



# STEP Program™ Overview and Eligibility Requirements

Thank you for your interest in submitting a proposal for funding through the STEP (Solutions to Empower Patients) Program™. Please use the following information to help as you prepare the submission form and other required supporting materials. Please submit completed submission forms and documentation to STEP.Program@Novartis.com by December 21, 2018.

## *About the STEP Program and Proposal Submission Process*

### 1. What is the STEP Program?

The STEP Program was created to inspire potential solutions that will help empower patients in a specific disease state with significant unmet needs to navigate a path to their care in an increasingly complex health care environment. The program will recognize and fund proposals from United States (US)-based health care or health care–related nonprofit organizations that demonstrate innovation in health education, empowerment and support to help improve the experience of people living with sickle cell disease (SCD). Funding will be provided at the beginning of 2019 to execute proposals that begin that year.

### 2. Who is eligible to submit a proposal?

Any US-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that complies with applicable laws, regulations, codes and guidelines that supports people impacted by SCD is eligible to apply. You must provide a Letter of Determination from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) documenting your 501(c)(3) status as part of the submission.

### 3. What are the proposal eligibility requirements?

This year's STEP Program calls for proposals for programs, services or tools directed at helping people living with SCD to advocate for themselves and manage psychosocial issues including education, employment and health care; to navigate health care systems and interact with health care providers (HCPs) in the emergency room (ER) setting; to educate medical doctors and other HCPs about SCD; to ease the transition to adult care; and to reduce stigma and bias around SCD.

- **Empower SCD patients to advocate for themselves:** SCD affects all aspects of patients' lives. The debilitating symptoms and complex treatment can impact their ability to perform in school, pursue careers, have a family and maintain relationships. This type of proposal will empower SCD patients to advocate for themselves and better manage the difficulties that come along with living with this disease.
- **Provide resources, programs or tools that help SCD patients better interact with HCPs and navigate the health care system to receive better and faster care:** When it comes to navigating SCD care, there are a number of barriers patients face. Because there are a limited number of adult SCD specialists many patients turn to the ER during a pain crisis, where they may receive suboptimal or delayed care. This type of proposal will help SCD patients better interact with HCPs and navigate the health care system to receive better and faster care.
- **Educate HCPs about SCD management and patient needs:** Many HCPs, including ER nurses and physicians, have minimal experience and training to manage SCD patients, causing some patients to receive suboptimal or delayed care. This type of proposal will educate medical doctors and other HCPs about SCD management and patient needs.

- **Create innovative transition programs that teach young people to manage their own care:** The transition from pediatric to adult care can be very difficult for patients and their families due to inadequate access to adult providers, poor communication between their current pediatric treater and new adult treater and issues with insurance coverage. This type of proposal will provide innovative transition programs that teach young people to better manage their own care.
- **Provide empathetic training programs for HCPs and raise awareness of implicit and institutional biases:** SCD disproportionately impacts African Americans and Hispanic Americans. As a result, patients who seek care during a pain crisis often face significant stigma and racial bias in the ER. This leads to long delays in treatment and/or being dismissed as a drug addict. This type of proposal will provide empathetic training programs for HCPs and raise awareness of implicit and institutional biases.

#### 4. Can my organization submit a proposal to expand or improve on an existing program?

Yes, you may submit a proposal that seeks to expand or improve on an existing program.

#### 5. How much money can be requested to fund the proposal?

The maximum funding amount per organization is \$50,000.

#### 6. What cannot be covered as part of the funding?

Funding provided through the STEP Program cannot directly support the below items, should they be a part of your overall project:

- Personal travel
- Entertainment aspects of events or promotional exhibit and display fees
- Capital campaigns, building funds, operating expenses (e.g., salaries, benefits) or fund-raising
- Activities held in lavish venues/resort locations or requests that include spa or resort activities
- Housing or travel for event/program attendees
- Branded treatment-specific education
- Activities involving predominantly health care providers

#### 7. Can my organization submit multiple proposals?

We are only accepting one proposal per organization.

#### 8. What if my organization's proposal doesn't fit into one of the five specific categories?

The STEP Program calls for proposals for programs, services or tools directed at helping people living with SCD to advocate for themselves and manage psychosocial issues including education, employment and health care; to navigate health care systems and interact with HCPs in the ER setting; to educate MDs and other HCPs about SCD; to ease the transition to adult care; and to reduce stigma and bias around SCD. However, you are welcome to submit other proposals to Novartis for consideration through the [Novartis Grant Central Station](#) portal.

#### 9. Does the proposed project need to last one year? Can it be shorter or longer?

Your proposed project does not need to last exactly one calendar year. However, activities must kick off in the 2019 calendar year.

