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**2020 Nursing Leadership Research Grants Focused on  
Nursing Leadership’s Impact on and Response to the Coronavirus Pandemic  
and  
Nursing Leadership’s Role in Advancing Health Equity and Eliminating  
Disparities  
Request for Proposals**

**Introduction:**

The AONL Foundation envisions a healthier tomorrow advanced through nursing leadership and strives to achieve that vision by providing resources to create opportunities to bridge science and practice to shape the future of nursing leadership.

The AONL Foundation supports its vision and mission by supporting research to generate new knowledge around:

- Demonstrating the impact of nursing leadership on:
  - The patient experience,
  - Population health,
  - Health care’s value proposition of quality, service, and cost, and
  - The wellbeing of nurses and other clinicians.
- Focusing on the design and implementation of care delivery and population health models across the care continuum.
- Discovering evidence-based approaches to advance nursing leadership, recognizing the diversity of individuals and roles across health care.

**Purpose:**

The COVID-19 pandemic has transformed health care and life overall. Some changes experienced during the pandemic will likely have positive future implications—for example, more rapid organizational decision making through the removal of barriers, and enhanced care through the incorporation of technology. The crisis also heightened the attention to issues and challenges such as workforce exhaustion and burnout, personnel turnover, and pipeline. It has brought to the forefront other issues such as difficulties procuring needed resources. The COVID-19 pandemic has also highlighted inequities in the quality of health care due to implicit and explicit bias, systemic racism and social determinants of health.

The AONL Foundation seeks to support timely, innovative research on nurse leaders’ role in addressing these issues during the pandemic.

The Foundation seeks to learn:

- How nurse leaders have adapted (redesigned) the structure and processes of care delivery to rapidly respond to the demands presented by the pandemic.

- How nurse leaders' behaviors, actions and decisions have been influential in successful responses to the pandemic and its related challenges.
- The roles that nurse leaders have played at all levels of health care delivery across the continuum to ensure the quality of care and a safe practice environment.
- Strategies implemented by nurses in executive and management roles in the health care organizations and in the community to eliminate disparities and improve health equity.

Recognizing that these are very broad topics, the AONL Foundation anticipates that the studies funded will be preliminary investigations to describe the efforts taken by nurse leaders during the past nine months and to explore the impact of these efforts on various stakeholders. Also, studies that address the role of nursing leadership in addressing inequities in health care and are linked to larger, ongoing projects will be considered. Investigators may use any of the qualitative traditions (ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, etc.), descriptive quantitative designs, or mixed methods to explore these topics. Studies that lay the groundwork and have the potential to progress to outcomes-focused research are encouraged.

#### **Grant Detail:**

Grants available: At least two (2) grants of \$5,000- \$10,000 each.

Online Submissions Open: December 14, 2020

Deadline for Submissions: February 15 – 3:00pm Central Standard Time

Award Notification: April 2021

Public Announcement: April 2021

Funding Dates: May 2021 – June 2023.

Please note: a portion of the funds will be distributed at the beginning of the funding period. Remaining funds are dependent upon and will be distributed at completion of the study.

#### **Eligibility Criteria:**

- Principal investigator must be a current licensed Registered Nurse.
- Members of the board of directors, officers, and staff of the AONL Foundation, AONL, the American Hospital Association and its affiliates are not eligible to apply.
- Researchers currently funded by the AONL Foundation are not eligible for this award.

#### **Guidelines:**

- This grant award applies only to research studies and does not include evidence-based projects.
- Documentation of Institute Review Board (IRB) approval is required prior to initiation of funding (timetable for IRB approval or proof of IRB approval to be included in proposal).
- Implementation of the research project must commence immediately upon receipt of the funds.
- Research project must be completed within timeframe established above (24 months), inclusive of dissemination.

