Public-Private Partnerships to Improve Population Health Using AI/ML (P4) Program

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

General

1. **What is the goal of the AIM-AHEAD Public-Private Partnerships to Improve Population Health Using AI/ML (P4) Program?**

   The AIM-AHEAD P4 Program is designed to support partnerships among public health departments, higher education institutions, and data science organizations in applying AI/ML to improve population health outcomes.

2. **What is the total amount of funding available per award?**

   The total funding available per award is up to $612,500, which includes $87,500 for a 6-month Planning Phase and $525,000 for a 12-month Implementation Phase.

3. **What are important dates for this funding opportunity? [Updated]**

   The application is due on **June 30, 2025, 11:59 PM ET**. The scientific review of applications is scheduled for July 2025. The earliest start date for each project is September 2, 2025.

4. **The funding is divided into a planning phase and implementation phase. Can we just apply for the planning phase?**

   No, applicants cannot apply for just the planning phase. The application must address both the planning and implementation phases.

5. **How many awards will be granted?**

   The AIM-AHEAD Consortium anticipates **supporting up to 12 projects in the Planning Phase**.

   Of these, **up to 7 projects will be selected for** further funding in the **Implementation Phase**, contingent on the progress and completion of the Planning Phase.

6. **The application indicates that projects must be aligned with the AIM-AHEAD North Stars. What are they? And do projects have to align with all of them or just one?**

   The North Stars are the central goals for the AIM-AHEAD Consortium and are as follows:

   - North Star I - Develop a representative AI/ML workforce with broad participation.
   - North Star II - Increase knowledge, awareness and national-scale community engagement and empowerment in AI/ML.
   - North Star III - Use AI/ML to improve behavioral health, cardiometabolic health and cancer outcomes for all.
   - North Star IV - Build community capacity and infrastructure in AI/ML to address community-centric health needs and challenges.

   Proposed projects should be aligned with at least one North Star. The description of how the project is aligned with one or more North Stars should be incorporated in the application.

7. What types of research projects are encouraged?

Studies that can help advance public health research in high priority areas aligned with the AIM-AHEAD North Stars are strongly encouraged.

Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Use of predictive modeling in enhancing the accuracy, efficiency, and actionable insights in public health decision-making
- Studies that employ AI-driven disease forecasting
- Novel studies that develop new analytical tools and methods
- Studies that use AI methods, including machine learning and natural language processing to enhance risk prediction approaches
- Machine learning algorithms for EHRs in public health departments
- Use of AI in public health diagnostics to increase the speed and precision of diagnostic procedures

8. What datasets can applicants use?

Applicants are strongly encouraged to utilize data from the public health department partner to pilot AI/ML applications to strengthen their operations, co-design interventions and preventions or improve health outcomes in partnership with the communities they serve.

Alternatively, applicants may apply to use existing AIM-AHEAD resources including the OCHIN Database on AIM-AHEAD Service Workbench or MedStar Health through the AIM-AHEAD Data Bridge (AADB). Please refer to the Call for Proposals (CFP) for more information on available data resources.

9. What must the application include?

A complete application for this funding opportunity must include the following:

- Applicant information (Principal Investigators/Program Directors)
- Biosketches for key personnel
- Letters of support from public health departments
- Proposal summary
- Research plan, including budget, budget justification, and partnership plan.

Please refer to the CFP for more information on the application components.

10. Where do I apply?

The AIM-AHEAD Consortium utilizes the online portal *InfoReady* for the submission of proposal applications. *InfoReady* should be used to access, complete, and upload the completed application components no later than June 23, 2025, at 11:59 pm in the Eastern (ET) time zone. The *InfoReady* application site can be accessed here.

Chrome, Firefox, or Edge are recommended browsers for *InfoReady*. If you are using Safari, make sure to clear your cache before logging in.

11. How will the application be evaluated? What are the review criteria?

Applications will undergo an administrative, scientific, and programmatic review.

