

2024 QI/PI Proposal for Funding REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL – APPLICATION GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

The American College of Cardiology (ACC) Accreditation Services has been helping hospitals and health systems improve care for patients with acute coronary syndromes (ACS), heart failure (HF), and atrial fibrillation (AF). We believe this is best accomplished by using quality and process improvement scientific methods.

To support cardiovascular quality initiative (QI) and process improvement (PI), the ACC's Accreditation Services Foundation Committee (AFC) provides funding opportunities that support future cardiovascular quality initiatives, particularly those that highlight the importance of ACC's Accreditation Services programs. Funding to support these projects is made possible by the Society of Cardiovascular Patient Care (SCPC), which was a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the care and outcomes of patients worldwide with suspected ACS, HF, and AF through innovative cross-disciplinary processes. Its merger with the American College of Cardiology Foundation (ACCF) in 2016 provided an opportunity to leverage the accreditation strength of the SCPC into the large portfolio of services the ACCF offers. To preserve the legacy of the SCPC, an endowment was created to support future cardiovascular QI or PI, particularly those efforts that demonstrate QI or PI through cardiovascular care accreditation programs.

FUNDING ELIGIBILITY

- Individuals or groups may submit one application for up to \$100,000 per proposal.
 - The Request for Proposal funds cannot be used to cover the cost of accreditation fees.
 - AFC QI/PI funds will not pay for indirect or overhead costs.
- The proposal for funding will **ONLY** be paid to United States based healthcare organizations.
- Priority in funding is given to applicants that demonstrate affiliation with an [ACC accredited and/or certified facility](#).
- Applications must be received by **11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, July 29, 2024**. Incomplete proposals or those received after the deadline will not be considered.

PROPOSAL TOPIC CRITERIA

The proposal criteria allow for a detailed approach to ensuring that the QI/PI in cardiovascular care can be effectively planned, implemented, and evaluated to drive meaningful in patient care and outcomes. In general, proposed projects will be expected to be completed within 12 months of award notification, unless otherwise explicitly stated in the posted request for proposals.

The AFC serve as the selection committee and will evaluate the merits of each proposal and

recommend the projects to be funded. The committee seeks proposals that are well conceived and demonstrate sound methodology:

1. Present a project design and methodology including specific aims, significance, innovation, and approach, that can answer the proposed questions.
2. Demonstrate that the project team is knowledgeable on the topic and qualified to complete a high-quality project.
3. Include matched funds or in-kind contributions to strengthen the feasibility of conducting the project and completing it within the contracted timeline.
4. Support operational improvements, patient care and safety, and efficiency in cardiovascular care.

Focus areas of desired projects or proposals include those that support cardiovascular care QI or PI, and patient outcomes that:

- contribute to the evidence base for accreditation
- develop or evaluate cardiovascular QI or PI that strengthen the accreditation process
- provide opportunities for education that supports QI or PI projects
- improve EMS systems of care in collaboration with community hospitals providing accreditation services
- provide public health education to improve community measures/outcomes related to early recognition of heart attack symptoms and appropriate action steps (e.g., [Early Heart Attack Care \(EHAC\)](#))
- Support scholarly or creative work that further the principles of cardiovascular patient care QI or PI using [ACC Accreditation Services](#)

Examples of projects addressing the above focus areas include those that:

- Implementation of Clinical Pathways
- Telemedicine for Remote Monitoring
- Cardiac Rehabilitation Programs
- Quality Improvement Initiatives
- Community Outreach and Education Initiatives
- Risk Factor Modification Programs
- Enhanced Care Coordination and Transition Management

APPLICATION PROCESS

Step 1 – Log in (New Users must create an account) to the Abstract Scorecard. **Only applications submitted through the site will be accepted.**

Use English only and avoid jargon and unusual abbreviations. For terms not universally known, spell out the term the first time it is used with the appropriate abbreviation in parentheses; the abbreviation may be used thereafter.

