



VHA Diffusion of Excellence

2022 Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Shark Tank Competition

Applicant Frequently Asked Questions

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Veterans Health Administration Innovation Ecosystem (VHA IE), Diffusion of Excellence, and VHA Diffusion Marketplace Overview

What is the VHA Innovation Ecosystem (VHA IE)?

VHA IE is the catalyst for enabling the discovery and spread of mission-driven health care innovation to advance care delivery and service that exceeds expectations, restores hope, and builds trust within the Veteran community. As part of the VHA Office of Discovery, Education and Affiliate Networks (DEAN), VHA IE leverages the collective power of innovation champions from across VHA to drive improvement and foster a culture of innovation and continuous learning.

For more information, please visit the [VHA IE](#) website.

What is the Diffusion of Excellence?

VHA Diffusion of Excellence specializes in scaling emergent, high-impact health care practices across the nation's largest integrated health care system consisting of more than 300,000 employees serving over nine million Veterans at roughly 1,250 facilities. The 2015 Veterans Choice Act studies uncovered that on average VHA outperformed the private sector on many measures, but variation between facilities resulted in poor outcomes for some Veterans. VHA took a unique approach to solving this issue by designing and deploying a model to identify, test, and diffuse evidence-based practices across VHA, naming it Diffusion of Excellence.

VHA Diffusion of Excellence puts VA's talented clinical and administrative workforce at the helm of enterprise-wide health care improvement initiatives. Since 2015, VHA has held six "shark tank" style competitions, each followed by the Diffusion of Excellence Base Camp (Base Camp). During Base Camp, the winners, known as Diffusion of Excellence Fellows, build implementation plans for practice replication. VHA consults the Diffusion of Excellence Fellows on adapting the practices to meet the unique needs of local Veteran populations and employees. Once the practices prove to be replicable and deliver consistent impact, Diffusion of Excellence works with national stakeholders to collaboratively develop strategies for national diffusion throughout the VHA health care system.

For more information on Diffusion of Excellence, please visit the [VHA IE](#) website.

How does Diffusion of Excellence work?

As depicted in Figure 1, Diffusion of Excellence use the model below to discover, test, replicate, and scale Promising Practices across VHA.

Figure 1. Diffusion of Excellence Model



VHA Shark Tank Competition

Identifies employee-developed promising practices and matches them with interested facilities

Facilitated Replication

Promising Practices are implemented in one or two additional facilities with training and project management support through a 6-9-month process

Diffusion Pathways

Promising practices continue through Organic Diffusion, Initial Diffusion, or National Diffusion

Why should I join the Diffusion of Excellence team?

Diffusion of Excellence brings together a diverse national network of fellow innovators working to hone and standardize their Promising Practices. By participating in Diffusion of Excellence, you will

- Accelerate the scaling of your practice with the support of the Diffusion of Excellence community
- Improve and expand the impact of your practice on the Veteran community
- Receive recognition from national leadership for you, your team, and your facility
- Gain leadership support for further adoption of your practice

What is the VHA Diffusion Marketplace?

The [VHA Diffusion Marketplace \(Marketplace\)](#) is a web-based platform that enables VHA employees to share, discover, and implement practices across the health care system. The Marketplace helps frontline VHA employees access and spread innovative health care ideas and solutions that positively impact Veterans lives. All practices on the Marketplace operate in at least two VHA sites, are endorsed by a senior VHA leader with relevant subject matter expertise and have an active team to support diffusion of practice knowledge. For all VHA employees, the Marketplace offers easy access to a range of innovations, along with tutorials, ratings, and contact information for the practice creators. Employees can collaborate with the practice creators and their local teams to identify and adapt new practices to fit their facility's needs. The Marketplace strengthens VHA in becoming a learning health care system, fostering a culture of innovation that continually improves the care provided to Veterans.

VHA Shark Tank Competition Overview

What is the VHA Shark Tank Competition?

