



Request for Proposals

Proposal to develop an AI tool for nonjudgemental patient education on immunizations

1. Program Overview / Background

Misinformation and disinformation have become major threats to the care and health of patients, the public health of our communities, and the core values and scientific basis of the practice of medicine. It has undermined trust between patients and their doctors and has fueled judicial and legislative intrusions into the exam room. It has contributed to the stress and workload of physicians dealing with regulatory, legal, philosophical and professional impositions that conflict with evidence based, timely, and compassionate care of patients. It has become a significant source of moral distress and burnout that can have a detrimental effect on physician practice and wellbeing.

Social media, fake news websites, political messaging, algorithmic distribution of messages customized to individual interests and fears, marketing products to susceptible individuals, celebrity endorsements, mainstream media, AI generated deepfakes, and search engines that do not prioritize accuracy are but a few of the ways mis and disinformation are introduced, embraced, and amplified. There are few solutions that address these issues when they impact the care of patients or the wellbeing of physicians.

One of the most difficult and pervasive areas of mis and disinformation is vaccines. False information and unfounded skepticism from media and online forums that promote distrust in the effectiveness, safety, or importance of vaccination can inspire hesitancy and refusal, undermining trust in public health and the primary care mission to protect it. This can impact the focus and workflow of patient visits and intrinsically reduce trust and thereby undermine the ability of the physician to provide their intended care and the joy in practice. This project aims to address these challenges by leveraging AI to provide accurate, evidence based, and nonjudgmental information about immunizations to patients prior to the visit, thereby reducing the conflict, time and effort to address these issues effectively.

We are seeking proposals for the development and implementation of an AI tool designed to educate patients/parents about immunizations in a nonjudgemental and informative manner. The goal is to improve patient understanding of the importance and confidence in immunization routines that support individual and public health, reduce the time spent discussing immunizations at a patient encounter, and build trust in the patient-physician relationship.

Objectives

- Develop a replicable platform for an AI interface with patients/parents that can provide accurate and credible information about the safety and effectiveness of vaccines in ways that can validate individual concerns and objectively respond to questions.
- Use generative AI to develop a comfortable and personalized approach that is empathetic, supportive, and nonjudgmental. Consider a platform using a chatbot and ambient listening where a conversation can take place that can be saved as a file for future review.
- Base the information on scientific and credible data that is not subject to the algorithmic intrusion of misinformation.
- Identify measurable parameters to evaluate impact on trust, patient experience, physician wellbeing and professional satisfaction, practice workflow, and immunization rates.
- Data should be derived from primary care practice settings where the pilot has been implemented.

Grantees are expected to include a plan for data analysis and evaluation and subsequently to execute this plan.

2. Eligibility Criteria

Applicant organizations must be:

- Defined by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) public charity (NOT a private foundation). This public charity status must be maintained throughout the life of the grant and applicant organization must be in the United States, OR
- A Section 115 educational institution in the United States.

Note: The Foundation cannot award grants to organizations that do not fit these eligibility criteria. Ineligible applications will not be reviewed.

3. Selection Criteria

Selection will be based on the following:

- Alignment with priorities presented in this RFP
- Demonstrated knowledge and expertise on physician wellness
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience working directly with physicians
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience conducting research in a clinical setting
- Demonstrated experience developing educational materials for patients
- Presentation of a detailed plan and timeline for accomplishing the project objectives, with realistic expectations, clearly defined goals, outcomes, and assigned resources
- Presentation of a plan for evaluation that defines desired short- and long-term outcomes and steps to collect data for measurement of progress towards those outcomes
- A well-justified budget derived from a clear and compelling understanding of resources needed to carry out the project successfully. The project budget must include a narrative describing each line item, including new salaried positions. If existing salaried positions are included in the budget, an explanation should be provided indicating why funding from the Foundation is needed to support those positions. Demonstration of replicability at a reasonable cost in terms of dollars and efficient use of human resources should be considered and explained.

