

# AARP Quality Measure Innovation Grant: FAQ

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Thank you for your interest in the AARP Quality Measure Innovation Grant. Please use this list of Frequently Asked Questions as your first resource for quick clarifications. Please submit any additional questions not addressed herein to [proposals.optumlabs@optum.com](mailto:proposals.optumlabs@optum.com).

## Questions and Answers

**Q1: Who is eligible to apply for the AARP Quality Measure Innovation Grant?**

A1: This opportunity is open to the public. Anyone may submit a brief proposal for consideration.

**Q2: How many projects will be funded through this opportunity?**

A2: Two grants may be sponsored under this award. AARP reserves the right to withhold awards or sponsor additional projects at its discretion. Grantees will receive up to \$150,000 in funding for direct and indirect costs, as well as credits for access to OptumLabs Data and software licensing<sup>1</sup> to support the project.

**Q3: Is it okay for a party to submit multiple proposals for measures as a primary applicant under this opportunity?**

A3: Yes. We encourage parties to, either independently or collaboratively with other partners, submit multiple brief proposals for meaningful measures or outline multiple measures within a single proposal if feasible within the award budget.

**Q4: If our proposal is accepted, will we have unrestricted access to the Optum data or ONLY the data we specify in the proposal?**

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<sup>1</sup> Software licensing credit is for one SAS Server user license or other similar analytical software.

A4: OptumLabs data are provided in statistically certified, de-identified "views" accessible only to OptumLabs partners with an active master agreement for data access. Awarded grant teams will need to select the view that best suits the measure project. Data will not be limited to only those elements specified in the full proposal, but they are limited to the data available in the de-identified data view provisioned for the project.

**Q5: What is an OptumLabs partner for the purposes of this opportunity and who are they?**

A5: An OptumLabs Partner relationship is a relationship described and supported by Master License Agreement (MLA) between OptumLabs and an external (non-Optum/UHG) entity ("Partner"). This is typically a one-to-one relationship focused on research, innovation, translation or other activities that both OptumLabs and the Partner agree to carry on for certain duration and for certain purpose. Please see the Orientation Slides for a list of OptumLabs partner organizations.

**Q6: My organization is not an OptumLabs Partner. What kinds of organizations exist in the OptumLabs partnership that we may be able to team with under this opportunity?**

A6: Please see the Orientation Slides for a list of OptumLabs partner organizations. OptumLabs partner organizations include a number of academic institutions, as well as advocacy and provider organizations with expertise in OptumLabs data and/or quality measurement. We encourage you to seek out contacts in your network who are affiliated with these institutions. Many OptumLabs partner organizations may be open to considering collaborations related to this award, however, decisions to participate in collaborative engagements are at the sole discretion of the OptumLabs partner institution.

**Q7: If my organization is not an OptumLabs partner and collaborates with one as required, will my organization have access to use the data directly?**

A7: No, under this award, only organizations under an active master agreement with OptumLabs will be permitted direct access to the data environment. For clarity, parties who are not under an active master agreement with OptumLabs shall not have access to any non-summarized OptumLabs data assets. However, all grant team members will be able to review aggregated, summary output derived from OptumLabs data throughout the course of their project.

**Q8: What skill level does one need to access and query OptumLabs data? Do you have various user types e.g. SQL expertise vs. Excel Type users?**

A8: The OptumLabs data environment does require technical (e.g., medical coding, data analysis, programming) expertise. Applications for R and SQL are included in the environment. SAS, Stata and other applications may be provisioned in the environment, with appropriate licensing, as needed. A strong understanding of OptumLabs data tables and variables is necessary for efficient and effective use of the data for any project. Many OptumLabs partners have such expertise.

**Q9: If our Brief Proposal is selected, can we collaborate with the OptumLabs team for data analysis?**

A9: No, AARP, Optum and NQF staffs are ineligible to participate on project teams for this award. Teams should identify resources affiliated with OptumLabs partners with expertise in performing the programming and analysis required for measure development and testing. See Q8 for additional information.

A10: OptumLabs is committed to providing basic data support, throughout the request

**Q10: Will we have access to a data support expert?** for proposals, on an ad hoc basis to support questions of data availability, completeness and quality. Email [proposals.optumlabs@optum.com](mailto:proposals.optumlabs@optum.com) with any questions or to schedule a meeting.

**Q11: Will OptumLabs support identification of organizations to assist with data analysis if my grant is selected? When will this recommendation occur?**

A11: Shortly after brief proposals are selected and invited into the full proposal round, the Grant support team will provide OptumLabs Partners with a list of the final applicant teams that have an open need for data access and expertise in data analysis, encouraging those partners to contact applicants of interest. Many OptumLabs partner organizations may be open to considering collaborations related to this award, however, decisions to participate in collaborative engagements are at the sole discretion of the OptumLabs partner institution.