



Request for Applications:

Implementation Strategies to Increase Physical Activity among Adults with Osteoarthritis

Letters of Intent due: May 15, 2015 at 11:59 pm ET

Applications due: June 15, 2015 at 11:59 pm ET

Background:

Osteoarthritis (OA), the most common form of arthritis, is a leading cause of disability and is an under-recognized public health crisis. Currently, more than 27 million adults of all ages, races and ethnicities have OA. This large number of people with OA is increasing dramatically, owing to two important OA risk factors: the aging of 78.2 million Baby Boomers and the obesity epidemic. Thus, it is critically important to reduce disability by preventing the progression of OA and related losses in physical function and overall wellbeing.

Physical activity is an important strategy for reducing the burden of OA. Physical activity is effective and safe, yet most adults with OA do not engage at recommended levels. Many do not understand or believe that an active life is within their reach, and others may feel that physical activity is not possible with painful joints and impaired function. To address this issue, the Osteoarthritis Action Alliance (OAAA), Arthritis Foundation (AF), and the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) Arthritis Program began an initiative in response to recommendations contained in [A National Public Health Agenda for Osteoarthritis \(2010\)](#). The 2011 report, [Environmental and Policy Strategies to Increase Physical Activity Among Adults With Arthritis](#), focuses on the benefits of physical activity and ways to make physical activity more convenient and accessible to people with arthritis. The strategies in this report were designed to be implemented by organizations that work in and influence six key sectors that have the potential to reach adults with arthritis: 1) community and public health; 2) health care professionals; 3) transportation, land use, and community design; 4) business and industry; 5) park, recreation, fitness and sport; and 6) mass media and communication (more detail below). To facilitate such implementation, the report was developed into an online toolkit, called the Implementation Guide (<http://oaction.unc.edu/implementation-guide/>), which includes population-based statistics about arthritis prevalence and economic burden, implementation strategies and examples of successful programs and resources tailored to each sector.

The six sectors of the Implementation Guide are defined as follows:

1. **COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH:** Includes national, state and local public health agencies; aging services; schools of public health; volunteer and non-profit organizations that work with communities and constituencies on arthritis and other issues of aging; faith-based institutions; and governmental and non-governmental organizations that could promote physical activity among their constituencies in a way that is safe and effective.
2. **HEALTH CARE:** Includes licensed health care professionals working with or serving adults in a variety of settings as providers; public and private insurers; and health care administrators and managers.
3. **TRANSPORTATION, LAND USE, AND COMMUNITY DESIGN:** Includes national, state, and local organizations, agencies, boards and governing bodies that address transportation, development patterns, built environment, public spaces, public works and community design and planning issues.
4. **BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY:** Includes public and private employers, large and small, as well as worksite wellness programs, including those that provide access to fitness facilities and activities.
5. **PARK, RECREATION, FITNESS AND SPORT:** Includes public and private organizations invested in promoting, supporting and providing recreation and fitness opportunities for children and adults.
6. **MASS MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION:** Includes organizations that develop health communications or engage in public and private marketing of messages on the importance of physical activity for adults and available evidence-based interventions.

Purpose and Goal of Request for Application:

The OAAA is soliciting applications for **approaches** for using the Implementation Guide to establish environmental and policy strategies for increasing physical activity among adults with osteoarthritis in one of the six sectors defined above. The purpose of the program is to engage community organizations and to advance the objectives of the 2011 report through its Implementation Guide. In order to achieve this, successful applicants will implement one or more strategies outlined in the Implementation Guide.

The intent of this project is to evaluate application of the Implementation Guide by piloting approaches and documenting the outcomes of implementing the approaches (i.e., what worked and didn't work), not to conduct effectiveness research (i.e., not a clinical trial). The approaches utilized by grantees will assist the OAAA in establishing exemplar methods for implementing priority strategies in the future. The expectation is that results from this work funded by the OAAA will serve as initial data to lead to future actions, such as the continuation and expansion of these programs in the community or as pilot data for large grant applications.

Proposed Budget:

The OAAA will fund up to five awards for no more than \$25,000, for a one-year project period. Funds may **not** be used for construction costs, equipment, food, lobbying activities, providing clinical care, or reimbursing pre-award costs. Funds will be disbursed half in the beginning and half at month 6 and are contingent on reasonable progress with conduct of the project.

