



**COVID-19 and Decision Models
Request for Proposals**

Opportunity

The SMDM COVID Decision Modeling Initiative (CDMI) seeks to develop and advance new ideas and scalable approaches to address uncertainties during the COVID-19 pandemic by catalyzing innovation in decision models for rapid uptake and impact.

To kick off this effort, we are requesting proposals for *projects developing, tailoring, and communicating decision models for COVID-19 response to policy, health system, or clinical alternatives.*

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis starting immediately. Budget requests should not exceed \$50,000 total costs including up to 12.5% indirects. Budgets over \$25,000 require detailed justification. Total available funds are \$350K, and up to 10 awards will be made. Projects must be completed in 4-6 months.

Examples of uncertainties, questions and issues amenable to decision modeling to support decisionmakers responding to the pandemic are being continually updated as part of the CDMI at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/SMDMccovidQuestions>

These examples correspond to the three priority decision contexts of interest for this RFP:

- A. Policy
- B. Health Services Delivery
- C. Clinical

Given the continually changing landscape of this pandemic and limits to understanding all decision needs, the scope of the RFP is not limited to the examples available on this link.

Who is eligible: Modelers who have submitted a model description of their research to the SMDM repository (<https://tinyurl.com/SMDMccovidModeling>) and/or are willing to submit modeling description from the output of this grant opportunity to the public-facing SMDM repository. Modelers must have demonstrated ability to manage grant awards from public or university sponsors. Applicant will be required to sign a grant agreement, see sample below (Appendix A).

Successful applications will be scored based on the following criteria:

1. **Impact.** The significance of the problem and the potential for models to inform policy and practice in near term
2. **Theme.** The degree to which the topic of the proposal ties to COVID-19 priority decision contexts (<https://tinyurl.com/SMDMccovidQuestions>), or otherwise justified as crucial for pandemic response.
3. **Investigators.** The qualifications of the investigators, including demonstrated ability to address time-sensitive policy and practice questions and interface with real world decisionmakers. Multidisciplinary teams are preferred, but not required.
4. **Methods.** The appropriateness and methodological rigor of the scientific plan.
5. **Practice/Policy Translation.** Dissemination plan clearly defined for impact.

Timeline:

May 18, 2020	Open for Applications
May 25, 2020	Deadline for Questions about RFP (submit to CDMIproposals@smdm.org)
May 29, 2020	Zoom call where CDMI team will address questions received, and provide update on decisionmaker interests. Please register here
June 30, 2020	RFP Closes
Ongoing	Award Announcements
Within 1 week of Award	Project start date
September 18, 2020	CDMI Zoom Retreat I – Grantees will present their progress on models to SMDM COVID-19 Special Committee
November 18, 2020	CDMI Zoom Retreat II – Grantees will present on grant impact to SMDM COVID-19 Special Committee
End of Projects	Submit structured project summary to CDMI and post model description to SMDM Repository

HOW TO APPLY

Proposals will only be accepted online through the [infoready application portal](#). Applicants will be required to upload the following information as attachments:

Project Description Please upload a project description (up to two pages; single-spaced; 11-point font minimum; Arial, Georgia, Helvetica, or Palatino Linotype font) which contains the following information:

- statement of the project's specific aims, significance, and impact
- description of the research plan and methodologies to be employed
- discussion of how the data and how key variables will be measured and analyzed
- anticipated impact on clinical or health services delivery or policy decisions

Project Budget: Budget requests should not exceed \$50,000 total costs including up to 12.5% indirects. Please use the downloadable template provided in the application. Please use budget template provided on the CDMI website [here](#).

Budget Justification and Timeline: (not to exceed one page, 11-point font minimum, Arial, Georgia, Helvetica, or Palatino Linotype font): which contains the following information:

- the timeline should list main activities and dependencies for project completion (e.g., Gantt chart). Timeline of 4 months strongly preferred, but will accept applications with a 6 month timeline.
- the budget justification should clearly describe the specific items to be funded by the grant, and provide detailed line item justification for proposals over \$25,000.
- formal budget and application approvals will be required after proposal is selected. Indirect costs cannot exceed 12.5%.



Biosketches or CVs: Please upload biosketches or CVs for Principal Investigator (PI's) and Co-Investigators. NIH biosketches or equivalent (5 page maximum for each investigator) with selected relevant publications, current research support, and research support received during the past three years.