- Dissemination should include presentation at a national conference and submission of a manuscript for publication in a peer reviewed journal. A webinar or other agreed upon format may also be considered.
  - Please note, if planning to submit an abstract to present at an AONL Annual Conference, abstract should reflect completed study.
- A portion of the award money will be dependent upon completion of award study.
- Under budget proposals:
  - AONL Foundation provides funding for direct expenses, and allows up to 10% of total grant funds to be used for indirect expenses or overhead expenses.
  - No investigator time will be supported. All other research-related expenditures including salary support for research assistants or statisticians, supplies, software, printed materials, copying, communications, study incentives for participants, and expenses related to attending and presenting study findings at conferences can be included.
    - When building budget to attend and present findings at a national conference, consider all travel, poster design and printing, and other associated costs.
- All research proposals are expected to address one or more of the following AONL Foundation Priorities:
  - Demonstrating the impact of nursing leadership on:
    - The patient experience,
    - Population health,
    - Health care's value proposition of quality, service, and cost, and
    - The wellbeing of nurses and other clinicians.
  - Focusing on the design and implementation of care delivery and population health models across the care continuum.
  - Discovering evidence-based approaches to advance nursing leadership, recognizing the diversity of individuals and roles across health care.

### **Proposal Application:**

An electronic copy (Microsoft Word or PDF) of the entire proposal shall be submitted online via AONL Foundation's website. Applications should be no longer than eight single-spaced pages with 1-inch margins in Times New Roman or Arial 12-Point font. References should be cited using APA format and are to be included within the 8-page limit. Copies of planned surveys or other measures are to be included as appendices.

A second copy (Microsoft Word or PDF) of the entire proposal—**with all identifying information of researcher(s) and institution(s) removed**—shall be submitted online via the AONL Foundation's website. The same page limit applies.

**Format of Application:** *(Please note all elements listed below are required for consideration of this grant award.)*

#### *Title Page:*

- Name, title, organizational affiliation, email address, phone number, address of each investigator
- Project Title

*Proposal:*

- Abstract (400 words maximum – not to be included in the 8-page limit)
- Introduction
- Background/Literature Review/Conceptual Model or Framework
- Specific Aims/Purpose of Study
- Alignment with AONL Foundation Strategic Priorities
- Anticipated Impacts (How will this study add to the body of knowledge? What is the potential for future research studies?)
- Research Design and Methods (Setting, Sample, Measures, Plans for Data Analysis)
- Plans for Protection of Human Subjects
- Plans for Dissemination
- Plans for Translation and Potential Implementation of Findings
- Timeline
- Budget
- References

*Support Documents:*

- Two letters of support (at least one letter of support from the institution at which the study will be conducted)
- Letter of IRB approval or timeline for obtaining IRB approval
- Instruments to be used in study
- Proof of author permission to use proposed instruments
- Curriculum Vitae or Bio sketch for each investigator
- Declaration of any other funding sources for this project

**Review Process:**

All submitted proposals will undergo a blind review by members of the AONL Foundation Board's Research Review Committee. The grant award recipient will be selected based on consideration of eligibility and merit of the research proposal. Review criteria will include:

- What is the overall impact of the proposed research study on the defined purpose?
- What is the significance and innovativeness of the planned study?
- Is the study strategy, methodology and data analysis plan rigorous and can it be accomplished in the projected timeframe?
- Is the support (budget) requested justified to the proposed research?

Priority will be given to:

- Research work that advances nursing leadership.
- Proposals that identify original research opportunities.
  - If the research opportunity proposed is a replication study, large-impact studies will receive priority.

Previous research completed, and research experience will be taken into account.

### **Expectations of Grant Recipient:**

- At the beginning of the grant period, the principal investigators will provide a jpg head shot and a narrative biography of no more than 300 words for each investigator.
- At the midpoint and at the conclusion of the research study the principal investigators will submit an interim and final report, respectively, on the progress of the study.
- Upon conclusion of the study and within the 24-month timeline the principal investigator will:
  - Submit an abstract and, if accepted, present study findings at a national conference
  - Submit manuscript for publication to at least one peer reviewed nursing research journal
  - Submit a summary of the study to be added to the online AONL Foundation's Research Repository
  - Allow study findings to be incorporated into the AONL Foundation's marketing and communications
  - Aid the AONL Foundation in demonstrating impact of the research

### **Acknowledgment:**

Funding for these research studies is made possible by AONL members and friends. Thank you for your generous support.

### **Inquiries:**

For questions about the submission or review process, please contact Dani Ward, AONL Foundation director, at [dmward@aha.org](mailto:dmward@aha.org).