



Request for Proposals Controlling Health Care Costs

INTRODUCTION

As a part of its efforts to reach a broader set of grantees, the Commonwealth Fund's program on Controlling Health Care Costs is conducting a request for proposals (RFP) to engage with historically underrepresented groups, early career researchers, and other researchers outside the Fund's existing network. Applicants will first submit a two-page letter of intent (LOI), and selected LOIs will be invited to submit a full proposal. Awards will be for projects with a maximum budget of \$150,000.

ABOUT THE COMMONWEALTH FUND AND CONTROLLING HEALTH CARE COSTS PROGRAM

The mission of the Fund is to promote a high-performing health care system that achieves better access, improved quality, and greater efficiency, particularly for society's most vulnerable, including low-income people, the uninsured, and people of color. The Fund carries out this mandate by supporting independent research on health care issues and making grants to improve health care practice and policy. More information on the Fund can be found [here](#).

The Fund's Program on Controlling Health Care Costs is focused on bending the cost curve. The program seeks to identify the drivers of health care spending in the United States and the policy and market reforms that can reduce costs. Currently, the program is focused on research to inform policy efforts to curb commercial prices and drug prices.

DEADLINES

May 29, 2020 by
1:00 p.m. EST:

Letters of Intent due
to the Fund

On or before
June 30, 2020:

Fund to request
full proposals

August 14, 2020
by 1:00 p.m. EST:

Full proposals
(*invited applicants
only*) due to Fund

On or before
September 18,
2020:

Awards announced

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

The program is currently requesting LOIs for policy-relevant projects addressing the following two issues:

1. Changes in investment and performance of pharmaceutical research and development (e.g., public funding, private and venture capital investment, entities performing R&D) and the implications for the type of research conducted; the innovations that come to market; which diseases and populations are best served; and/or drug pricing when new products come to market.
2. Implications of high drug pricing and current Medicare drug proposals on different patient populations, such as people of color.

ELIGIBILITY

The Commonwealth Fund values differences among individuals across multiple dimensions including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, socioeconomic status, and veteran status. Building on a long history of working to address disparities in health care, the Fund strongly encourages underrepresented researchers to apply.

To be eligible to submit an LOI:

- You must have completed postgraduate studies.
- You cannot have been a principal investigator on a previous Fund grant.
- You must apply as an individual researcher and be employed by a tax-exempt organization, 501(c)(3) institution, or public agency.
- You **CANNOT** apply for funding to be used for:
 - General support, ongoing activities, or existing deficits
 - Endowment or capital costs, including construction, renovation or equipment
 - Basic biomedical research
 - Conferences, symposia, major media projects, or documentaries
 - Individuals or scholarships
 - Activities conducted by churches or other religious organizations, unless the projects for which you are seeking funding are secular in nature

SELECTION CRITERIA

LOIs will be evaluated based on their relevance to the program, the research design, the significance of the proposed study, and policy relevance.

APPLICATION PROCESS

All applicants will be required to submit the LOI and application materials via an online portal, found [here](#).

Interested applicants must submit the following materials:

1. Application form
2. Letter of intent
3. Resume or CV

An LOI is an opportunity to introduce a research proposal to the Fund. If selected, researchers will be invited to develop a full proposal to be considered for funding. LOIs must not exceed two single-spaced pages, with one-inch margins, and must be in standard 11- or 12-point font. You are expected to dedicate most of your LOI to defining the research question and describing the research design, methodology, and project activities. LOIs should contain a general budget estimate that includes a short description of key costs. Proposals must be relevant to the Fund program's current priorities and should include a brief description of the qualifications and responsibilities of key investigator(s).

Please consider the following questions before submitting the LOI:

1. Does the proposal address an important policy question or set of questions?
 - a. Applicants should clearly state the primary questions and/or hypotheses, explain their importance, and describe their relevance to the Fund's interests.
2. What is the likely contribution of this project?
 - a. Applicants should be aware of prior research in the field and state the specific outcomes expected, as well as how the project will contribute to the field.
3. Does the research design, methodology, and proposed data appropriately address the research question(s)?
 - a. This section should clearly delineate how and why the chosen data and methods are appropriate to answering the research question.

Application materials will be accepted until May 29, 2020, at 1:00 p.m. EST. After reviewing all LOIs, Fund staff will alert applicants by June 30, 2020, if a full proposal is requested. Selected applicants will be advised of the proposal guidelines. All proposals are due by August 14, 2020, at 1:00 p.m. EST. Grant awards will be announced by September 18, 2020.

Programmatic questions should be sent to rfp@cmwf.org. Answers to all questions will be posted weekly [here](#).

Technical questions regarding the online application system should be addressed to Grants and Systems Administrator Caitlyn Duer at cd@cmwf.org.