Inspired by the reality television series, *Shark Tank*¹, the VHA Shark Tank Competition shines a spotlight on employees passionate about solving some of the toughest challenges across VHA and provides them with a platform to bring exposure from all levels of leadership to their practices that are elevating the standard of care for Veterans. The Competition invites all VHA employees to submit promising practices they have successfully implemented in at least one VHA facility. To be eligible, practices must address one of the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Priorities:

- **Age-Friendly Health Systems:** Provides care to older Veterans based on the 4Ms (What Matters, Medication, Mentation, and Mobility) framework for establishing Veteran-centric care focused on What Matters across all care settings
- **De-Implementation:** Focuses on effectively stopping activities that no longer provide value or that have become ineffective or obsolete
- **Employee Experience and Well-being:** Improves recruitment, retention, well-being, and morale of VA employees, empowering staff to provide greater input into their work environment; Promotes a safe, harassment-free environment for Employees; and/or creates a great place to work where all feel valued, engaged, and empowered
- **Enabling Rural Veterans to Thrive:** Improves access to health care and services for rural Veterans and their caregivers, breaking down the barriers (e.g., distance, internet access, transportation) that prevent quality care in rural settings
- **Health Care After COVID-19 – Post-Pandemic Care:** Promotes Veteran, employee, and citizen health and safety to address the COVID-19 pandemic, and future emergency situations, including virtual care models to enable remote service delivery
- **Health Care Technologies and Tools:** Refers to any tools or software used to improve health care delivery, improve the quality of Veteran care, and/or increase Veteran access to care, including remote monitoring to support Veteran ability to achieve health goals or maintain independence
- **Health Equity:** Supports the elimination of health disparities and their outcomes, achieving equitable access to high-quality care for all Veterans, including Veterans of all races, ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, geographic regions, and LGBTQ+ Veterans
- **High Reliability Culture Change – Commit to Zero Harm:** Develops standard work practices for leaders and staff to support the enterprise effort to move VHA toward higher reliability with a focus on reducing errors and harm

¹ [Shark Tank](#) is a reality television series aired on ABC where entrepreneurs make ten-minute business presentations or “pitches” to a panel of potential investors called “Sharks” – self-made multi-millionaire and billionaire executives. In their pitch, entrepreneurs attempt to convince the “Sharks” to invest in their business or product. If “Sharks” believe the idea is viable and will provide a significant return on investment, they will bid their funding and support.

- **I-DEA (Inclusion Diversity Equity and Access):** Addresses diversity, inclusion, equity and access across VA through activities and practices that address VA workforce management, recruitment, retention, or that improve patient care and patient experience.
- **Immersive Technologies and Experiences:** Leverages evolving augmented, mixed, or virtual realities to enhance treatment for Veterans or to facilitate comprehensive healthcare training, education, or evaluation for VA staff through an immersive modality
- **Opioids and other Substance Abuse:** Addresses opioid or other substance misuse and substance use disorder among Veterans through activities such as intervention, identification of high-risk patients, and successful pain management or prescribing practices
- **Suicide Prevention:** Reduces the incidence of Veteran suicide through VA-wide suicide prevention training, improving the Veterans Crisis Line, and/or expanding suicide prevention programs
- **VA and Community Health Care Access:** Improves the ease with which a Veteran can receive timely care at VA or in their community;; leverages solutions across specialties to optimize provider and care-team productivity; enhances care coordination for Veterans receiving care in the community; Supports natural bridges to VA enrollment and future service delivery; and/or Finds unique and creative ways to impact transitioning Veterans, and those not currently receiving VA services, to build civilian lives of opportunity and fulfillment
- **Veteran Experience:** Delivers patient experiences marked by effectiveness, ease, and engagement, restoring pride, public trust, and confidence in VA
- **Whole Health:** Empowers and equips people to take charge of their health and well-being and live their life to the fullest
- **Women's Health:** Enhances and optimizes our ability to provide high-quality, gender-specific health care to women Veterans in a safe and sensitive environment
- **Other:** Share your own unique Priority Category