## 10. When are the proposals due?

All proposals are due by December 21, 2018.

## 11. How does my organization submit a proposal for consideration?

Please send completed submission forms, which can be found at <https://www.multivu.com/players/English/8420351-novartis-2018-step-program/>, and necessary attachments to: STEP.Program@Novartis.com.

### ***Submission Materials Package***

## 12. What should be included in the submission materials package?

- Completed submission form
- Project timeline
- Detailed budget
- IRS determination letter [verification of 501(c)(3) status]
- W-9 form
- Organizational (and partner) letter of intent

For additional information regarding the submission form, budget and letters of intent, please see questions 13-20.

### ***Submission Form***

## 13. Does my organization need to use the provided submission form to offer a proposal?

It is preferred that you use the STEP Program submission form when offering a proposal. However, if you are concerned about Mac-related formatting issues, you can copy the questions and your responses from the provided submission form into a Word document.

## 14. Is there a preferred font for materials shared with my organization's STEP Program proposal?

There is no preferred font required, though Times New Roman and Arial are easy to read.

## 15. Is there a limit to the number of characters or words used in each response field?

There are no character- or word-count limits other than the 1,000-word limit for question #15. We don't envision that the answers outside of that for #15 will require a great deal of text; however, you are welcome to provide as much information as you need to answer a question so the review committee can effectively understand your proposed project.

### ***Detailed Budget***

## 16. Is there a preferred budget template my organization should be mindful of?

No, you can use your own budget template, but please make sure it is detailed.

## *Letters of Intent and Support*

### **17. What is the letter of intent/what should my organization plan to include in the letter of intent?**

The letter of intent for your STEP Program submission is a formal request for funding and should include an intent statement that your organization will carry out the program should it be selected to receive funding. The letter should be no more than one page in length and include a very brief overview of your proposed project and the unmet need(s) it will address.

### **18. Does a letter of intent need to be submitted on behalf of my organization?**

Yes, as part of the submission, you must submit a letter of intent on behalf of your organization.

### **19. Does my organization need to submit a letter of support from another organization?**

If your proposal requires partner organizations, please submit a letter of support from each partner.

### **20. Should my organization combine letters of support as one PDF document or keep them as separate files?**

Please combine letters of support as one PDF.

## *Additional Submission Package Questions*

### **21. Can my organization provide supplemental information about our proposal such as screen shots, videos or case studies?**

Yes, you can provide supplemental information with your proposal.

### **22. How does my organization submit references for consideration?**

To submit references, you can add them to the bottom of the appropriate section within the STEP Program submission form or add them as attachments to your proposal.

### **23. My organization's application might be a large file, even when zipped. Can our proposal be sent via Hightail or another delivery method? If I send via email how will I know it was received, and if not, what would be my other options for sending a large file?**

It's best if you can send your application as a zipped file. However, if you are concerned about the file being received we suggest either sending via Hightail and/or breaking up your files into a few different zipped files and sending separately via email, noting in the body of the email, "email 1 of 3, email 2 of 3, final email, etc." so we can ensure that we have received all of the attachments.

## *Recipient Selection Notification Process*

### **24. How will the funding decision be made?**

Submissions will first be reviewed by Novartis to ensure compliance with all relevant rules and regulations, as well as STEP Program requirements. All compliant submissions will

be reviewed and considered by the external review committee, who will collectively evaluate each proposal for innovation, feasibility, longevity, impact and potential to address unmet needs in the SCD community.

**25. Who is on the external review committee?**

A panel of experts outside of Novartis in fields including advocacy, psychosocial support, multicultural health, as well as an SCD practitioner and patient, will review the submissions and collectively evaluate and identify the five most innovative proposals that have the greatest potential to make a positive impact on the SCD community.

**26. How many recipients will there be this year?**

There will be a maximum of five recipients in 2019.

**27. Will my organization hear back if our proposal does not get chosen for funding through the STEP Program?**

Yes, we will inform all applicants as to whether their proposal has been chosen or not.

**28. How long should my organization expect to wait until we hear back about the decision?**

All organizations will be notified of the review committee's decision by early 2019.

***Additional Questions***

**29. If my organization isn't able to participate in the STEP Program this year, can we submit a proposal next year?**

Novartis is only able to confirm the STEP Program for this year.

**30. Can my organization submit the same proposal to be considered for a Novartis grant at the same time we submit for the STEP Program?**

You cannot submit the proposal for a Novartis grant or sponsorship at the same time as submitting for a STEP Program. Additionally, if your program is not selected for STEP Program funding, you cannot submit the same project for any future Novartis funding.

**31. Who do I contact if I have any additional questions?**

Please feel free to email any additional questions to [STEP.Program@Novartis.com](mailto:STEP.Program@Novartis.com).