AHRQ Mission & Priorities

Training & Research Grants

Peer review Process
Scientific Research Spectrum

Laboratory-or Clinic-based Research

Clinical Trials/Health Services Research

Community-based /Patient Care Health Services Research

Basic Research

Drug Discovery Research & Development Phases

Clinical Research

Drug Treatments, Health Care & Services

Applied Research

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH
The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) mission is to

1) produce evidence to make health care safer, higher quality, more accessible, equitable, and affordable, and

2) to work within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and with other partners to make sure that the evidence is understood and used.
AHRQ's Research Priority Areas

1. Research to improve health care patient safety.

2. Harnessing data and technology to improve health care quality and patient outcomes and to provide a 360-degree view of the patient.

3. Research to increase accessibility and affordability of health care by examining innovative market approaches to care delivery and financing.
HHS four secretarial strategic priorities

- Combating the opioid crisis
- Bringing down the high cost of prescription drugs
- Addressing the cost and availability of health insurance
- Transforming our healthcare system to a value-based system
Notice Number: NOT-HS-18-015:
Special Emphasis Notice (SEN): AHRQ Announces Interest in Health Services Research to Address the Opioids Crisis

Notice Number: NOT-HS-18-011
Notice of Intent to Publish Funding Opportunity Announcement to Promote Screening and Management of Unhealthy Alcohol Use in Primary Care (R18)

Notice Number: NOT-HS-16-010
AHRQ Announces Interest in Research that Uses Shared Decision Making as a Tool to Improve the Quality of Care for Low Income and Racial and Ethnic Minority Patients
Funding Announcements

Sign up: Grant Announcements Email updates

Grant announcements from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality for supporting research to improve the quality, effectiveness, accessibility, and cost effectiveness of health care.

Notice: Reminder to AHRQ Grantees that FY2013 Funds will Expire on September 30, 2018

Notice: NIH and AHRQ Announce Updated Policy for Application Submission
Program Announcements

Program Announcements (PAs) describe continuing, new, or expanded program interests for which grant or cooperative agreement applications are invited. Applications in response to PAs are reviewed in the same manner as unsolicited grant applications (i.e., by peer review committees of the AHRQ Initial Review Group [IRG]).

All PAs are published in the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts.

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<tr>
<th>PA Number</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<td>PA-17-077</td>
<td>Utilizing Health Information Technology to Scale and Spread Successful Practice Models Using Patient-reported Outcomes (R18)</td>
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<td>PA-17-008</td>
<td>Large Research Projects for Prevention of Healthcare-Associated Infections (R01)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA-17-007</td>
<td>Large Health Services Research Demonstration and Dissemination Projects for Prevention of Healthcare-Associated Infections (R18)</td>
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<td>PA-16-453</td>
<td>AHRQ Conference Grant Programs (R13)</td>
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<td>- Sample Small Conference Grant Applications</td>
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<td>PA-16-424</td>
<td>Developing Measures of Shared Decision Making (R01)</td>
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<td>PA-16-423</td>
<td>Large Research Projects for Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria (CARB) (R01)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA-16-422</td>
<td>Large Health Services Research Demonstration and Dissemination Projects for Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria (CARB) (R18)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA-16-421</td>
<td>Advancing Patient Safety Implementation through Safe Medication Use Research (R18)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA-16-420</td>
<td>Advances in Patient Safety through Simulation Research (R18)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA-16-283</td>
<td>Scaling Established Clinical Decision Support to Facilitate the Dissemination and Implementation of Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Findings (R18)</td>
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<td>- Frequently Asked Questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA-16-282</td>
<td>Developing New Clinical Decision Support to Disseminate and Implement Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Findings (R18)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>- Notice of Extension of the Expiration Date</td>
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## Research Training & Education

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<th>Training Programs for Individuals</th>
<th>Investigator Stage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Predoctoral</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Services Research Dissertation Awards (R36)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHRQ National Research Service Award (NRSA) Individual Postdoctoral Fellowship (F32)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHRQ National Research Service Award (NRSA) Institutional Health Services Research Training Program (T32)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHRQ Mentored Clinical Scientist Research Career Development Award (K08)</td>
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<tr>
<td>AHRQ Mentored Research Scientist Research Career Development Award (K01)</td>
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Research Projects

**R36**: Dissertation Grants To support health services research (with emphasis placed on methodological and research topics that address the mission of AHRQ) undertaken as part of an academic program to qualify for a doctorate.

**R03**: Small Research Project Grants to provide research support specifically limited in time and amount for studies in categorical program areas. Small grants provide flexibility for initiating studies, which are generally for preliminary short-term projects and are non-renewable.

**R01**: Research Project to support a discrete, specified, circumscribed project to be performed by the named investigator(s) in an area representing his specific interest and competencies.
R18: Research Demonstration and Dissemination Projects to provide support designed to develop, test and evaluate health service activities, and to foster the application of existing knowledge for the control of categorical diseases.

R21: Exploratory/Development Grants To encourage new exploratory and developmental research projects by providing support for the early and conceptual stages of these projects.