Eligibility Criteria:

OAAA funds will not be awarded to individuals; rather, funds will be made to employing entities, including private corporations, professional organizations, community organizations, state/local/tribal health departments, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, and colleges, universities —each of which will be represented by the signatory authority (name and title) for that entity (e.g., a Dean of a College within a university, a chief executive or financial officer, or a president). Entities may only apply for one award.

Guidelines for Scope of Proposed Project:

- Timeframe to complete grant activities: 12 months
- The proposed approach must include: 1) selection of at least one priority strategy to apply from the Implementation Guide (<http://oaction.unc.edu/implementation-guide/>) and 2) collaboration with one or more additional community partners (in addition to the OAAA)

There is not a required format for the project because we recognize that project proposals may vary based on a number of factors (e.g. choice of implementation strategy, community partners, target group). If you are interested in viewing an example project, please refer to the Employee Wellness Policy from Partners in Care Foundation – San Fernando Site: <http://oaction.unc.edu/implementation-guide/business-and-industry/>.

Letter of Intent Content:

Prospective applicants MUST submit a letter of intent (LOI) that includes the following information:

- Descriptive title of proposed project
- Name, address, and telephone number of the lead applicant(s)
- Names of other key personnel
- Participating organizations
- Chosen sector(s) among the six sectors targeted in the Implementation Guide (described above in Background and at <http://oaction.unc.edu/implementation-guide/>)
- Draft of specific aims of project

The LOI is not binding and is not a part of the review of the full application. The information that the LOI contains allows the OAAA staff to plan the review process.

Application Content:

Applicants MUST identify in the application how their chosen project fits in the sector(s) and/or how it addresses a stated need or objective for the sector in the Implementation Guide. Applications should be no more than 6 pages, 12-point font, single spaced, with 1-inch margins. The page count does not include cover letter, staff bios, budget, letters of support or work samples. Appendices may be used.

- Cover letter
- Staff bios
- Background and need
- Project description
- Work plan and objectives
- Timeline
- Evaluation plan / follow-up measures
- A statement of future plans after the completion of this project
- Detailed budget
- Budget justification
- Letters of support
- Work samples

Review Process:

All proposals funded through the OAAA will undergo a peer review process in which proposals are ranked according to merit. An online review mechanism is used to assign an initial priority score. Each application will be evaluated and scored by at least three experts in the field. Each application will be evaluated on the following **Evaluation Criteria**:

- Feasibility of project and timeline
- Description of measureable outcomes and methods for measuring outcomes
- Ability/Capacity to develop and implement tasks
- Experience and expertise of employees assigned to project
- Relevance of the proposed project to increasing physical activity among adult with arthritis
- Innovation and novelty
- Cost-effectiveness
- Ability of the investigator(s) to carry out the proposed project
- Public health merit
- Engagement of key stakeholders and strength of partnerships, including OAAA
- Quality of work product as demonstrated through submitted work samples

Reporting Requirements:

A short progress report (1-2 pages) is expected to be sent to the OAAA quarterly (every 3 months). It should include an accounting of funds expenditures and progress toward accomplishment of project aims. A final report is due no later than 60 days after the end of the funding period, including an accounting of funds expenditures and achievement of project aims.

Timeline:

- Request for Application released: April 15, 2015
- Letter of Intent due: May 15, 2015 at 11:59 PM
- Application due: June 15, 2015 at 11:59 PM
- Notification of awards: July 15, 2015
- Project period begins: August 1, 2015
- Quarterly report due dates: November 1, 2015; February 1, 2016, May 1, 2016
- Final report due: September 2016 –November 2016

OAAA Contacts and Additional Resources:

Questions about this application should be directed to Grant Program Manager, Yvonne Golightly (golight@email.unc.edu). The LOI and proposal should be submitted electronically to Program Manager Kirsten Ambrose (kirsten_ambrose@med.unc.edu).

Osteoarthritis Action Alliance: <http://oaaction.unc.edu>

Implementation Guide: <http://oaaction.unc.edu/implementation-guide/>

For resources and tools to help guide evaluate implementation:

<http://portals.tracs.unc.edu/index.php/d-iportal/d-i-portal>

A National Public Health Agenda for Osteoarthritis: <http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/docs/OAagenda.pdf>

Environmental and Policy Strategies to Increase Physical Activity Among Adults With Arthritis: http://oaaction.unc.edu/files/2014/10/OA_Physical_Activity_Rpt_508_v1_TAG508.pdf