All eligible applications will be reviewed following a modified NIH peer review process. The standard NIH scoring range (1-9) will be used to assess the application's strengths and weaknesses regarding the following criteria: overall impact, significance, innovation, and approach.

Please refer to the CFP for more information on the review process.

12. Can current and/or prior AIM-AHEAD awardees apply?

Yes, applicants who are currently funded and/or have previously received funding from AIM-AHEAD are eligible to apply; however, the research question(s) must be distinct from the previously funded application.

Additionally, current awardees may not hold multiple AIM-AHEAD awards except under exceptional circumstances. The current project must also be completed by the start of the new award (i.e., the project should not be in a no-cost extension).

Please refer to the CFP for more information on eligibility for current/prior AIM-AHEAD awardees.

13. What are the grantee expectations? In other words, how much time should I expect to spend on AIM-AHEAD and P4 activities?

In addition to implementing your projects, grantees are expected to participate in the P4 Enrichment program, including attending monthly awardee meetings (via Zoom). Other expectations, as outlined in the CFP, include:

- Timely submission of monthly reports, invoices, and surveys.
- Participation in annual hub and AIM-AHEAD Consortium meetings.
- Presentation of project results in AIM-AHEAD meetings.
- Agreement for AIM-AHEAD to disseminate study findings through online websites, social media, and other communication channels.
- Provision of a summary of the research status about milestones listed in the proposal, challenges faced and plans to overcome those challenges, usage of funds, and next steps.
- Within 60 days following the project end date, submission of a final report of research findings, usage of funds, and a list of publications, grant applications, articles, and reference presentations emerging from the research.

Applicants

14. What does it mean to be the primary applicant? And who can serve in this role?

The primary applicant is the organization in the dyad or triad that will submit the application on behalf of the team.

Additionally, if awarded, the primary applicant will receive the funds and be responsible for disbursing funds to the other partners.

A local, state, and/or tribal health department and a 1) higher education institution and/or 2) data science-oriented organization with an accessible data library can apply.

Any of these three types of institutions are eligible to be the primary applicant organization; however, the primary applicant must be a domestic institution located in the United States and its territories.

15. Can partnerships consist of either two partners (dyad) or three partners (triad)?

Yes, partnerships can consist of two or three partners. However, all partnerships MUST include a public health department.

16. Can there be more than one application from an institution/organization?

Yes, each organization/institution may be involved in one or more applications.

17. The program includes the words "public-private partnerships" in its name. Do all partnerships have to be between a public health department and a private data science organization or institution of higher education?

Yes. All partnerships must include a public health department.

The second (dyad) or third (triad) partner must be a private higher education institution or data science-oriented organization.

18. The *InfoReady* application asks for information on the lead representative for each partner organization/institution. Who should be listed in these sections?

The Public-Private Partnerships program supports co-leadership among partners in the dyad or triad, as in a multiple project director/principal investigator (MPD/MPI) model.

Each organization/institution should have a representative who will assume a leadership role in the partnership as the project MPI/Co-Lead. Information for each MPI/Co-Lead must be provided in the lead representative sections of the *InfoReady* application.

19. I understand that each application team must have a Public Health Department, along with a private Higher Education Institution and/or Data Science-Oriented Organization. Can additional organizations also be involved with funding support?

The primary partners involved need to be the organizations/institutions mentioned above. However, yes, other institutions can be invited at the discretion of the dyad or triad.

But the allocation of grant funds will need to be justified in the application, and the disbursement of funds will be the responsibility of the primary applicant.

20. **Our data-science-oriented partner will provide the following services: download relevant data, structure the data for analysis, and package the data and algorithms for sharing. Is the above company's role responsive to the public-private partnership call for proposals?**

    Yes, these activities fulfill the role of the data science-oriented partner for the P4 CFP.

21. **Can an entity serving as a bona fide agent for a public health department be the submitting applicant for this opportunity?**

    A bona fide agent for a public health department is acceptable for this CFP.

