



1. Background

The Harvey L. Neiman Health Policy Institute, under the auspices of the American College of Radiology (ACR), is one of the nation's leading medical imaging socioeconomic research organizations. The Neiman Institute studies the role and value of radiology and radiologists in evolving health care delivery and payment systems and the impact of medical imaging on the cost, quality, safety and efficiency of health care.

The Neiman Institute's research will provide a foundation for evidence-based imaging policy to:

- Optimize individual patient care
- Improve overall patient safety and outcomes
- Bolster efficient and effective use of imaging resources to ensure a sustainable health care delivery system.

2. Funding Opportunity

As part of the Neiman Institute's mission to provide objective, credible research to inform the policy community on the role and value of medical imaging, the Neiman Institute seeks to fund external researchers interested in producing studies that may add substantial contributions to this discussion. The Neiman Institute is highly interested in broadening the base of researchers examining the economics of medical imaging and, as such, is particularly interested in funding junior researchers in hopes that Neiman Institute funding may serve as seed grants for pursuing larger research efforts in the future. However, any qualified researcher is eligible to receive funding under this solicitation.

This call for proposals is designed to foster projects that fall in the following four areas of interest:

- *Value of Imaging:* While the utility of diagnostic imaging is unquestioned, there is sparse evidence directly quantifying the value of imaging for either patient outcomes or efficiencies in care delivery. Projects under this area seek to examine the role of imaging in improving outcomes and reducing costs to the overall health care system.¹
- *Alternative Health Care Models:* As health care continues to evolve beyond traditional care delivery models and fee-for-service payment systems, there is a need to understand the roles of radiologists and their practices in these emerging models. These projects will evaluate the role of imaging in next generation care

¹ Successful projects in this area have the potential for future funding through Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) grants.

delivery systems with a focus on the performance and payment of radiology services in Medical Homes, Accountable Care Organizations (ACO) and other similar models of care.²

- *Imaging and Quality:* As payment for quality continues to supplant payment for service as the foundation for ensuring a sustainable care delivery system, it is vital to understand how these efforts affect overall quality of care and their impact on the practice of radiology. These projects specifically examine the effects of this shift on patients and providers.³
- *Economics of Practice:* Changes in both payment schedules and the regulatory environment in which physicians operate create incentives that often have far reaching effects into the care delivery system. Projects in this area consider the effects of such changes on important system characteristics such as patient access to care, practice ownership and imaging utilization.⁴

While we have highlighted specific areas of interest, we encourage and may support any proposal that addresses an important, topical issue related to medical imaging and the practice of radiology. This solicitation does not provide support for clinical trials or comparative effectiveness research.

As these projects are intended to be informative to the national health care debate, proposals must discuss how the results will be disseminated and the strategy to distribute them to a wide policy-oriented audience.

3. Eligible Applicants

The Neiman Institute welcomes qualified applicants from a variety of disciplines to include health services research, public health, public policy, economics and medicine. Clinical practitioners interested in pursuing research and junior non-clinical researchers are especially encouraged to apply. Applicants must submit proposals through their organization; individuals are not eligible for funding under this solicitation. As a government contractor, ACR is an Equal Opportunity Employer and complies with applicable federal, state and local EOE laws.

4. Use of Funds

This solicitation is available for projects requiring up to \$60,000 and projected to take 12 months or less. A streamlined application and decision process is available for projects requiring no more than \$30,000.

² Successful projects in this area may be appropriate for future funding under Robert Wood Johnson Health Care Financing and Organization (HCFO) grants.

³ Successful projects in this area have the potential to secure future funding under Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) grants.

⁴ Successful projects in this area may be appropriate for future funding under National Institute for Health Care Management (NIHCM) grants.

Funds may be used to support investigator(s) and project staff salaries, data collection, supplies, project-related travel and other relevant direct project costs. The Neiman Institute imposes a 15% ceiling on indirect costs associated with this solicitation. Project funding will be commensurate with the proposed project size and scope.

The Neiman Institute maintains extensive resources that can be made available to support projects funded under this solicitation. Our diverse professional staff includes experts in statistics, economics, and health services research to assist in study design and data analysis, as well as physicians to provide an appropriate clinical context and perspective when needed. The Neiman Institute also houses valuable research datasets such as the 5% Medicare LDS Data that may be made available to funded projects under specific conditions. Funds may be also used to support a residency at the Neiman Institute for a portion of the project to more fully leverage the experts and resources available.

Applicants seeking either to collaborate with the Neiman Institute on their project or otherwise access Neiman Institute expertise and data are especially encouraged. Applicants that wish to utilize Neiman Institute resources as part of their project are advised to contact the Research Director prior to submitting their proposal. A formal affiliation with the Neiman Institute may be available under this solicitation.

5. Proposal Review Process

The deadline for proposals is midnight EST on January 31, 2013.

Proposals will be reviewed to determine consistency with the solicitation requirements. Submissions meeting these standards will be assessed by the Proposal Review Committee from the following perspectives:

- *Policy Relevance:* Each proposal will be assessed for the potential to make a substantial contribute to policy debate and relevance to the objectives of both this solicitation and the Neiman Institute.
- *Technical Proposal:* Each proposal will be evaluated for soundness, feasibility and the likelihood the proposed data and method will lead to project success.
- *Investigator Qualifications:* Investigator(s) qualifications, experience and project time commitment will be examined for sufficient skills and effort to perform the proposed work.

In addition to the stated review criteria, special consideration will be given to projects which leverage Neiman Institute resources. We anticipate announcing initial award decisions in March 2013 depending upon the quality of proposals received, relevance to the mission of the Neiman Institute and continued availability of funds for this solicitation.

Applicants demonstrating exceptional promise but not fully meeting the criteria for funding by the Proposal Review Committee may be contacted for revisions of the initial proposal for further consideration.

6. How to Apply

All submissions should be sent electronically to info@neimanhpi.org no later than midnight EST on January 31, 2013.

The Neiman Institute will allow considerable flexibility in constructing the proposal. Applicants for projects of up to \$60,000 are requested to include the following components in their submission:

1. Cover Letter discussing the relevance of the project to both policy and the objectives of this solicitation.
2. Project Abstract (250 words or less)
3. Project Dissemination Strategy
4. Project Technical Proposal (8 page limit including references, tables, and figures)
5. Detailed Project Budget Justification
6. Curriculum vitae of all principle and co-investigators
7. Description of how the project will address regulatory requirements such as human subjects, Personal Health Information, etc.

Projects requiring no more than \$30,000 will face a streamlined review process. Applications for these smaller awards will include all of the elements required for our standard application; however, the technical proposal is limited to 2 pages and only a broad project budget is required.

7. Point Of Contact

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