If you have more than one biosketch or CV to upload, please upload as a single document.

Letter of Support: Please upload a letter of support: This letter should demonstrate prior experience with connecting decision modeling research to time-sensitive policy or practice questions. It should include examples and evidence about how decision modeling work connected with real world decisionmakers and informed decision making. The letter should be written by someone external to the study team.

Audited Financial Statement: Please upload audited financial statement from most recent fiscal year (**non-university applicants only**).

IRS 990 Form: Please upload most recent 990 tax form (or equivalent; **non-university applicants only**).

The Johns Hopkins University

COVID Decision Modeling Initiative (CDMI):

SAMPLE COVID-19 and Decision Models SubGrant Agreement

Subgrant Amount: xxxx Total (50% to be paid upon receipt of signed agreement, 50% upon completion)

Subgrant Recipient Organization Name:

Address:

[SENT VIA EMAIL]

Congratulations! Your organization has been selected as a Subgrant Recipient supporting The Johns Hopkins University's COVID Decision Modeling Initiative (CDMI).

If this Subgrant Agreement meets with your organization's approval, please sign and date it and return the entire agreement (including attachments) with the completed electronic funds transfer form by electronic mail to xxx, within five (5) business days of receipt of this Agreement.

Johns Hopkins University will not disburse grant funds prior to receipt of the signed Grant Agreement.

Appendix A includes the Subgrant Terms and Conditions, incorporated herein and made a part hereof.

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Initiative Overview

With support from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, researchers from the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing (JHU), Duke University Margolis Center for Health Policy, University of Michigan Medical School and the Society for Medical Decision Making (SMDM) have partnered to catalyze innovation COVID-19 decision models for rapid uptake and impact. The CDMI will support the development of decision models to inform the urgent needs of decision makers responding to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The global pandemic caused by the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19 has wreaked havoc on the world. Characterized by concerning levels of transmissibility and virulence, COVID-19 has the potential to overstress frontline health workers, overwhelm health care delivery systems and cause significant social and economic disruption. The full impact of COVID-19 is yet to be realized but many fear the worst. As of May 15, 2020, JHU's global tracker has recorded 4.5 million confirmed cases worldwide and over 86,000 deaths in the United States attributed to COVID-19.

The emergence of a novel organism creates a crisis in a vacuum of knowledge. Little is known a priori about the behavior of the organism, the human response to infection and the most appropriate actions to mitigate

harm to individuals and society at large. Evidence must be observed, collected and analyzed. Meanwhile urgent decisions must be made to manage the crisis. Scientific modeling is an important tool to facilitate rational decision making.

CDMI has several specific goals to facilitate responsive decision modeling research:

1. Determine key priorities and critical questions where decision modeling can support better decisions and outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic
2. Implement grant making program to fund 6-10 projects with rapid impact potential
3. Leverage Society for Medical Decision Making (SMDM) repository of models and network of decision modelers addressing COVID-19

To optimize success of decision modeling projects funded for rapid impact, the research team (led by Drs. Kathy McDonald, Gillian Sanders Schmidler, and Lisa Prosser from JHU, Duke University and University of Michigan respectively) will coordinate efforts from their institutions along with the Society for Medical Decision Making (SMDM) COVID-19 Modeling Special Committee to offer individualized technical assistance as needed, provide connectivity to decision makers and decision modelers, and disseminate the combined CDMI results to the public at large.

Milestone Responsibilities of Subgrant Recipients

- Develop scientifically rigorous decision models that specifies and address key uncertainties of importance to decision makers
- Submit a project abstract of research in progress by September 14, 2020
- Participate in two Zoom-style CDMI retreats to review project activities and interim findings (anticipated September 18, 2020 and November 18, 2020)
- Submit full model description in the SMDM Model Repository
- Submit a final report that summarizes decision model, key findings and implications for decision makers. A peer reviewed published paper can be submitted in lieu of final report.
- Submit final financial report of expenditures compared to initial budget.

Method of Payment

In order to receive the subgrant funds, all Subgrant Recipients will need to be set up in JHU's PaymentWorks system. If the Subgrant Recipient has an existing JHU vendor ID number, the vendor information needs to be provided to JHU upon execution of the research agreement. If the awardee is not a current JHU vendor please notify JHU upon execution of the research agreement, by checking the appropriate box and providing the information below:

- ☐ Yes, we have a Vendor ID: _____
- ☐ No, we do not yet have a vendor ID and will set one up in PaymentWorks.

