



# Request for Application (RFA) FAQs

VHA Health Services Research & Development  
Department of Veterans Affairs

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## Forms/File/List Locations

[VA-ORD SF 424 \(R&R\)](#) - A guide for preparing and submitting VA-ORD applications via Grants.gov Workspace or NIH ASSIST, last updated October 1, 2021

[2022 RFA Cyberseminar](#) – HSR&D Administration Seminar Winter 2022 RFA Cyberseminar

## RFA Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### Intent to Submit (ITS)

Questions	Answers
How has the Intent to Submit (ITS) process changed in light of the new requirements provided in 2021?	The <a href="#">Intent to Submit (ITS)</a> process has not changed. An ITS submission is required for any project that will be submitting a full application in grants.gov/eRA within the submission window.
Who should be included in the Intent to Submit (ITS) submission?	All involved personnel for the project must be included in the ITS submission. The ITS/ART list is an opportunity to list every single person who touches the project, and the eRA Commons <a href="#">Sr/Key person profile</a> is now just those who contribute in a substantive way. There will be an opportunity to update this list when the proposal is submitted.

### Personnel

Questions	Answers
How has the Key Personnel Profile changed in light of the new requirements provided in 2021?	Because of the difficulty in having eRA Commons ID for those listed on the key personnel form, HSR&D now only requires <a href="#">Senior and Key Personnel</a> to be described in the proposal. However, in order to identify potential conflicts with reviewers, HSR&D still requires the list of all personnel through the ITS.
Should only PD/PIs and Co-Is be listed on an application?	No; it is the minimum, all key personnel should be listed on the application. As specified under section 3.5, page 67 in the <a href="#">VA-ORD Application Guide SF 424 (R&amp;R)</a> , “Senior/Key Personnel are defined as all

	individuals who contribute in a substantive, measurable way to the scientific development or execution of the project, whether or not salaries are requested; this includes PD/PI(s) and Co-I's."
Who must be listed in the ART System?	Part of the revision from October 1, 2021 requires that ALL individuals named in the application (other than the bibliography or biosketches) MUST be listed in the ART system. This is a way that HSR&D can capture all the personnel information that PIs used to have to put in their application without them having to get eRA Commons IDs for all parties.

### Letter of Support (LOS)

Questions	Answers
What is a Letter of Support (LOS) and what should be included in it?	The letter of support (LOS) is an endorsement from an institution or person. It should include information such as the type of support for the project, belief in its relevance for veterans, willingness to provide resources necessary to perform the work (e.g., space, facilities, effort etc.) and commitment to allowing the time necessary (protected time for clinicians) for the research.
Who should sign off on the Letter of Support (LOS) for VA Investigators and non-VA collaborators?	The Medical Center Director letter of support is required. If the project has multiple PIs, a Medical Center Director letter is required for each PI. Only the PI (or MPIs) needs institutional letters of support.
What other Letter of Supports (LOS) are required?	All key personnel must write letters of commitment and PIs/MPIs need an additional Medical Director Letter. Please reference section 3.4, 8, page 62 in the <a href="#">VA-ORD Application Guide SF 424 (R&amp;R)</a> for additional information on Director Letters.

<p>For a proposal resubmission, would using a letter of support from a previous submission be acceptable?</p>	<p>As specified under section 3.4, 8b, page 63 in the <a href="#">VA-ORD Application Guide SF 424 (R&amp;R)</a>, all letters of support are expected to be dated within 12 months of the date of submission. A new letter is required if the date of the letter is over a year old from the date of submission.</p>
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**Budget and Costs**

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>Is the estimated budget for implementation &amp; dissemination required to be covered within the budget cap (\$1.2M)?</p>	<p>Yes, the estimated budget must be within the \$1.2M cap. All work proposed must be included within the budget cap.</p>
<p>How would publication costs be budgeted in the proposal?</p>	<p>Publication costs must now need to be included and requested in the budget. You may request up to a total of \$3,000 for publications which will be held until requested. The publication is for final results. For additional information, please reference Section 3.7.3 F. Item 2, page 90 in the <a href="#">VA-ORD Application Guide SF 424 (R&amp;R)</a>.</p>
<p>Should applicants include indirect costs being drawn from another sponsor (not through HSR&amp;D)?</p>	<p>No, HSR&amp;D is looking for the (total) direct costs per budget year which would include the investigator’s salary if they are drawing salary from the award/grant and all other line items that are direct costs.</p>
<p>Should indirect costs be included in the budget?</p>	<p>Yes, but only if these indirect costs are not being drawn from another sponsor. The key is to NOT include indirect costs for sponsors (e.g., NIH) who already provide these indirect costs.</p>
<p>How should a non-VA investigator who is a Co-Investigator be labeled in the budget?</p>	<p>A non-VA investigator may be a co-I in the application but not the budget. They must be labeled as a consultant or an IPA in the budget. If this person is not an IPA but a part of a contract, their name cannot</p>

	appear because a contract is for services, and it is not important who provides those services.
How is the budget percentage threshold of an IPA designated?	The determination of the percentage of IPA for COIN or non-COIN is based on the primary site status. If the primary site is a COIN, then the IPA percentage threshold is 30%. While if the primary site is a non-COIN, then the IPA percentage threshold of 40% is allowed.
Which budget amount determines the percentage of an IPA calculated?	The budget amount to determine the percentage is calculated with all donated time of personnel rather than the total budget as this amount generally exceeds the budget total and allows more flexibility to include IPAs.
Does the budget and budget justification count towards the 1-page limit for the narrative, which describes the justification for the waiver request?	The one-page limit refers only to the narrative. The budget must be included separately.

### Miscellaneous Questions

Questions	Answers
What requirements must be included in the nurse salary waiver request for a research nurse PI?	Nurse waivers do not pertain to RNs receiving clinical funds as PIs. It is expected that the medical center will offset their research time with VERA dollars. The only nurses who can receive salary as PI are those hired by research in title 5 positions, e.g., as research health scientists, and they do not require waivers. The nurse waivers are only for clinical nurses who are members of the research study team including project managers, study coordinators, research assistants, and etc.
Are proposals to also include	Proposals submitted under the Disrupted Care RFA may include mortality as an outcome, though HSR&D

<p>mortality as an outcome in the Disrupted Care RFA?</p>	<p>cautions against including mortality as the only outcome and recommend any proposals in this space focus on more granular questions to distinguish them from the National Mortality Study.</p> <p>For any additional questions related to the Disrupted Care RFA, please email:  <a href="mailto:VHACOHSRDDisruptedCa@va.gov">VHACOHSRDDisruptedCa@va.gov</a></p>
<p>Should the applicant include a Biographical Sketch and ORS for an organization (i.e. TAPS, or American Legion)?</p>	<p>No; <a href="#">Biographical Sketches</a> are for “people,” and not organizations. Therefore the applicant would not need to include one for organizations.</p>
<p>How would a registered dietician be categorized?</p>	<p>A registered dietician is similar to a registered pharmacist. In order for either to receive HSR&amp;D salary support, the written budget justification/narrative needs to clearly describe the research related duties and explain why they can only be performed by a registered dietician who will not perform clinical duties during the time allotted to the research study.</p>
<p>What additional information is required for Co-Investigators?</p>	<p>Co-investigators should submit a letter of support for the study. If there are multiple co-investigators from the same institution, they can write a joint letter and all sign it. As Key Personnel, they should be listed in the application as well as in ITS.</p> <p>If the co-investigator is non-VA, they may not be listed in the budget as a Co-investigator but may instead be listed as a consultant or IPA.</p>