

Greater Value Portfolio

Research Grant Awards to Highlight Opportunities to Increase Value in Healthcare

Although we have not changed our focus on value, we believe there are many research questions related to our nation's response to the COVID-19 pandemic that could fit within this topic.

Statement of Purpose

The Donaghue Foundation announces its 2020 Greater Value Portfolio grant program that will fund research projects for two years with a maximum amount of \$400,000 per award (plus a 10% indirect) for the purpose of advancing promising approaches to achieve a higher value healthcare system. The goal of this program is to test approaches and tools that organizations can readily use to improve the value of the healthcare they provide to patients and communities.

We believe value in healthcare is achieved with uniformly high quality outcomes and favorable patient experience for the money we spend. Symptoms of poor healthcare value include:

- high and rising healthcare costs,
- unwarranted variation in prices,
- unaffordable cost of care burden on patients and families,
- unacceptable variation in quality, and
- lack of transparency in both price and outcomes.

Investigators conducting research to develop actionable solutions to one or more of these symptoms of low value healthcare are encouraged to apply to the Greater Value Portfolio program.

Eligible Topics

To be considered for funding, research studies must focus on improving value through promising strategies using one or more of these approaches:

- Test models of care, coverage or system change that seek to improve value by addressing one or more of the symptoms of low value,
- Reduce routine treatments, tests, and screenings for patients for whom the potential harms (including financial harm) outweigh potential benefits,
- Provide tools to help consumers make decisions about their healthcare based on value, including the cost of care to patients, in addition to other patient-centered factors,
- Promote conversations between patients and their clinicians and care teams about preferences and trade-offs related to alternative treatment options and/or out of pocket cost burden to patients and families,
- Test interventions geared to reducing racial and ethnic disparities through the provision of higher value healthcare.

Eligibility Criteria

The Greater Value Portfolio program places emphasis on research that is closely linked to ongoing improvement initiatives geared to achieving greater value in healthcare organizations. This program is

open to investigators at tax-exempt research institutions in the United States. In order to receive the award, the applicant must partner with an organization that delivers healthcare services or be a researcher based in a research unit embedded in a healthcare organization.

Standards for Selection

The applicant will be asked to describe the following:

- 1) How their proposed research will assess value,
- 2) Their proposed research question and methods,
- 3) How this study aligns with current improvement initiatives and strategic goals of the healthcare organization that is partnering with the principal investigator on this study, and
- 4) Evidence of the principal investigator's and the partnering organization's ability and commitment to work together to implement new knowledge into practice and communicate new findings to audiences beyond scholarly publications.

Equal weight will be given to each component in the review process.

In all programs, the Foundation requires applicants to demonstrate that they have reviewed their research questions, protocols, sampling, and data analyses to ensure that they do not inadvertently mask or exacerbate racial, ethnic or gender health inequities.

Topics that are not considered relevant to the purpose of the program are efficacy trials, basic research, or research using animal models.

You are invited to contact the Foundation with questions about eligibility, suitable research topics, or other questions about the Greater Value Portfolio program by emailing Stacy Cloud at cloud@donaghue.org. A recorded webinar providing additional information about the GVP program and the application process will be available to prospective applicants beginning March 17, 2020.

Funding Commitment

The Foundation intends to fund up to five *Greater Value Portfolio* awards in 2020. The Trustees will commit up to \$400,000 per award plus a 10% indirect rate to each selected investigator. Because of this close link between the funded research and the potential for meaningful results to be used to help healthcare organizations achieve their strategic goals, the duration of the award is two years.

A partial payment of the award will be made at the start of the first year, and the balance of the funding will be made at the start of the second year upon receipt of an accepted annual report from the investigator unless a clear reason for additional information or a reason for termination develops. No-cost extensions may be requested.

Grant funds may be used to support the following:

- The principal investigator's salary (consistent with the applicant institution's policy), project staff salaries, and employee benefits
- Data processing expenses, and other direct expenses including equipment and research participant expenses,
- Appropriate expenses of the partnering organization to facilitate their support of the research;

and costs associated with disseminating research findings.

The majority of the expenses are expected to support the research study.

Funds may *not* be used for:

- All or part of the salary and fringe benefits for secretarial or clerical assistance not related to the research,
- Any administrative costs including professional membership and subscriptions,
- New construction or the renovation of existing facilities,
- Support of ongoing research projects not an integral part of the investigator's research program, except with express Foundation approval,
- Indirect cost of more than 10% of the direct cost of the project for either the applicant organization or any partnering or subcontracted organizations.

Timeline for Application Process

The application process will have two phases. Phase 1 is a letter of intent, **due to the Foundation by May 11, 2020**. Following a review of all letters of intent, we will begin Phase 2 by inviting some applicants to complete a more substantial application.

March 17, 2020	Information webinar posted
May 11, 2020	Letters of intent due
June 8, 2020	Notice of LOI decision
August 3, 2020	Applications due
November 2, 2020	Funding decisions announced
January 1, 2021	Grant term begins

Letters of Intent

Submitted letters of intent are to briefly describe how the research will advance greater value; the research question and methods; the linkages between the research study and a partnering healthcare organization and implementation approaches. Letters of intent are assessed for their eligibility by Foundation staff and then sent to an external panel of reviewers. ***The external reviewers review the letters of intent without information as to the applicant and their institution;*** only the core ideas are considered at this stage. When the full applications are reviewed, all information contained in the application including applicants' bios and their institutions are used in the review process.

The letter of intent form includes all of the specific information that must be included in your LOI. The LOI form can be found on the Grants Opportunities page and the Greater Value Portfolio page on our website at donaghue.org. **The form must be submitted electronically to cloud@donaghue.org by the principal investigator no later than May 11, 2020.**

Standards for Selection

Letters of intent and applications will be reviewed as to the relevance of the research topic to achieving greater value, the importance of the research question and appropriateness of the methods; the demonstration of a strong collaborative working relationship amongst the researchers and the clinical or operational personnel who will be engaged in this project; the alignment of the research goals with the current initiatives and strategic goals of the partnering organization; and approaches to implementing the research findings into practice or policy.

Requested applications will further be assessed on the scientific merit of the research question and methods; the degree to which the past experience of the key personnel is related to the project activities, including efforts to integrate research findings into healthcare improvement; the appropriateness of the overall cost to the project goals and duration; and the project's potential for practical benefit in bringing greater value to health and healthcare.

For additional information, please visit our website donaghue.org to see all of the application materials for the Greater Value Portfolio grant program or contact Stacy Cloud at cloud@donaghue.org.

About the Donaghue Foundation

The Donaghue Foundation is a private medical research foundation located in West Hartford, Connecticut. The Foundation focuses on initiatives to strengthen research on health issues, to promote research leadership, and to put new knowledge to work for public benefit. The Foundation supports work in a wide range of disciplines aimed at improving mental and physical health, advancing clinical interventions and the delivery of health services, and improving community and public health status. The Foundation is particularly interested in funding research that has the potential for a direct, near term impact to improve health and in supporting initiatives designed to promote the transfer of knowledge for use in practice and policy.