Additionally, the Competition seeks practices that improve outcomes for the following populations:

- All Veterans
- LGBTQ Veterans
- Older American Veterans
- Post-9/11 Veterans
- Pre-9/11 Veterans
- Rural Veterans
- Women Veterans
- VA Employees
- Veteran Caregivers

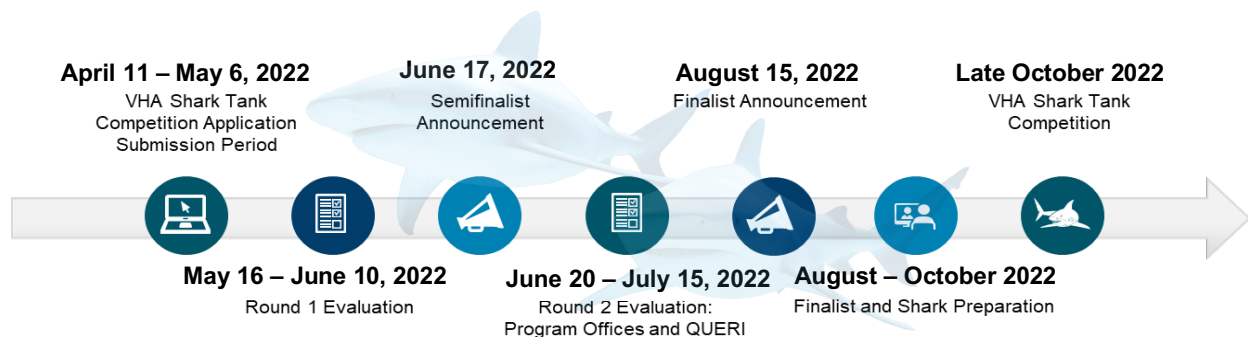
Who can apply to the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition?

Any VHA employee who has **successfully implemented** a practice in at least one VHA facility can apply to the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition. An employee can submit an application as an individual contributor or on behalf of a team, service line, or medical center. If submitting a group effort, **one individual** must serve as the point of contact during the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition application process.

What are important dates during the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition?

Figure 2 depicts the key milestones for the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition.

Figure 2. 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition Timeline



2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition Application Process

How can I apply to the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition?

To apply, please visit the Diffusion of Excellence Marketplace to access the application, opening on **April 11, 2022, and closing May 6, 2022**. Please see the Appendix for a complete list of application questions. For more resources, please visit the [VHA Diffusion Marketplace](#).

What if I miss the submission deadline?

If you miss the submission deadline, you can submit your promising practice in the next VHA Shark Tank Competition, tentatively scheduled for the Spring of 2023. Please monitor the VHA Shark Tank Competition page on the VHA Diffusion Marketplace for more information on the application process.

What are some tips to consider when completing a VHA Shark Tank application?

When completing your application, please consider the following:

- Determine whether your practice can be replicated in another VHA facility in approximately 6-12 months

- Use measurable data in your application when describing your practice’s impact, user experience, and financial value
- Provide details on the user experience for your target population (e.g., Veterans, employees, caregivers)
- List all resource requirements (e.g., employees, equipment) necessary to implement your practice at a new facility
- Describe the specific steps to implement your practice, including timeframes
- Avoid acronyms and jargon, explain things like you would to a Veteran
- **Do not submit sensitive or protected data in your application**

Please see the [Appendix](#) for a complete list of application questions.

My practice crosses several of the key VHA Shark Tank Priorities. Which should I select as the practice’s primary Priority?

In general, select the VHA Shark Tank Priority that most closely aligns with your practice. Evaluators will review submissions based on the Priority, so select the one you think will have the most appropriate Evaluator for your submission. You can also include a statement in the “Additional Information” question that indicates your practice covers multiple Priorities.

What happens after I submit an application?