22. **Does lack of Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) accreditation or pending PHAB accreditation disqualify public health departments from applying for this funding opportunity? Also, can you clarify what is meant by *county, city, state and special district governments* in the public health department eligibility criteria section? [New]**

    No, although PHAB accredited public health departments are encouraged to apply, the lack of accreditation does not disqualify the health department from applying.

    Further, regardless of PHAB accreditation status, government led public health departments at the local and state levels, along with tribal health services/departments/equivalents, are eligible to apply for this funding opportunity.

23. **If the public health department is the primary applicant, is a letter of support from them still required? If so, who should be the signer of the letter? [New]**

    Yes, if the public health department is the primary applicant, a letter of support is still required.

    Ideally, there should be at least one letter of support from someone in leadership at the public health department who can convey support for the project, resources, and assurance for protected time for their staff to participate in the project.

24. **Our health department does not take indirect costs. How would we handle this portion of the budget? [New]**

    If the health department and/or another partner institution/organization does not have an indirect cost rate, the budget specific to those entities can include only direct costs.

    However, if your partner(s) have established indirect cost rates, the indirect costs will need to be included in the budget as a whole.

    It is also important to be mindful that the $612,500 is the total cost allowed and maximum budget for this funding opportunity. Thus, indirect costs should be included within the $612,500 and NOT in addition to $612,500.

    In other words, the proposed budget should NOT exceed $612,500.

Required Registrations

25. What types of registrations are required for the P4 CFP? How long does the registration process take? And when do they need to be in place?

Registrations in multiple systems are required to receive federal grant awards.

To be eligible to apply for or receive an award, applicant organizations must complete and maintain SAM.Gov, eRA Commons, and UEI registrations as described in the SF 424 (R&R) Application Guide.

Registration can take 6 weeks or more, so applicants should begin the process as soon as possible to allow time to address unforeseen issues.

All registrations for the primary applicant must be in place at the time of the application.

All registrations for the secondary and/or tertiary applicants should be in place by the time of the award.

SAM.gov and UEI

26. Which partner must be registered on SAM.gov and have a current UEI?

All applicants MUST BE registered on Sam.gov and provide the Unique Entity Id (UEI) by the time of the award.

The primary applicant MUST BE registered on Sam.gov and provide the organization/institution's UEI when applying for the Public-Private Partnership Program.

27. How do I find my organization's UEI number?

You can contact your organization's Office of Sponsored Research to find the number. Additionally, if you are registered in eRA Commons, you can find your unique entity identifier (UEI) by viewing your institutional profile. For more information, visit the eRA Commons Institution Basic Information online help site.

28. If I do not have a UEI number, how do I obtain one?

Unique entity identifiers (UEIs) are issued by the System for Award Management (SAM.gov). More information on registering a new entity or obtaining a UEI can be found here: Obtaining a UEI in SAM.

29. Do tribal organizations need to register with SAM.gov?

No, federally recognized tribes and their derivatives are exempt from this requirement.

However, tribal organizations may register with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) to obtain a Unique Entity identifier (UEI). The UEI is issued by SAM.gov and used to uniquely identify entities (i.e., organizations, businesses, and individuals) within the U.S. government award and financial systems.

eRA Commons

30. Which organization should establish an eRA Commons account?

Any organization intending to receive federal funds must establish an eRA Commons account. To do anything in eRA Commons, you will need an account.

The only exception is for a referee to submit a reference letter. An eRA Commons account is not required to submit a reference letter.

31. Where can I find more information about eRA commons?

For an overview of eRA Commons, visit Overview of eRA Commons. Additional information can be found on the eRA Commons Frequently Asked Questions page.

32. How do I register my organization/institution with eRA Commons?

Only individuals with legal signing authority - the signing official (SO) - can register their organization in Commons. The SO typically has a title such as: President, CEO, Executive Director, Dean, Chancellor, Provost, Owner, or Partner. Please note that the SO registers the applicant organization in eRA Commons, and an SO account is automatically created. The SO (or an Account Administrator) then creates an account for the principal investigator. If a PI already has an existing eRA Commons account with another organization, the SO can affiliate the PI to the current organization.

