cover letters that specify the expertise they think necessary to evaluate the proposal. Letters of intent should be sent to Mr. Bob Vollinger at bob.vollinger@nih.gov. For further questions regarding review, you may contact Dr. Weijia Ni at (niw@csr.nih.gov).

Q. If I have some pilot data, is it better to submit an R01 or an R21? Do pilot data demonstrating proof-of-concept exclude the R21 mechanism?

A. In general, if you have pilot data showing proof-of-concept, you are likely ready to submit an R01 application. However, in some cases, pilot data may not be sufficient to justify an R01 application. It is advisable to consult colleagues and mentors who can help you make this decision. You may also contact the NCI Scientific Program Contacts to discuss your proposal in more detail.

Q. Is preliminary data required for the R21 application?

A. As noted in the R21 FOA, "The R21 exploratory/developmental grant supports investigation of novel scientific ideas or new model systems, tools, or technologies that have the potential for significant impact on biomedical or biobehavioral research. An R21 grant application need not have extensive background material or preliminary information. Accordingly, reviewers will focus their evaluation on the conceptual framework, the level of innovation, and the potential to significantly advance our knowledge or understanding. Appropriate justification for the proposed work can be provided through literature

citations, data from other sources, or, when available, from investigator-generated data. Preliminary data are not required for R21 applications; however, they may be included if available."

Q. If an institution submits an R21, and NCI deems it more appropriate for the R01 mechanism, would NCI automatically change it?

A. NCI will not convert an application from one mechanism to another. It is the research team's role to determine which mechanism is best suited for the proposal.

Q. Given the changing tobacco landscape, is there a preference for the type of tobacco products studied?

A. No. The application should provide the rationale for studying the particular type of tobacco product for the targeted population.

Q. What is meant by vulnerable populations?

A. A vulnerable population is any population disproportionately affected by tobacco use. This may include one or more racial or ethnic groups, people living in low-resource communities, low income individuals, Medicaid beneficiaries, children or adults exposed to secondhand smoke, people with comorbid psychiatric conditions, people with physical disabilities, LGBT populations, and other population groups that have demonstrated tobacco-related health disparities. It will be up to the applicants to provide the rationale for the population(s) they are proposing to study.

Q. Will applications that utilize existing datasets be responsive to the FOA, or must applications involve primary data collection?

A. The use of existing datasets (secondary data analysis) is acceptable if the aims of the research are responsive to the FOA.

Q. What is the expectation for the dissemination and implementation component of this funding opportunity?

A. As explained in the announcement, the dissemination and implementation component of the proposal will be considered in review. The investigators are required to include a well-designed plan for proactively disseminating and implementing their research findings. They are also expected to provide a specific plan for identifying and engaging critical community partners in the research, including clearly described roles and responsibilities of key partners, and plans regarding the nature and extent of future collaborations. Finally, they are expected to include a communication plan and list of responsible parties for decision-making and implementation of related activities presented.

Q. Is Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) the only acceptable methodological approach, or can investigators propose to use other dissemination and implementation approaches?

A. CBPR is an example of one appropriate methodological approach, but others are acceptable as well. Applicants should ensure that the strategy they select is relevant to their scientific

goals, populations, and dissemination and implementation partners. We encourage research teams to engage with potential dissemination partners early in the conceptual process to ensure that their research questions are relevant to their respective communities and populations.

Q. Where can I find additional information about dissemination and implementation science?

A. The NCI Implementation Science team provides resources to advance the science of implementation; develops ongoing training opportunities to build capacity to conduct dissemination and implementation research and practice; and disseminates knowledge gained from cancer control and population science research by establishing partnerships between researchers and practitioners. For more information, see https://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/IS/index.html.

Q. How can I find partners to work with on dissemination and implementation?

A. Researchers may consult with the CDC National Tobacco Control Program, which encourages coordinated, national efforts to reduce tobacco-related diseases and deaths and provides funding and technical support to state and territorial health departments. Additionally, individual state and local health departments have connections to community partners.

Contacts

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