After the application period closes on May 6, 2022, Evaluators will review all submitted applications. All applicants will receive updates on the status of their applications via email. The first-round evaluation period last approximately three weeks.

Who do I contact if I have additional questions?

For questions related to the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition, please email the [VA Diffusion Support Team](mailto:vadiffusionsupport@va.gov) (vadiffusionsupport@va.gov).

2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition Application Evaluation Process


Who will evaluate the submitted practices?

Diffusion of Excellence Fellows, Medical Center and Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Directors, Innovation Specialists, Systems Redesign Coordinators, and other recommended Evaluators will review the applications and recommend Semifinalist practices. During the second round of evaluation, Program Office leaders and members of the Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI) team will evaluate Semifinalist practices and recommend Finalists to pitch their practices at the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition. Evaluators will have approximately three weeks to evaluate and recommend practices during each round of evaluation.

What are the application evaluation criteria?

Table 1 details the evaluation criteria, their definitions, and associated examples of information an applicant may have included in their application. Note the examples do not represent an exhaustive list of the components for each criterion.

Table 1. Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Evaluation Round	Definition	Examples
 <p>VHA Shark Tank Priority Impact</p>	Round 1 Evaluation	Demonstrated impact in the aligned VHA Shark Tank Priority	Age-Friendly Health Systems: The practice provides care to older Veterans based on the 4Ms (What Matters, Medication, Mentation, and Mobility) framework for establishing Veteran-centric care focused on What Matters across all care settings
			De-Implementation: The practice focuses on effectively stopping activities that no longer provide value or that have become ineffective or obsolete
	Round 2 Evaluation		Employee Experience and Well-being: The practice improves recruitment, retention, well-being, and morale of VA employees, empowering staff to provide greater input into their work environment.
			Enabling Rural Veterans to Thrive: The practice improved mental health care access for rural Veterans using telehealth appointments
	Health Care After COVID-19 – Post-Pandemic Care: The practice increased access to personal protective equipment using a 3D printing network		
	Health Care Technologies and Tools: The device improved early detection of diabetic foot ulcers (DFUs), reducing the number of Veterans receiving limb amputations due to DFUs		
	Health Equity: The practice improved the care and experience for LGBTQ+ Veterans through an educational training program		
	High Reliability Culture Change: Commit to Zero Harm: The practice reduced hospital readmission or reduced infection rates		

Criteria	Evaluation Round	Definition	Examples
			<p>I-DEA (Inclusion Diversity Equity and Access): The practice addresses diversity, inclusion, equity and access across VA through activities and practices that address VA workforce management, recruitment, retention, or that improve patient care and patient experience.</p> <p>Immersive Technologies and Experiences: The practice leverages evolving augmented, mixed, or virtual realities to enhance treatment for Veterans or to facilitate comprehensive healthcare training, education, or evaluation for VA staff through an immersive modality</p> <p>Opioids and other Substance Abuse: The practice addresses opioid or other substance misuse and substance use disorder among Veterans through activities such as intervention, identification of high-risk patients, and successful pain management or prescribing practices</p> <p>Suicide Prevention: The practice improved advance detection of Veterans at risk for suicide and intervened to save their lives</p> <p>VA and Community Health Care Access: The practice reduced days to appointment or increased specialty care appointments within 30 days from preferred date</p> <p>Veteran and Employee Experience: The practice improved understanding of a Veteran’s diagnosis or treatment plan or increased feelings of trust or engagement in care; or the practice improved retention or increased job competency</p> <p>Whole Health: The practice provided Veterans with alternative options for care, focusing on developing a personalized health experience based on the Veteran’s values, needs, and goals</p> <p>Women’s Health: The practice enhances and optimizes our ability to provide high-quality, gender-specific health care to women Veterans in a safe and sensitive environment</p>