More information on registering for an eRA Commons account can be found on the Register Your Institution in eRA Commons page.

33. How does a Principal Investigator (PI) get registered in eRA Commons?

Once the applicant organization is registered in eRA Commons, the organization's Signing Official or Accounts Administrator/Business Official (AA/BO) can register the Principal Investigator by creating an account with the PI authority role.

When a Signing Official creates an account for a PI, the PI will receive an email to go to the Commons to verify the PI's profile information. This email is sent only when the PI has prior NIH support; otherwise, the account will be created immediately. See the steps to Create or Edit a Commons Account or watch a video tutorial on How Signing Officials Create Accounts in eRA Commons.

A PI must confirm eRA Commons registration before the application submission.

34. What is an IPF number?

The Institution Profile (IPF) number is an internal NIH identifier that uniquely identifies and associates institutional information within NIH electronic systems. You can find it via the IPF tab in eRA Commons. See the Institution Profile Module in the eRA Commons online help page and/or the Manage Institution Profile page for more information.

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

35. Is IRB approval required if we plan to de-identify patient notes?

An IRB determination of human subjects is required for AIM-AHEAD funding, even if patient data is de-identified. In this case, the IRB may provide a designation letter which states that the project does not involve human subjects.

36. If IRB approval is required, would this be needed before the project starts?

IRB submission and approval does NOT need to be completed prior to submission of the application. However, the IRB designation letter, a formal letter issued by the IRB indicating that the project has been reviewed and approved or is exempt from review, must be received by AIM-AHEAD before the project can commence.

Application Submission (*InfoReady*)

37. Do all partners need to set up an account in *InfoReady*?

No, just the primary applicant. However, all partners should sign up for AIM-AHEAD Connect.

38. In *InfoReady*, is the PI able to delegate access of the application to others? [New]

Per the InfoReady support site, *only one user account can be directly associated with the submitted application (i.e., the application data will only be tied to one user and appear on their profile).*

However, InfoReady allows users to designate other users as proxies for themselves and submit applications on their behalf. More information on how this is done can be found here: https://infoready.freshdesk.com/support/solutions/articles/14000060080-have-someone-submit-an-application-on-my-behalf-proxy-.

39. The CFP indicates that the NIH Research & Related (R&R) Budget Form must be used for the budget. Where can I get a copy of this form?

A copy of the Research & Related Budget form is available for downloading within the *InfoReady* application site for this funding opportunity. For more information on completing the form, visit NIH R&R Budget Form.

40. Should we submit one budget NIH R&R budget form for the Planning and Implementation Phases? Also, should we submit an NIH R&R budget form for each partner, or include the budgets for all partners in one NIH R&R budget form? [New]

Yes, the budget for the entire project, including the planning and implementation phases and budgets for all partners, should be included in one NIH R&R budget form.

The budget allocations for the secondary and/or tertiary partner organizations/institutions can be included in Section F (Other Direct Costs) of the NIH R&R form under Subawards/Consortium/Contractual Costs.

The breakdown of the budget allocations for each phase (planning and implementation) and each partner organization/institution should be clearly outlined in the budget justification.

In summary, for this application, only one NIH R&R Form should be submitted (5 pages maximum) and one budget justification (2 pages maximum).

41. For each partner organization, the application requests the eRA Commons ID. What eRA Commons ID should be listed? [New]

For each partner organization/institution, a lead representative should be named in the application.

Thus, the eRA Commons ID to be entered is the eRA Commons ID/username for each lead representative. The eRA Commons ID/username is typically one's last name, first initial and last name or a variation of the individual's name that may include other characters.

42. How can I request technical support or ask questions about the P4 Program and application process?

To request technical support or ask questions about the P4 program, please submit a request via Public-Private Partnerships HelpDesk.