



**ORD-wide Post-COVID Conditions
Collaborative Merit Award**

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Health Services R&D**

Today's Session (another version)

- Overview: Maciej Gonek, PhD
- Panel Q&A

David Atkins, MD, MPH	Director	Health Services R&D
Patricia Dorn, PhD	Director	Rehabilitation R&D
Holly Krull, PhD	Deputy Director	Biomedical Laboratory R&D
Miriam Smyth, PhD	Deputy Director	Clinical Science R&D
Jane Battles, PhD	Scientific Program Manager – Infectious Diseases	Biomedical Laboratory R&D

Post-COVID Conditions

- ~10–20% of COVID-19 patients experience lingering symptoms for weeks to months following acute SARS-CoV-2 infection.¹

- **Per WHO, Post COVID-19 condition occurs in individuals with a history of probable or confirmed SARSCoV-2 infection, usually 3 months from the onset of COVID-19 with symptoms that last for at least 2 months and cannot be explained by an alternative diagnosis.**

1. GBD Long COVID Collaborators. Surviving COVID-19: a global systematic analysis of long COVID disability in 2020

Research on Post-COVID Conditions

Cooperative Studies Program (CSP) #2028/Epidemiology, Immunology and Clinical Characteristics of COVID-19 (EPIC3)

COVID-19 Observational Research Collaboratory (CORC) Long-Term Outcome Study

Million Veteran Program (MVP)

Cross-Service Collaborative RFA

Solicitation Description

- The aim of this RFA is to support pre-planned collaboration across multiple investigators
- Allows investigators with different expertise to examine different aspects of a single, high-priority problem
- Cross-Service RFA
- Composition of three I01's.
 - Collaboration across more than one VAMC is strongly encouraged.

LINK to RFA (VA intranet site):

<https://vaww.research.va.gov/funding/rfa.cfm>

Solicitation Description (continued)

- To promote effective collaboration across projects, a collaborative program may request support for up to three cores.
- The goal of the cores is to
 1. facilitate collaboration and learning across the individual studies
 2. facilitate and support components of the individual research studies.
- **An administrative core is required** and will be responsible for facilitating communication across projects, communications with clinical partners and with ORD, and with maintaining awareness of other related research relevant to the projects.

LINK to RFA (VA intranet site):

<https://vaww.research.va.gov/funding/rfa.cfm>

Priority Areas (see solicitation for more details)

- Cognitive impairment
- New or worsened mental health symptoms
- Persistent fatigue, with an emphasis on unusual fatigue with Myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS)-like symptoms
- Risk factors for incidence or severity of specific post-COVID conditions
- Functional impairment, including work-related function and functional independence
- Sleep disturbances
- Recurrent pain
- The influence of different COVID-19 viral variants on the incidence, severity or duration of post-COVID conditions

Levels of Funding

Duration and Budget for Individual I01 Projects

- PD/PIs may request funding for a maximum of four (4) years
 - 1 year = \$300,000 max
 - 2 years = \$600,000 max
 - 3 years = \$900,000 max
 - 4 years = \$1,200,000 max
- Up to 3 cores may be proposed. A yearly maximum per core is \$50,000 is allowed. This amount should not be included in the I01 budget and does not count toward the budget cap.

Letters of Intent

- **Page limit:** 8 pages (including cover page & references page)
- **Review process** – reviewed administratively within ORD
- **Applications that do not demonstrate sufficient relationship between project may be triaged**
- **Letter of Intent should describe**
 - Estimated budget for each project
 - Summary of overall collaborative effort & how individual projects will benefit from collaboration
 - Objectives of each individual project & core
 - Additional Clinical Trial information (if applicable)

Individual I01 Applications

- **Page limit for Research Plan:** 14 pages
- **Content for Research plan:**
 - Background & Significance
 - Preliminary Studies
 - Research Design & Methods
- **Appendices describing**
 - All applications that comprise the collaboration
 - Approved letter of intent
 - Research Context and Impact document
 - The Project Management Plan and Administrative Core Appendix
 - Additional Core Rationale & Function
- **This appendix will be identical across all the same projects for one collaboration**

Project Evaluation Criteria

- **Significance**
- **Innovation**
- **Approach**
- **Feasibility**
- **Investigator Qualifications**
- **Multiple PD/PI Leadership Plan**
- **Environment (Facilities and Resources)**
- **Integration**
- **Project management Plan**
- **Ethical/Safety Issues**

Individual I01 Application Reviews

- Each proposed project will be reviewed and scored on its own
- Projects within a given program will be reviewed together in sequence
- Synergy among projects will be factored into individual project scores
- Funding recommendations will take into account individual project scores and potential value of overall program (3 projects)
- High-scoring projects may be funding individually if related projects are not fundable.