Criteria	Evaluation Round	Definition	Examples
 <p>Data-Based Improvement</p>	Round 1 Evaluation	Measured improvement in the practice's primary success metric	The practice reduced Veteran's wait time for limb prosthetics by 39 percent, from 33 days to 20 days
	Round 2 Evaluation		The practice resulted in a 54 percent total decrease in RN turnover from FY20 to FY21
			The practice detected more than 2 million anomalous records annually resulting in \$6.4-9.0M additional revenue
			After one year, the practice improved Veteran satisfaction by 14 percent per distributed survey
 <p>Participant Satisfaction</p>	Round 1 Evaluation	Improved satisfaction or experience for the practice user and/or target population	The practice improved patient satisfaction or experience metrics
	Round 2 Evaluation		The practice improved employee job satisfaction or experience metrics
			The practice improved experience for the target population (e.g., rural Veterans, women Veterans)
 <p>Implementation Feasibility</p>	Round 1 Evaluation	Can be implemented in another facility through the Diffusion of Excellence model	The practice can be implemented in another VHA facility within six to 12 months
	Round 2 Evaluation		The practice is process-focused (e.g., has developed training manuals or timeline others can use to achieve similar results)
			The practice has clearly specified resource requirements (e.g., infrastructure, technology, processes)
			The practice integrates into existing VHA facility systems (e.g., infrastructure, technology, processes)
<p>Alignment to VHA Policies and Processes</p> 	Round 2 Evaluation	Does not conflict with existing VHA processes or policies	The practice aligns with VHA policies (or) prescribed mandatory procedures and operational requirements (e.g., directives, handbooks, memorandums)
			The practice aligns appropriately with system relationships (e.g., contracted partners, unions)
			The practice aligns with strategic initiatives of VHA program offices (or) senior leadership

Are most of the selected practices low cost to implement?

The cost levels of the submitted practices vary. In previous VHA Shark Tank Competitions, selected practices had both low and high implementation costs. We recognize that low-cost practices may spread more easily to other facilities; however, low cost is not required for Promising Practice selection.

What is expected of an applicant whose practice is selected as a Semifinalist, Finalist, or Promising Practice?

If selected as a **Semifinalist**, your practice will continue to the second round of evaluation. The applicant does not need to take any additional action if selected as a Semifinalist.

If selected as a **Finalist**, you will:

- Attend four informational sessions in August, September, and October 2022, designed to help you prepare for the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition
- Create a practice page on the Diffusion Marketplace
- Give a three-minute pitch presentation at the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition to Medical Center and VISN Director Sharks

If you win the VHA Shark Tank Competition, you will:

- Participate in the Diffusion of Excellence Base Camp event in February 2023
- Work with the Implementing Facility and Diffusion of Excellence team for approximately six months to replicate your practice in the new facility or VISN
- Participate in weekly calls to guide and advise the implementation team
- Travel to the Implementing Facility, if required
- Support the potential national rollout and implementation of your Promising Practice

2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition Bidding Process and Event

Who are Sharks? Can I serve as a Shark?

Only Medical Center and VISN Directors will serve as Sharks and have the opportunity to bid resources to implement Finalist practice(s) pitched during the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition. If you are a Medical Center or VISN Director and are interested in serving as a Shark, please contact the [VA Diffusion Support Team](#). The VA Diffusion Support Team will provide a separate Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document for Sharks at a later date.

How does the bidding process work?

Medical Center and VISN Director Sharks will have the opportunity to submit their bids prior to the Competition, allowing Finalists to review the bids on their practice and recommend which bid should be selected as the winning bid. Medical Center and VISN Director Sharks will place bids on the Finalist practices via a survey tool, which will be open for approximately two weeks.

At the Competition event, Finalists will have the opportunity to discuss their selected bid with the Shark representative panel and explain why they chose it. There is no minimum or maximum number of practices that Sharks can bid on during the VHA Shark Tank Competition. Examples of resources that Sharks may bid include:

- One or more part-time or full-time equivalents (FTEs) to focus on implementation of the practice at their site
- Travel funds
- Time and/or other resources to help support implementation of the practice

What happens on the day of the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition?

