

Q&A

1. Is there any funding or money available to execute this project?

NIH does not have funds available to support any research projects arising from these efforts. However, there are sources of funding through traditional grant mechanisms for funding this kind of research that are on a much longer timescale than this opportunity, such as the Science of Science Approach to Analyzing and Innovating the Biomedical Research Enterprise (SoS:Bio) that is supported by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences in collaboration with the National Science Foundation: [https://www.nigms.nih.gov/Research/specificareas/Pages/Science-of-Science-Policy-Approach-to-Analyzing-and-Innovating-the-Biomedical-Research-Enterprise-\(SCISIPBIO\).aspx](https://www.nigms.nih.gov/Research/specificareas/Pages/Science-of-Science-Policy-Approach-to-Analyzing-and-Innovating-the-Biomedical-Research-Enterprise-(SCISIPBIO).aspx)

2. Is training available on how to use the NIH Research Portfolio Online Reporting Tools (RePORT) website?

The NIH Research Portfolio Online Reporting Tools (RePORT) website (<https://report.nih.gov/>) provides access to reports, data, and analyses of NIH research activities, including information on NIH expenditures and the results of NIH-supported research. There is a guided tour available from the RePORT Expenditures and Results module website (<https://reporter.nih.gov/>) and FAQs (<https://report.nih.gov/faqs>).

3. Who is the audience for the deliverables?

For the methodological approaches, the audience will be NIH staff working on analytics and evaluations of NIH programs. For the stewardship recommendations, NIH expects that results will be shared with policy- and decision-makers, as well as those implementing NIH programs and policies.

4. How often are you willing to meet with researchers?

NIH will meet with researchers as needed depending on the complexity of the proposed project, and work across the agency to identify and coordinate input from the most appropriate experts.

5. What is NIH's internal capacity to do this work?

NIH has a strong community of staff that engage in evaluation and analytics, and remains committed to supporting organizational capacity to enhance NIH's operations through high-quality evidence. *The Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act of 2018* (<https://www.congress.gov/115/plaws/publ435/PLAW-115publ435.pdf>, also referred to as the *Evidence Act*) was established to advance evidence-building in the federal government by improving access to data and expanding evaluation capacity. The *Evidence Act* requires changes to how the federal government manages and uses the information it collects, emphasizing strong agency coordination for the strategic use of data. Although the capacity already existed

NIH Evidence Project Portal Opportunity
Researcher Interest Meeting, May 28th, 2024

within NIH, the *Evidence Act* has provided a great opportunity to further build and bolster this capacity across the agency.

6. I'm interested in some other topic not included in the question set, should I apply?

This opportunity is limited to identifying evidence that would fall within the scope of these questions, but as these are very general areas, many lines of research could potentially be included within the scope of this opportunity. In their expressions of interest, researchers are encouraged to state how they would address aspects of one or more of these questions.

7. Would data other than those publicly available be potential sources?

Data other than those that are publicly available will not be provided by NIH for these projects. NIH believes in transparency and makes abstracts, administrative, and certain identifiable information available on funded grants, however, information on unfunded ideas, applicants, and investigators generally remains protected under *The Privacy Act of 1974*.

8. How will the assortment of research projects that result from this be managed?

NIH staff gladly offer their knowledge and expertise with NIH processes and data for the purposes of a productive collaboration but will not be overseeing or managing these research projects. The data and findings are free to be published and shared by the researchers. Results will be shared with NIH decision-makers and could be considered for adoption within existing stewardship activities.

9. Will multiple partners/individuals be chosen to address specific projects across the proposed research areas? Or, will one partner be chosen who can best answer as many proposed research areas as possible?

As these questions are broad and have multiple aspects that could benefit from further evidence, multiple partners/individuals may work on the same topic.

10. Developing program/evaluation metrics requires deep stakeholder engagement and teamwork. What are the provisions/expectations/logistics for those principles in this complex project?

Depending on the submitted expressions of interest, there could be opportunities for varying levels of engagement.

11. Is it possible to gain access to the confidential grant application data that the NIH stores related to the peer review process (e.g., applications, scores, reviewer identities)?

NIH believes in transparency and makes abstracts, administrative, and certain identifiable information available on funded grants, however, information on unfunded ideas, applicants,

NIH Evidence Project Portal Opportunity
Researcher Interest Meeting, May 28th, 2024

and investigators generally remains protected under *The Privacy Act of 1974* and will not be made available through this engagement.

12. Is there an opportunity to apply for Evaluation Set-Aside (ESA) Funds to support this kind of work?

No, NIH is not accepting applications for the NIH Evaluation Set-Aside (ESA) Funds.

13. Can teams of co-investigators submit statements of interest, or should all submissions have a PI?

Yes, teams of co-investigators may submit statements of interest.

14. What happens after the expression of interest? When can we expect to hear back?

Depending on the number of expressions of interest received, researchers can expect to hear back by the end of the summer.

15. What's the timeline/deadlines for the metrics recommendations report?

Preliminary results for reports describing potential measures NIH could implement are due within 1 year of start date.

16. Is it also of interest how NIH impacts decisions of pharmaceutical companies or just CMS decisions?

Yes, NIH is also interested in understanding impacts on private industries as well as other government policies.

17. How similar or different are your topic areas to the agencies Learning Agenda?

The HHS Evaluation Plan describes how the evaluation priority areas of HHS operating and staff divisions are aligned with the goals of the HHS Strategic Plan and the HHS Evidence-Building Plan. The broad nature of this learning agenda does not lend itself to highlighting the evaluation questions of interest listed here.

18. Are you open to recommendations of changing NIH repositories to count access and downloads?

NIH has a longstanding commitment to making the results of NIH-funded research available and maintains a number of repositories for sharing or accessing data (see <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/NIHbmic/bmic-about.html>). Studies that may provide evidence for strengthening data sharing efforts or better understanding of the outcomes of such efforts would be of great interest.