The online application consists of the following Task List below:

1. Key Participants

2. Statement of Work

Specific Aims

- State concisely the goals of the proposed project and summarize the expected outcome(s), including the impact that the results will exert on the focus area being addressed.
- List succinctly the specific objectives of the proposal (e.g., test a stated hypothesis; create a novel QI/PI design; solve a specific problem; challenge an existing paradigm or clinical practice' or address a critical barrier to clinical performance, systems development, education, dissemination of evidence, or accreditation).

Significance

- Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the focus area that the proposed project addresses.
- Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad focus areas.
- Describe how the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventive interventions that drive this field will be changed if the proposed aims are achieved.

Innovation

- Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current design, operations, research, or clinical practice paradigms.
- Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.
- Explain any refinements, improvements, or new applications of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.

Approach

- Describe the overall strategy, methodology, outcomes/endpoints, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project.

- Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve the aims.
- If the project is in the early stages of development, describe any strategy to establish feasibility, and address the management of any high-risk aspects of the proposed work.
- Include information on preliminary studies, data, and or experience pertinent to this application. Preliminary data can be an essential part of an application and help to establish the likelihood of success of the proposed project.

3. Project Details

Resources and Environment

Describe the facilities where the project will be conducted.

Budget

Indicate how the money will be spent. Provide a narrative justification for all direct expenditures and a timeline for project activities. AFC awards will not pay indirect or overhead costs. The RFP funds cannot be used to cover the cost of accreditation fees.

Human Subjects

If your project entails performing research involving human subjects, a part of the peer review process will include careful consideration of protections from research risks, as well as the appropriate inclusion of women and minorities. The information on the protection of human subjects that you are required to provide in this section is identical to information that you will be required to provide for IRB submission at your own institution and that is required by most Federal agencies. This information can be copied and pasted directly into your application. The applicant should include specific measures on how protected health information (as defined by the Department of Health and Human Services) will be handled in accordance with the Privacy Rule of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Publications

All discoveries resulting from this work should be made available to the public and scientific community through approved scientific channels such as national meetings and peer reviewed publications. Publications will acknowledge the support of the AFC. Appropriate recognition to the AFC also should be given in all advertising, printed materials, etc. It is expected that any new QI/PI tools or strategies that are developed, will be made available to the broader healthcare community. Any results, data, or materials that are developed during the course of funded projects may be used to support ongoing AFC or Accreditation Services activities.

4. Upload Supporting Documents

Upload up to 3 supporting documents in Excel, Word or PDF formats.

5. Terms and Conditions

Progress Reports and Funding Distribution

Awardees are required to submit a 6-month progress report and a final progress report within thirty days of the conclusion of the award year. For projects of 6 months or less duration, only a final progress report will be required. Progress reports must include an accounting report using Generally Accepted Accounting Principles showing the distribution of funds with a signature from an institutional official.

The first payment installment, 50% of the total amount awarded, will be paid at the time of commencement of the study project. The second payment of 25% will be made upon receipt and approval of the 6-month progress report. The final 25% will be paid upon documentation of completion of the project and submission of the final progress report. For projects of 6 months or less duration, the first payment installment will be 50% of the total awarded amount and the remaining 50% will be paid upon submission of the final progress report. Unused funds must be returned.

Presentation of Work

Grant awardees are required to present their work at the annual ACC Quality Summit, or another ACC-sponsored meeting as designated by the AFC, immediately following the completion of the award year. Funds can be requested in the project budget to cover the travel costs to attend the required meeting.

Project Duration

Projects must be completed within twelve (12) months from the signing of the funding contract unless a specific condition exists that would warrant an exception. If an extension is required, the individual grantee must file for an extension and receive approval from the AFC. No additional funds will be provided for such an extension.

Conflict of Interest

The AFC members will serve as the selection committee for the proposals. As such they are not eligible to submit project proposals, but they may serve as un-compensated advisors to projects led by others. Applications that include participation of AFC members must be clearly identified. Those participants will be recused from the evaluation and selection process. Other potential conflicts of interests with other organizations or companies should be identified in the application.