The Diffusion of Excellence leadership team will host the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition in October 2022 at the VHA Innovation Experience (iEX) and live stream the event to facilities across the country. Finalists, who receive bids on their practice prior to the Competition, will give a three-minute pitch presentation on their practice. Following the presentation, the Shark representative panel will facilitate a one-minute question and answer (Q&A) session with the Finalists, asking them questions related to their practice, and this will be followed by a one-minute discussion on the winning bid the Finalist selected. During the event, the audience will have the opportunity to vote for their favorite practice. The practice receiving the most votes will be selected as one of the winning practices and proceed with replication. Diffusion of Excellence leadership will announce the winning practices and Sharks at the awards ceremony on the last day of the VHA iEX event.

Promising Practice Designation and Implementation

What happens after the VHA Shark Tank Competition?

After the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition, the VA Diffusion Support Team will compile Shark bids on the Finalist practices and the Finalist selected bids and evaluate them based on quantity, quality, and the facility or VISN's need for the practice. The team will present the bids to VHA IE leaders for them to select the winning practices and Sharks. Additionally, Diffusion of Excellence leadership will select one winning practice based on popular vote from the audience. The team will capture popular vote via a mobile application during the live event.

VHA IE leaders will review the recommendations and select approximately 10 Finalists and 10 Sharks as winners of the Competition. Diffusion of Excellence leadership will announce the winners at the awards ceremony on the last day of the VHA iEX event. The winning practices will proceed with six months of facilitated replication in the winning Shark's facility or VISN.

What are the benefits of being selected as a winner of the VHA Shark Tank Competition?

If selected as a winner of the VHA Shark Tank Competition, or Diffusion of Excellence Fellow, the benefits include:

- Recognition from VA and VHA senior leaders
- Travel funding to attend the Diffusion of Excellence Base Camp
- Access to communication (e.g., graphics, toolkits) and technical (e.g., data analysis) support
- Support for conference submission development
- Invitation to develop a practice page on the VHA Diffusion Marketplace
- Access to training
- Possible national rollout of your practice
- Possible travel funding to attend the 2023 VHA iEX event

What is a Promising Practice and a Diffusion of Excellence Fellow (DF)?

Promising Practice refers to a practice selected by VHA IE leaders during the VHA Shark Tank Competition for facilitated replication in another VHA facility or VISN. A Diffusion of Excellence Fellow (DF) refers to the individual(s) that submitted the Promising Practice to the VHA Shark Tank Competition.

If your practice receives Promising Practice designation, you will participate in a Diffusion of Excellence Base Camp event. During the event, you will work with the Implementing Facility Fellow to develop action plans for implementing your practice in the facility over the subsequent six months. After the event, you will spend the following six months working with the Implementing Facility Fellow and the Diffusion of Excellence Support Team to implement your practice. You will attend weekly calls to guide and advise the implementation team in the replication of your practice.

What is an Implementing Facility? What is an Implementing Facility Fellow (IFF)?

The VA Diffusion Support Team will compile Shark bids from the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition and present them to VHA IE leaders. They will select Implementing Facilities based on the recommendation from the Finalists, the quality of the bid placed by the Shark, and the facility or VISN's need for the practice. Upon selection as an Implementing Facility, the Shark will designate an Implementing Facility Fellow (IFF) to lead the implementation of the Promising Practice in their facility or VISN.

An IFF's responsibilities include participating in weekly calls with the DF and implementing team members to support and lead successful implementation of the Promising Practice.

What is the Diffusion of Excellence Base Camp?

The Diffusion of Excellence Base Camp is an event where DFs and IFFs meet to develop implementation plans for replicating and adapting the Promising Practices in a six- to nine-month timeframe. The event will take place in February 2023.

Appendix

2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition Application

Thank you for your interest in the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Competition. To compete, submit the application form below by **11:59 PM PT on May 6, 2022**.

