RRC – Frequently Asked Questions

I. Funding Support

Q1: What types of studies does the RRC fund?

A: RRC funding is available to support small-scale pilot studies and data review studies. The RRC allocates funds for studies that add to the evidence base for high-quality medical care. The committee's goal is to support innovative physician-led projects that will have an impact on practice.

Q2: How much funding can be requested for a study?

A: RRC funding awards range between $8,000 - $55,000 per proposal. The RRC does not fund projects less than $8,000, and the maximum funding limit is $55,000.

Q3: How can the RRC funding be used?

A: In general, RRC funding is used to cover Kaiser Permanente staff support such as:

- Statistician time to conduct data analysis per the RRC-approved proposal
- Programmer time to pull electronic data per the RRC-approved proposal
- Research Associate time to conduct manual chart review per the RRC-approved proposal
- See Q29 for questions related to abstract submission fees or publication fees.

RRC funding *does not:*

- Reimburse physician time - Physician time is donated to the project
- Provide salary support for personnel employed at other institutions
- Allow the purchase of books, software, or medical devices / equipment
- Allow travel to conferences

Q4: What type of expenses are allowed?

A: RRC project funding can be used for internal staff support and project related expenses such as:

- Purchasing general office supplies
  - ➢ Note: Principal Investigator must follow Kaiser Permanente Purchasing Supplies and Services Policy, POL.BC.2005.01.01, and Purchasing Supplies and Services Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), SOP.BC.01.01
- Printing expenses for recruitment and/or data collection forms
- License to reproduce survey or questionnaire, if required
- Reasonable travel expenses necessary to the conduct of the project

Q5: How many projects does the RRC fund in a funding cycle?

A: RRC funding awards are competitive. In recent years there has been an increase in the number of submissions reviewed by the committee. In 2022, 41% of studies reviewed were approved for funding.

Q6: How long is the RRC funding support?

A: RRC funding is available for one year of support. During the 12-month funding period, all study-related activities must be completed, including all analyses.

Q7: When does the RRC accept proposals for funding?
A: The RRC accepts proposals for funding consideration twice per year. There is a review meeting in May and October / November of every year. Please refer to the RRC website to access the calendar for the letter of intent and proposal submission deadlines. A letter of intent should be submitted prior to submitting a full proposal for funding consideration.

Q8: What are the dates for the RRC funding cycle?
A: RRC funding cycles:
  ▪ If awarded funding in May 2023, the funding cycle is July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024.
  ▪ If awarded funding in October / November 2023, the funding cycle is January 1 – December 31, 2024.

Q9: Can RRC funding be carried over to another year if I have not completed the study?
A: No. RRC funding is a fixed budget and funds cannot be carried over to another year. At the end of the 12-month funding cycle, the project's cost center will be closed, and unused funds will be reclaimed.

Q10: Can I apply for a no-cost funding extension from the RRC?
A: No. Due to the large demand for RRC funds, funding extensions are not permitted.

Q11: Can RRC funding be combined with funding from an external grant?
A: No. Funding agencies frown upon multiple funding for one project. Generally funding agencies prefer that only "they" fund the project with very few exceptions. If you submit a proposal to multiple funders and all are awarded, you will have to select which funder to go with for that project. You cannot, under any circumstance, co-mingle funds from multiple funders, and certainly cannot do so without the sponsor(s) explicit permission and approval. Typically, RRC funding is seed funding with the intent to seek extramural funding at its completion.

II.   **Funding Eligibility and Guidelines**
   Q12: Who can apply for RRC funding?
   A: The Regional Research Committee offers two types of grants: traditional grant and RRC-Graduate Medical Education Research Program Development Grant.

   Eligibility Criteria for Traditional Grant: SCPMG partner or full-time associate physicians, Kaiser Permanente Southern California residents or fellows, or full-time Kaiser Permanente employees can apply for this grant. Retired SCPMG physicians, per-diem physicians, and full-time staff in the Department of Research & Evaluation or other regional departments are not eligible.

   Eligibility Criteria for RRC-GME Research Program Development Grant: Open to Graduate Medical Education faculty only.

   Q13: Who can be a principal investigator on a RRC funded study?
   A: SCPMG partner or full-time associate physicians, or full-time KP employees can be a principal investigator on an RRC-funded study. KPSC residents or fellows can be a principal investigator if their graduation date is *after* the date of when the RRC funding cycle ends.

- Due to the various administrative responsibilities required of a Principal Investigator, KPSC residents or fellows <u>who will graduate before the funding cycle</u> are not allowed to serve as a PI on a RRC approved study. They can, however, serve as a co-investigator on a RRC funded study.
- Due to the various administrative responsibilities required of a Principal Investigator, rotating residents or fellows are not allowed to be a Principal Investigator on a RRC approved study.

Q14: Can I submit a proposal for RRC funding if my project already has Institutional Review Board approval?
A: Yes. However, you will be required to provide the RRC a copy of the IRB research application, along with a summary of the work that has been completed on the project. Your summary must also include a brief statement explaining why you are seeking RRC funding. If you are awarded RRC funding a modification to the IRB must be submitted to address any changes to the original IRB approval.

Q15: Can I submit a proposal if I have received RRC funding in the past?
A: Yes. However, you will be required to provide a summary of your previous work (presentations / publications). A summary will be required <u>for each project</u> that was funded by the RRC.