R24: Resource-related Research Project to support research projects that enhance capabilities to contribute to extramural research of the Public Health Service (PHS) and the development of a translational research capability. As an applicant, you will be solely responsible for planning, directing, and executing the proposed project.
**R13**: Conference Grants to support recipient sponsored and directed international, national or regional meetings, conferences and workshops.

**Cooperative Agreements**

**U01**: Research Project/Cooperative Agreements (RFA Only) to support a discrete, specified, circumscribed project to be performed by the named investigator(s) in an area representing his specific interest and competencies. These are usually cooperative programs between participating principal investigators, institutions, and the sponsoring Institution(s).

**U18**: Research Demonstration/Cooperative Agreements (RFA Only) to provide support for testing, by means of a research design, the effectiveness of the transfer and application of techniques or interventions derived from a research base for the control of diseases or disorders or for the promotion of health. These are usually cooperative programs between participating principal investigators, institutions, and the sponsoring Institution(s).
NIH & AHRQ Grant Application Similarities

- Announcement publication:

- Application forms:
  - Form 424 Research and Related (SF 424 R&R)

- Application submission and referral – NIH Center for Scientific Review (CRS)
Applications sent from NIH to AHRQ
- Assigned to an AHRQ study section
- Assigned to a specific Program at AHRQ

Scientific Review typically occurs 3-4 months after applications received
- dissertations, three months later

Funding decisions occur 1-3 months later
- Summary Statements issued

Resubmission – one allowed
What Determines Which Awards Are Made?

- Scientific merit
  - Significance, Innovation and originality – Overall Impact
  - Methods - Qualifications of Investigators

- Program considerations
  - What is uniquely AHRQ
  - Existing portfolio balance
  - Anticipated IMPACT of research

- Availability of funds
Key Points to Promote Success

- Talk with an Agency (AHRQ, etc.) program officer(s)

- Previously funded work can be informative. See AHRQ Grant Database: https://gold.ahrq.gov/projectsearch/

- Consult with senior investigators regarding grantsmanship
Key Points to Promote Success

- **Bottom Line – Go/No Go**
  - Priority Populations
  - IRB/Human Subjects Protection & Inclusions
  - Data Monitoring Plans

- **Common Problems**
  - Flaw(s) in the Proposed Methodology
  - No apparent translatability of research into practice or policy
  - Not unique to AHRQ or relevant to mission or in line with AHRQ’s research priority
Scoring Individual Criteria

- There are 5 “core” criteria for most types of grant applications
- For example, the core criteria for R01’s are:
  - Significance
  - Investigator(s)’ Qualifications
  - Innovation
  - Approach
  - Environment

- Use the 9-point scale (1 = exceptional, 9 = poor) for the five “core” review criteria.
- Overall Impact Score (9-point scale)
## AHRQ Peer Review Scoring Descriptor Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Additional Guidance on Strengths/Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Exceptional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Fair</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Non-numeric score options:
- DF = Deferred, AB = Abstention, CF = Conflict, NP = Not Present, ND = Not Discussed

*Minor Weakness:* An easily addressable weakness that does not substantially lessen impact

**Moderate Weakness:** A weakness that lessens impact

***Major Weakness:** A weakness that severely limits impact

- Applications that are not discussed at the meeting will not be given an overall Final Impact Score, but the applicant, as well as the AHRQ staff will see the preliminary scores for each review criteria as additional feedback on their summary statement
- For each criterion rating, the strengths and weaknesses within that review criterion should be considered
Once applications are reviewed, the results are documented by the Scientific Review Officer (SRO) in a summary statement and posted on the eRA Commons & IMPACII system.

The summary statement contains:

- Overall Resume and Summary of Review Discussion
- Essentially Unedited Critiques provided by the Reviewers
- Priority (Impact) Score and Percentile Ranking
- Budget Recommendations
- Appropriate Human Subjects Protections and Inclusions Coding
- Administrative Notes
Descriptions of the peer review study section research foci

1. Healthcare Systems & Value Research (HSVR)
2. Healthcare Information Technology Research (HITR)
3. Healthcare Effectiveness and Outcomes Research (HEOR)
4. Healthcare Safety and Quality Improvement Research (HSQR)
5. Healthcare Research Training (HCRT)

(http://www.ahrq.gov/funding/process/study-section/resfoci.html)
Criteria For Selection of Peer Reviewers

- Demonstrated Scientific Expertise
- Doctoral Degree or Equivalent
- Mature Judgment
- Work Effectively in a Group Context
- Breadth of Perspective
- Impartiality – Objective Judgment
- Adequate Representation of Women and Minority Scientists
- Interest in Serving
Peer Reviewers...

- Diverse scientific expertise
- Appropriate representation of stakeholders
- Nurses are well-represented

**Attention Potential Reviewers:** The Division of the Scientific Review (DSR) of AHRQ is seeking nominations for scientific reviewers to join AHRQ Peer Review Teams to evaluate grant applications submitted to AHRQ. If you are interested in being considered, please contact:

Dr. Kishena Wadhwani
Director of Scientific Review
Kishena.Wadhwani@ahrq.gov
Thank you!

https://www.ahrq.gov/

Kishena.Wadhwani@ahrq.gov
Phone: (301) 427-1556