On behalf of Johns Hopkins University, we look forward to working with you in support of this important project.

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE PAGE FOLLOWS]

AGREED AND ACCEPTED:

Subgrant Recipient Organization

Name:

By: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Attachments:

Appendix A – CDMI Subgrant Terms & Conditions

Appendix B -Budget

Appendix A – CDMI Subgrant Agreement Terms & Conditions

This contains the terms and conditions for the Subgrant. Please read it carefully and contact **xxx** if you have any questions or concerns.

1. Status of Subgrant Recipient Organization:
This Grant is specifically conditioned on Subgrant Recipient Organization's status as an eligible grantee. Subgrant Recipient confirms that it is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"), and is not a private foundation as defined in Section 509(a) of the Code. Subgrant Recipient Organization will notify JHU immediately of any potential or actual change to this status.
2. Subgrant Purpose:
The charitable purpose of this Subgrant is to support the development of decision models to facilitate decision making during the COVID-19 pandemic. This purpose is to be carried out in accordance with the project plan and approved budget (the "Subgrant Purpose").
3. Use of Subgrant Funds:
Subgrant Recipient Organization must use these funds, and any income earned on those funds, for the Subgrant Purpose only. If Subgrant funds are placed in a pooled interest-bearing account, the interest earned on Subgrant funds may be estimated on a pro rata basis. Subgrant Recipient Organization will return to JHU any Subgrant funds, including any income earned on them, that it does not use for the Subgrant Purpose.
4. Subgrant Reports:
Subgrant Recipient Organization will submit final narrative and financial reports to JHU within 2 weeks of the agreement end date.
 - (a) Narrative Reports: The narrative report will describe, as of the end of the project period:
 - (1)) What has been achieved and the significance of those achievements towards advancing the goals of the Subgrant (in the form of a one to two page summary);
 - (2))
JHU may provide a narrative reporting template, and if provided, Subgrant Recipient Organization will submit narrative reports using this template.

(b) Financial Reports: The financial report will include:

(1)) An Excel spreadsheet showing actual versus budgeted spending of Subgrant funds (plus variances), and any interest earned on those funds, as of the end of the reporting period and cumulative across the life of the Subgrant;

(2)) An explanation of any variances in expense subcategories that are over \$10,000 and between 10% to 20% of the subcategory amount (expense subcategories refer to the subcategories of direct costs such as personnel, consultants and contractors, subgrants, and other direct expenses); and

(3)) An explanation and documentation of approval for any variances in expense subcategories over \$10,000 and greater than 20% of the subcategory amount.

Subgrant Recipient Organization will submit reports electronically to the Subgrant Lead xxx, (insert title and email address here) for the Subgrant.

5. Grant Modifications:

Subgrant Recipient Organization may only modify the terms and conditions in this Subgrant Agreement with the written consent of the JHU. However, Subgrant Recipient may modify the Budget in Attachment 2 to reflect actual costs without the prior written consent of JHU so long as the modification does not (1) change any Budget expense subcategory by more than 20% (except for variances under \$10,000 which do not require the prior written consent of the Foundation regardless of percent), (2) increase the amount of indirect costs, or (3) result in an expenditure for anything other than the Subgrant Purpose.

6. Notifications:

Subgrant Recipient will promptly notify JHU of:

- (a) Any potential or threatened litigation, claim, assessment, or audit involving Subgrant Recipient related to the Subgrant Purpose;
- (b) Any challenge that arises that may prevent Subgrant Recipient from completing the Subgrant Purpose according to the schedule in Appendix B
- (c) Any actual inability to complete the Subgrant Purpose according to this Subgrant Agreement;
- (d) Any potential or actual changes in the leadership, staff, who Subgrant Recipient has selected to carry out the Subgrant Purpose including but not limited to xxx. JHU reserves the right to terminate the Subgrant if any of the aforementioned

individuals or other key personnel leave the project during the term of the Subgrant; and

(e) Any other items identified in this Subgrant Agreement.

7. Subgrants and Contracts:

Subrecipient may select or engage further subgrantees or contractors with these funds only after receiving prior written approval from JHU.

8. Information and Data Sharing:

The parties understand that a material condition of this Grant Agreement is that JHU makes the data developed in whole or in part with any Grant funds ("Data") publicly available as soon as possible at no cost, or, when justified, at a reasonable cost. Subgrant Recipient agrees to support JHU as required with any data developed hereunder.

