

HEI RFA 25-2: Walter A. Rosenblith New Investigator Award

This file includes answers to questions posed by participants of the applicant informational webinar held December 11, 2025. If you do not find an answer to your question here, you can consult our [frequently asked questions page](#) or email Dr. Dan Crouse at dcrouse@healtheffects.org for more information.

Eligibility and Application Process

Should applicants have IRBs in place at the point of application?	No, but studies must have IRB approval in place prior to the start of the study.
How do leaves of absence from work affect the eligibility criteria?	Applicants may exclude periods of absence from work (e.g., medical or parental leave) from the 60-month eligibility period. Please indicate any periods of leave in your biosketch. It is recommended that you verify your eligibility with Dan Crouse (email above) prior to applying.
May applicants contact the HEI Research Committee for guidance?	No. Reach out to Dan Crouse (email above) if you have additional questions.

Questions about the study budget

What is the cap on direct and indirect costs?	The maximum total budget for any single study is \$600,000 (total costs across 2-3 years), including both direct and indirect costs. Indirect costs are limited to a maximum of 30% of direct costs excluding equipment charges. In addition, indirect costs cannot be greater than the government-negotiated rate for your institution.
Does the preliminary proposal require a budget?	The preliminary application requires an approximate total budget. The full budget will be requested from invited applicants as part of their full applications.
Whose salary can be included in the budget?	Funds can be used to support the applicant's salary, to hire additional staff (e.g., postdocs, graduate or undergraduate students, technicians, or consulting statisticians). Funds cannot be used to support the salaries of co-investigators or mentors.
Does the proposal require the involvement of a biostatistician?	No.

Can equipment or data be included in the budget?	Yes.
Can the budget include subcontractors based at other institutions?	Yes.

RFA Topics & Scope

What geographic locations are of interest for this RFA? Does the research need to be of interest to the US EPA?	We will consider studies based anywhere in the world; there are no priority geographic locations for this RFA. Generally, however, we are interested in funding studies that will be of broad interest to researchers and policymakers in many jurisdictions or geographic contexts (e.g., findings or approaches that are generalizable and/or relevant to other locations and populations). Policy-relevance can refer to national-, state-, regional-, or city-level, or to clinical guidelines, among other kinds of policies.
How many studies will be funded through this RFA?	We anticipate funding one study, but there is a possibility that two studies might be funded.
Can we look exclusively at cancer as an outcome?	Yes. There are no specific priority health outcomes stated for this RFA.
Are clinical trials allowed?	Yes, so long as they are feasible within the budgetary and time constraints of the RFA.
What are the pollutants of interest?	For this RFA, we are interested in studies on the three following topics, which are described in greater detail in the HEI Strategic Research Plan 2025-2030 : the evolving transportation landscape, pollutant mixtures, and air toxics.
Is HEI interested in studies on indoor air quality, or studies on natural sources of air pollution, such as wildfires or dust?	Generally, HEI is interested in studies on outdoor air pollution. In particular, we are interested in studies on pollution sources and air pollutants that either are, or that can be, regulated by policy.
Are preliminary data required?	Preliminary data are not required, but it will be important to demonstrate that the study team has the necessary expertise and that the proposed work is likely to be successful.

Will there be higher priority given to proposals on exposure measurement or on epidemiologic studies?

We are interested in these kinds of studies equally.