



HPI-RUPHI Pilot Grant Program: Translating Research into Policy

Request for Application (RFA)

Purpose

The University of Pittsburgh Health Policy Institute (HPI) and the RAND-University of Pittsburgh Health Institute (RUPHI) announce a program to promote the translation of research into health policy through the initiation of policy-oriented projects that involve active collaborations between researchers from RAND and the University of Pittsburgh. The purpose of this RFA is to solicit proposals for pilot funding for the new “Translating Research into Policy” Program. HPI-RUPHI will provide funding for two to three projects of up to \$75,000 each for projects that may be up to 24 months in duration to test hypotheses and/or to gather preliminary data that will strengthen subsequent larger-scale research applications.

Background

To date, the national translational research agenda has been focused on either T1 bench to bedside or T2 clinical studies to clinical practice definitions. With the passage of the Affordable Care Act, a wide range of new health policies are being implemented or tested through pilots and demonstration projects. This unprecedented rate of policy change provides a unique opportunity for research that develops, interprets, and advances ideas that can improve health policy in the United States. The demand is growing for scientific research that tackles the unsustainable costs of health care as well as inequities in the U.S. health system and that will provide policymakers with guidance on creative new approaches to care delivery, financing, resource allocation, and reducing health disparities. The HPI-RUPHI *Translating Research into Policy Program* will support projects that apply scientific research to either a costly health condition or significant health inequity with the goal of making clearly defined, well-supported health policy recommendations. For example, researchers may focus on existing or proposed policies such as those in the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid or Medicare reimbursement and state scope of practice regulations. Researchers could also study promising new models of care or community- and school-based interventions that could be adopted locally, at the state level, or nationally through policy change. For the purposes of this grant, health policy is defined as: “authoritative decisions that impact health and its determinants made in the legislative, executive, or judicial branches of government that are intended to direct the actions, behaviors, or decisions of others.”¹ Health inequities are defined by the World Health Organization as “differences in health status or in the distribution of health determinants between different population groups.”

Eligibility

Eligibility criteria for HPI-RUPHI Policy Translational Research pilot funds include the following:

¹ Longest B. *Health Policymaking in the United States, Fifth Edition*. 2010.

- Must involve collaboration between a RAND investigator and a University of Pittsburgh investigator. The collaboration must exhibit significant, demonstrable contributions from both RAND and University of Pittsburgh team members.
- Except for extraordinary circumstances, University of Pittsburgh investigators must hold the rank of Assistant/Research Assistant Professor, Associate/Research Associate Professor, or Professor/Research Professor.
- At least one involved investigator must have expertise and experience in the area to be researched.

Special Considerations

The following special criteria will be considered when reviewing applications:

- Statement of policy issue.
- Summary of background, including relevant legal, stakeholder, political, economic, ethical and social factors as appropriate.
- Preliminary estimate of the direction of potential research outcomes and measurement (e.g. cost savings).

Applications

All applications should include the following in the order listed below:

- Cover page with the title of the proposed pilot project and the name, degree, academic title, primary departmental affiliation and contact information (telephone number and e-mail address) for both the RAND and University of Pittsburgh principal investigators. Please indicate the primary contact.
- Abstract summarizing the study goals, design, and methods (250 word maximum).
- Description of the relevant backgrounds of principal investigators (200 words per investigator).
- NIH biographical sketches (PHS 398 or SF424 format) and Other Support pages for principal investigators and co-investigators.
- Narrative proposal of the pilot project, including specific aims and research strategy (significance, innovation, and approach) (5 single-sided page maximum).
- Description of how the pilot will be used in a substantial grant application in the future including a discussion of potential funding sources (federal/state agencies, associations, foundations, trade organizations, etc.) (1 page maximum).
- Format: at least 11-point font, ½ inch margins on all sides, text in figures, charts, and tables, may use a smaller type but must be readily legible.
- Budget page and budget justification, see below.

Budget and Timeline

The budget may include investigator effort on the pilot project, participant honoraria, supplies, library resources, or other items directly related to the research. Funding is for direct costs only; no funding is available for indirect costs. Mentors who are not named principal investigators may not receive funding from this Program. Please itemize and justify any travel support or hardware requirements in the budget

proposal; these items will be considered but may be denied. All budgets will be co-funded by HPI and RUPHI.

Please note that even if the University of Pittsburgh investigator effort is not to be funded using funds from this award, investigator effort is required and must be cost-shared by the department or other entity that will support such effort. Both the Pitt principal investigator and his/her department chair or appropriate responsibility center director (e.g., division chief or institute director) who can authorize cost sharing against an Entity-02 or -04 institutional account must sign the cover sheet. These signatures certify acceptance of principal investigator's cost-shared effort and no indirect cost. The appropriate institutional account numbers against which the effort will be charged must also be provided.

Submissions

Applications are to be submitted electronically to HPI at hpi@pitt.edu by 5:00 PM, April 30, 2012. Within one week of receipt of the electronic application, an HPI-RUPHI representative will send an e-mail acknowledging receipt. Investigators should contact Judi Steenson (jes10@pitt.edu) if such messages are not received. Applications will be reviewed by an HPI-RUPHI review committee and leadership to determine which applications will receive awards. If the committee or leadership has questions regarding the application, an HPI-RUPHI representative will contact the investigators via e-mail or request an in person meeting to discuss.

It is anticipated that all projects responsive to this solicitation will require IRB approval. Pitt investigators will need approval from the Pitt IRB, and RAND investigators will need approval from the RAND IRB. Please note that no project funds can be expended until such approvals are in place. Approved protocols need not be submitted as part of the application. However, in order to minimize the time delay between approval of a project and release of funds, applicants are encouraged to prepare protocol submissions in advance of notification that an award is pending so that the protocols can be submitted for approval immediately upon such notification.

- **RFA Release Date:** January 31, 2012
- **Proposal Due Date:** April 30, 2012
- **Project Start Date:** July 1, 2012

Questions Regarding the Program:

Scientific and other questions can be addressed to Joanna Steenrod, HPI Projects Coordinator (jes189@pitt.edu) or RUPHI Associate Director, Deborah Seltzer (seltzer@pitt.edu).