9. Intellectual Property:

All right, title, and interest in and to all intellectual property based on, or derived from activities undertaken by Subgrant Recipient, including any of its employees, agents and other persons or entities under its control (each an "Agent") and funded in whole or in part by this Subgrant ("Subgrant Works"), shall be owned by Subgrant Recipient. Subgrant Recipient agrees to make the Subgrant Works available to JHU in order for JHU to comply with its obligations to The Moore Foundation and for research and education purposes. To give effect to the foregoing, Subgrant Recipient agrees to take all reasonable action necessary to carry out the Subgrant Purposes, including but not limited to obtaining appropriate assignments or licenses from Agents. Subgrant Recipient may transfer, license, or otherwise alienate the Subgrant Works only in compliance with this paragraph.

10. Open Access Policy:

In addition to the foregoing, if activities undertaken by Subgrant Recipient pursuant to this Subgrant results in a peer-reviewed journal article, Subgrant Recipient must comply with the Moore Foundation's Open Access Policy available at www.moore.org, which requires that a final (post-print) version of all peer-reviewed articles produced as a result of research supported, either in whole or in part, by the Foundation's funding as further subgranted by JHU, be made publicly and freely available (open access) within 12 months of publication.

11. Grant Publicity:

JHU encourages the Subgrant Recipient to attribute funding for the grant to the "COVID Decision Modeling Initiative (CDMI) and its sponsoring partners Johns Hopkins School of Nursing, The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the Society for Medical Decision Making, Duke University Margolis Center and University of Michigan School of Medicine. Any other reference to CDMI or the sponsoring partners requires advance written approval by JHU. JHU and the partners noted above may include basic information about this Subgrant Recipient (such as the name of the organization, the Subgrant amount, and a brief description of its purpose) in their tax returns, periodic public reports, and websites.

12. Prohibited Uses:
- (a) Subgrant Recipient may not use Subgrant funds for any purpose other than the Subgrant Purpose or for any purpose that is inconsistent with Section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code (the "Code").
 - (b) Subgrant Recipient may not use Subgrant funds to influence the outcome of any specific election for candidate for public office or to carry out any voter registration drive.
 - (c) Subgrant Recipient may not use subgrant funds for lobbying as defined in Section 4945(d) and (e) of the Code or any other applicable local, state or foreign lobbying laws.
13. Compliance with Laws:
Subgrant Recipient agrees to comply with all laws and regulations applicable to any of its activities associated with this Subgrant.
14. Maintenance of Subgrant Records:
Subgrant Recipient will account for Subgrant funds separately in Subgrant Recipient's books and records. Subgrant Recipient will, if requested by the Moore Foundation or JHU, provide JHU or the Moore Foundation with copies of its books and records related to the Subgrant funds, and to any interest earned on them. Subgrant Recipient will keep copies of all books and records related to the Subgrant funds for at least three years after all Subgrant funds have been spent.
15. Remedies:
If the Moore Foundation or JHU determines, in its reasonable discretion, that Subgrant Recipient has failed to or is unable to carry out any provision of this Subgrant Agreement, including but not limited to making reasonable progress towards the achievement of the Subgrant Purpose, JHU may elect to withhold further Subgrant payments under this Subgrant Agreement, and JHU may demand return of all or part of any Subgrant funds not properly spent or committed to third parties under this Subgrant Agreement. Prior to terminating or curtailing the Subgrant, JHU will give Subgrant Recipient thirty (30) days' advance written notice so that the parties can consult about resolving the issues, but the determination to continue, curtail, or terminate the Subgrant will remain in JHU's discretion.
16. No Promise of Future Funding:
Subgrant Recipient acknowledges that JHU and its representatives have made no actual or implied promise of funding except for the amount in this Subgrant Agreement.
17. Entire Agreement, Severability:
This Subgrant Agreement supersedes any prior oral or written understandings or communications between the parties and constitutes the entire agreement between the parties with respect to the Subgrant. The provisions of this Subgrant Agreement are

severable so that if any provision is found to be invalid or illegal, that finding will not affect the validity or enforceability of the remaining provisions.

18. Effective, Start and End Dates:

This Subgrant Agreement will be effective as of the date it is signed and accepted by Subgrant Recipient and shall terminate on xxx.