4. Grant Size

Grants are available for projects up to two years in length. The Physicians Foundation anticipates funding in the amount of up to \$100,000 per grant, but ultimately proposals will be evaluated based on their merits, alignment with stated goals, and the potential impact of the proposed projects. We seek innovative and cost-effective solutions that demonstrate a clear understanding of the project's objectives and deliverables. No more than 15% of grant funds may be allocated to general administrative purposes or indirect project expenses. A limited number of grants will be made.

5. Evaluation & Monitoring

Projects should have a plan for evaluation that defines desired short- and long-term outcomes and steps to collect data for measurement of progress towards those outcomes. Evaluation plans should provide tools to assess the success of interventions and include both short and long-term evaluation parameters. Executing on evaluation plans during the project period is the sole responsibility of grantees. Grantees are expected to meet requirements for the submission of narrative and financial reports, as well as periodic information needed for overall project performance monitoring and management. They will be expected to produce scholarly products, to be presented at conferences or published in peer-reviewed literature, based on their work. Project directors may be asked to participate in telephone or in-person meetings and give progress reports on their work. In addition to the main evaluation, grantees will be asked to contribute data to a central repository of data regarding wellbeing interventions to be managed and analyzed in aggregate by the BWH and Physicians Foundation Center for Physician Experience, which is focused on approaches that enhance physician wellbeing and quality of care. It is expected that grantees would work collaboratively with this Center on any aggregate analyses arising from use of this data repository.

6. Use of Grant Funds

Grant funds may be used for the following expenses: project staff salaries and benefits, consultant fees, data collection and analysis, meetings, supplies, project-related travel and other direct project expenses. According to the Foundation's policy, grant funds may not be used for any of the following:

- Unrestricted general operating expenses
- Ongoing programs, or existing staff, unless their time is being redirected to a new project
- Payment for services of a fiscal agent
- Endowment funds
- Religious purposes
- Fundraising activities or events (e.g. annual fund drives, phone solicitations, benefit tickets)
- Capital expenditures by the grantee (e.g. repairs, equipment, etc.)
- Lobbying or political activities
- Activities related to litigation, arbitration or other dispute resolution
- Medical education at the undergraduate or residency training levels
- Research that is not practice-based
- Clinical research or animal research
- Research and/or development of drugs or medical devices
- Any activity inconsistent with the Foundation's status as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization

7. How to Apply

To apply for a grant, complete the [online application form](#) and follow the proposal instructions. Proposals must be complete and submitted with all required attachments in order to be considered for funding in this grant cycle. Please follow the proposal instructions closely and contact the Foundation's office if you have

questions. An invitation to apply must come directly from the Physicians Foundation through GMA Foundations.

Please see below for instructions on accessing the application in the online system:

1. If you're new to the system, please reach out to Anna (adoggett@gmafoundations.com) to be set up with a username/password that will connect to your organization's existing account. If you're a returning user, please use your previously set up login information.
 - a. If you can't remember your password, please click the "Forgot your password?" link below the username/password entries to reset it.
2. Once you've logged in, please click the "Apply" link at the top left of the window and enter access code "**wellbeing**".
3. A link will appear below when you enter the access code. Please click the Apply button next to that text to begin the application.

8. Program Contacts

Questions about this RFP or the Foundation in general should be addressed to Rachel Rifkin (rrifkin@gmafoundations.com). Technical questions about the online application should be directed to Anna Doggett (adoggett@gmafoundations.com).

9. Timetable

RFP Release Date:	January 21, 2025
Proposals Due:	February 18, 2025 (5pm EST)
Funding Decisions:	May 1, 2025
Project Start Date:	May 8, 2025

10. About The Physicians Foundation

The Physicians Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that seeks to empower physicians to lead in the delivery of high-quality, cost-efficient healthcare. Since 2005, the Foundation has awarded numerous grants totaling more than \$57 million. As the U.S. healthcare system continues to evolve, the Physicians Foundation is steadfast in its determination to strengthen the physician-patient relationship, support physicians in sustaining their medical practices and help practicing physicians navigate the changing healthcare system. For more information, visit www.PhysiciansFoundation.org.