To be eligible, your practice must meet the following 3 criteria:

1. Your practice should address one of the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Highlighted Priorities or a self-identified "Other" Priority.

2022 VHA Shark Tank Highlighted Priorities:

- Age-Friendly Health Systems
 - De-Implementation
 - Employee Experience and Well-being
 - Enabling Rural Veterans to Thrive
 - Health Care After COVID-19 – Post-Pandemic Care
 - Health Care Technologies and Tools
 - Health Equity
 - High Reliability Culture Change – Commit to Zero Harm
 - I-DEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access)
 - Immersive Technologies and Experiences
 - Opioids and other Substance Abuse
 - Suicide Prevention
 - VA and Community Health Care Access
 - Veteran Experience
 - Whole Health
 - Women's Health
 - **Other** (Self-identified Priority Category)
2. You must have successfully implemented your practice in at least one facility.
 3. You must have collected at least one month of real-world data to support practice viability and effectiveness.

Please do not include any Protected Health Information (PHI) or Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in your application.

If you have any questions, please email the [VHA Diffusion Support Team](mailto:VADiffusionSupport@va.gov) at VADiffusionSupport@va.gov.

Applicant Contact Information

2. Please provide your contact information below.
 - Applicant First Name:
 - Applicant Last Name:
 - Applicant Role:
 - Applicant Company/Organization
 - Applicant Email Address:
 - Applicant Phone Number (required)

Team Member Information

3. Is your supervisor aware of your application submission? (required)
 - Yes
 - No
4. Supervisor First Name (required)
5. Supervisor Last Name (required)
6. Supervisor Title (required)
7. Supervisor Email (required)
8. Please provide names, positions, and VA email addresses of any key members involved in this practice/effort. (optional)

VHA Priority Alignment

The 2022 VHA Shark Tank Highlighted Priorities are as follows. If your practice doesn't fit into the following Highlighted Priorities, you may also identify your own Priority category.

- **Age-Friendly Health Systems:** Provides care to older Veterans based on the 4Ms (What Matters, Medication, Mentation, and Mobility) framework for establishing Veteran-centric care focused on What Matters across all care settings
- **De-Implementation:** Focuses on effectively stopping activities that no longer provide value or that have become ineffective or obsolete
- **Employee Experience and Well-being:** Improves recruitment, retention, well-being, and morale of VA employees, empowering staff to provide greater input into their work environment; Promotes a safe, harassment-free environment for Employees; and/or creates a great place to work where all feel valued, engaged, and empowered

- **Enabling Rural Veterans to Thrive:** Improves access to health care and services for rural Veterans and their caregivers, breaking down the barriers (e.g., distance, internet access, transportation) that prevent quality care in rural settings
- **Health Care After COVID-19 – Post-Pandemic Care:** Promotes Veteran, employee, and citizen health and safety to address the COVID-19 pandemic, and future emergency situations, including virtual care models to enable remote service delivery
- **Health Care Technologies and Tools:** Refers to any tools or software used to improve health care delivery, improve the quality of Veteran care, and/or increase Veteran access to care, including remote monitoring to support Veteran ability to achieve health goals or maintain independence
- **Health Equity:** Supports the elimination of health disparities and their outcomes, achieving equitable access to high-quality care for all Veterans, including Veterans of all races, ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, geographic regions, and LGBTQ+ Veterans
- **High Reliability Culture Change – Commit to Zero Harm:** Develops standard work practices for leaders and staff to support the enterprise effort to move VHA toward higher reliability with a focus on reducing errors and harm
- **I-DEA (Inclusion Diversity Equity and Access)s:** Addresses diversity, inclusion, equity and access across VA through activities and practices that address VA workforce management, recruitment, retention, or that improve patient care and patient experience.
- **Immersive Technologies and Experiences:** Leverages evolving augmented, mixed, or virtual realities to enhance treatment for Veterans or to facilitate comprehensive healthcare training, education, or evaluation for VA staff through an immersive modality
- **Opioids and other Substance Abuse:** Addresses opioid or other substance misuse and substance use disorder among Veterans through activities such as intervention, identification of high-risk patients, and successful pain management or prescribing practices
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- **VA and Community Health Care Access:** Improves the ease with which a Veteran can receive timely care at VA or in their community;; leverages solutions across specialties to optimize provider and care-team productivity; enhances care coordination for Veterans receiving care in the community; Supports natural bridges to VA enrollment and future service delivery; and/or Finds unique and creative ways to impact transitioning Veterans, and those not currently receiving VA services, to build civilian lives of opportunity and fulfillment
- **Veteran Experience:** Delivers patient experiences marked by effectiveness, ease, and engagement, restoring pride, public trust, and confidence in VA