Q16: Can I submit more than one proposal in the same funding cycle?
A: No. You can only submit one proposal per funding cycle.

Q17: Can I have more than one study funded if they are funded in different funding cycles?
A: No. An investigator or team of investigators can only have one study funded in a 12-month period. You are not allowed to have separate studies funded by the RRC in the same funding cycle or in overlapping funding cycles.

Q18: Can I be listed as a principal investigator on one proposal, and a co-investigator on another proposal, if both proposals are being considered for funding in the same funding cycle.
A: No. You are not allowed to be listed as a principal investigator on one study and a co-investigator on another study if the proposals are competing for funding in the same funding cycle. You are only allowed to have one study funded in a 12-month funding period.

Q19: When will I be notified whether my proposal was approved for RRC funding?
A: You will be notified via email within 2 weeks after the RRC review meeting to find out whether your proposal was approved for funding.

Q20: If my proposal is approved for RRC funding, what happens next?
A: Proposals that are approved for funding will be forwarded by the RRC staff to the IRB for review.

Q21: What if my proposal is not selected for RRC funding?
A. If your proposal is not selected for RRC funding you have the following options:
- you can resubmit your proposal for the next RRC funding cycle, or
- you can submit your proposal to the Institutional Review Board as an unfunded project.
  - Unfunded projects that are IRB approved are eligible to receive up to 100 hours of donated statistician time from the Department of Research & Evaluation. Be advised you may be required to narrow the scope of the study to adhere to the 100 hours of donated support.

III. RRC Proposal Submission Process
Q22: What steps are involved in submitting a proposal to the RRC?

A: Due to the competitive nature of RRC funding, pre-submission inquiries are required. The RRC seeks Letters of Intent to provide rapid feedback to investigators on the likelihood for potential funding. Please refer to the RRC calendar for deadlines regarding pre-submission inquiries.

IV. Conditions of RRC Funding Award
Q23: What are the general conditions of accepting a RRC funding award?

A: If your proposal is approved for RRC funding, the general terms to accepting the funding award are:
1. Receive IRB approval within 2 IRB meetings of this letter,
2. Participate in a kick-off meeting after IRB approval is obtained and the cost center is opened,
3. Complete at least 50% of your project (e.g., chart review, subject recruitment) five months after the award start date,
4. Reply to correspondence or inquiries from the RRC in a timely manner,
5. Provide the RRC a report or presentation of your findings when the study is completed,
6. Submit a manuscript for publication within 1 year from the funding end date (statute of limitation), and
7. Obtain RRC administrative pre-approval for all research expenses (i.e., abstract, poster or publication fee).

V. Principal Investigator's Role and Responsibilities for RRC Funded Study
Q24: What are the Principal Investigator's responsibilities for a RRC funded study?

A: The Principal Investigator is responsible for ensuring that the research study is conducted in compliance with federal regulations, KP policies, and IRB policies and procedures. The PI is responsible for ensuring that work performed by all study personnel is appropriate, supports the analytic plan as outlined in the proposal, and that study funds are appropriately utilized.

VI. RRC Study Start-Up Process
Q25: What happens when my study is funded?

A: The RRC staff will work with successful applicants to obtain IRB approval for their studies. After IRB approval is obtained a study team will be assigned and a "kick-off" meeting will be convened to discuss the scope of work as well as study milestones.

Q26: If I am awarded RRC funding, can I choose my own staff to work on the study?

A: No. The RRC will designate a statistician and/or programmer for analytical services. If a research associate is needed for your study, the RRC will assign staff to the project per the funding award.

VII. Publication / Authorship
Q27: What are the RRC's publication requirements for projects that they fund?

A: The RRC expects that the Principal Investigator take a leadership role in the project and is ultimately responsible for all aspects of the project. The PI must acknowledge on all publications and presentations that the research is supported by a "grant from the Regional Research Committee of Kaiser Permanente Southern California". In accepting programming and analytical support, the PI agrees to abide by the Council of Biology Editors ethical guidelines on authorship, which state that substantive contributors to statistical analysis and interpretation of statistical results warrant status as a co-author.

Q28: Can a non-KP investigator be listed on a RRC funded study?

A: Please contact the RRC directly prior to submitting a Letter of Intent if you are intending to include an external collaborator on your proposal because these requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Q29. Does the RRC cover an abstract submission fee or publication fee?

A: The RRC reviews requests for covering an abstract submission fee or publication fee on a case-by-case basis because these project related expenses usually occur after the funding support has ended (i.e., cost center has closed). Per KP finance policies, administrative pre-approval for a research expense (i.e., abstract submission fee or publication fee) is required. The Regional Research Committee is unable to pay a research expense or reimburse an investigator for an out-of-pocket research expense if pre-approval is not obtained. The RRC requires two weeks advance notice to obtain the pre-approval.

VIII. Compliance and Regulatory Requirements

Q30: Can I save the research data from my RRC study on my laptop?

A: No. Per KP policies, patient data may not be stored on laptops; thumb drives or any other portable device. Research information, with or without PHI, cannot be sent to a personal email or a person's external institution email address.

Q31: Can data that I collect from my RRC funded study be analyzed by someone at an outside institution?

A: No. For RRC funded studies, if the data set was derived from KP data, then it is not possible for the data to be analyzed by someone from an outside institution. Patient data may not be shared outside of Kaiser Permanente Southern California. All data must be analyzed by the KPSC statistician assigned by the Regional Research Committee.