Assessment of Cores

- Each Core will be evaluated as based on whether it is deemed essential for the proposed research and has the capability to fulfill the proposed function.
- An Administrative Core is required for the overall program, but additional Cores are subject to assessment of reviewers

Timeline

January 7, 2022

Letter of Intent & Budget Cap Waiver
Request Submission Deadline

March 1, 2022

Begin Submitting Award Applications

April 14, 2022

Down to the wire deadline

April 18, 2022

Last submission deadline

June 2022

Scientific merit review

August/September 2022 Earliest project start date

Funding Decisions

- We are looking to fund up to 4 full programs
- Willing to fund additional projects

Resubmissions/Renewals

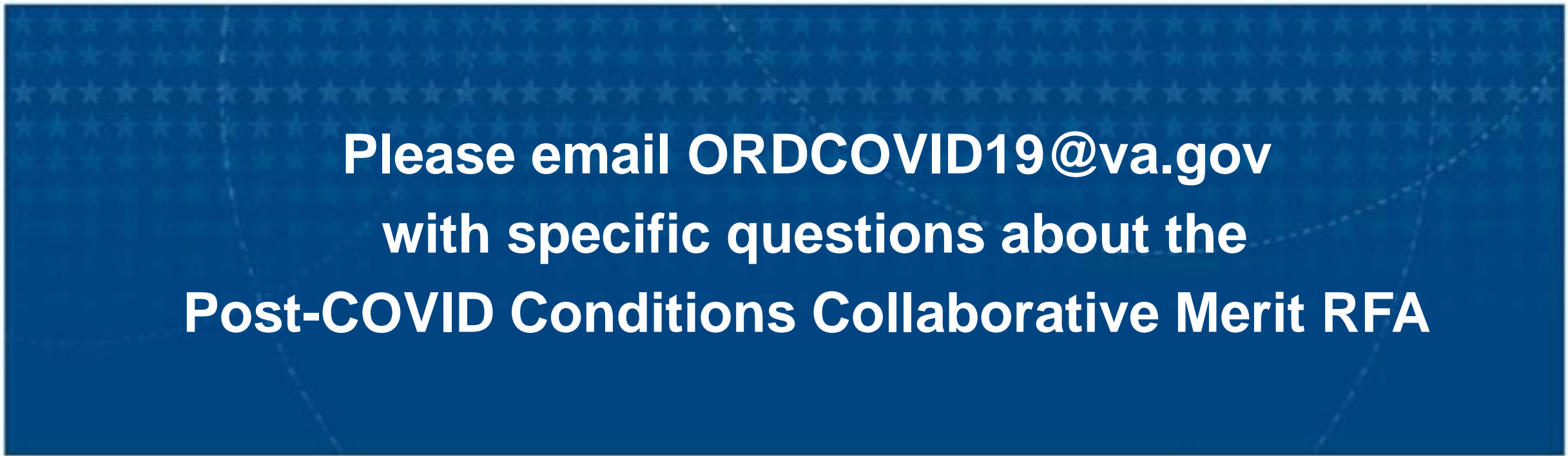
- Resubmissions or appeals of programs are not allowed.
- Renewals are not allowed.
- Investigators may submit an LOI that includes projects that have already been submitted under the individual service.
- RFAs of HSRD and RRD for their December 2021 deadline.
 - If a post-COVID Conditions Collaborative Merit LOI is approved, the individual project applications will be removed from the service specific review and be transferred to be reviewed as part of the cross-service review.

Review Process

- Applications will be reviewed in June 2022
- Funding decisions will be made independent of other Scientific Merit Review Board funding decisions



Questions?



**Please email ORDCOVID19@va.gov
with specific questions about the
Post-COVID Conditions Collaborative Merit RFA**

EXTRA SLIDES

Eligibility

- MD, PhD, or equivalent doctoral degree
- VA paid appointment of at least 25 hours/week (5/8ths).
- VA medical centers with active research programs
- A VA medical center must be registered as an applicant organization on Grants.gov and eRA Commons before any application can be submitted