- **Whole Health:** Empowers and equips people to take charge of their health and well-being and live their life to the fullest
 - **Women’s Health:** Enhances and optimizes our ability to provide high-quality, gender-specific health care to women Veterans in a safe and sensitive environment
 - **Other:** Share your own unique Priority Category
9. Select the 2022 VHA Shark Tank Priority most relevant to your practice. (required)
- Age-Friendly Health Systems
 - De-Implementation
 - Employee Experience and Well-being
 - Enabling Rural Veterans to Thrive
 - Health Care After COVID-19 – Post-Pandemic Care
 - Health Care Technologies and Tools
 - Health Equity
 - High Reliability Culture Change – Commit to Zero Harm
 - Immersive Technologies and Experiences
 - Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access
 - Opioids and other Substance Abuse
 - Suicide Prevention
 - VA and Community Health Care Access
 - Veteran Experience
 - Whole Health
 - Women’s Health
 - Other
- i. If “Other,” please enter your unique Priority Category: _____

Practice Information and Metrics

10. Practice Title (required)
11. Provide a problem statement for your practice.
12. What data demonstrated a need for your practice? Provide data sources. (required | **200 words**)
13. Provide a 2-3 sentence summary of your practice including its impact on the target population. (required | **100 words**)
14. Please select the target population(s) your practice benefits. (required)
- All Veterans
 - LGBTQ Veterans
 - Older American Veterans
 - Post-9/11 Veterans
 - Pre-9/11 Veterans

- Rural Veterans
 - Women Veterans
 - VA Employees
 - Veteran Caregivers
 - Other (please specify)
15. Describe how your practice delivers direct or indirect benefit to Veterans and/or VA employees (e.g., changing Veteran lives, saving Veteran lives, building trust, restoring hope, change/improve how employees do their work and deliver care). (required | **150 words**)
16. What is the **primary** metric used to measure your practice's success in addressing your problem statement (e.g., reduced infection rates, improved patient/employee satisfaction, demonstrated cost savings or avoidance)? (required | **25 words**)
17. Describe how primary metric data is tracked and collected to determine your practice's success. (required | **100 words**)
18. Provide a sample of primary metric data collected to date and explain how it demonstrates your practice's impact. (required | **100 words**)
19. Describe any other metrics you use to evaluate and support the effectiveness of your practice. Include data for each. (required | **100 words**)

Practice Implementation and Replication

20. Please describe the specific steps you took to implement your practice and the timeline/timeframe for each. (required | **250 words**)
21. How long do you predict it will take to replicate your practice in another VHA facility? (required)
- 1-3 months
 - 4-6 months
 - 7-9 months
 - 10-12 months
 - 12+ months
22. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being **very easy** to replicate and 5 being **very difficult** to replicate, please indicate the ease of replicability of your practice in a new facility. (required)
- 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5

23. Describe any potential risks or barriers to implementing your practice. (required | **100 words**)
24. List the names and roles of individuals from your facility, VISN, or central office management that were critical to your practice's implementation. (required | **150 words**)
25. List the personnel resources (e.g., number of full-time equivalents (FTEs), number of part-time employees, specific certification holders) needed to replicate your practice. (required | **100 words**)
26. Estimate the total personnel resource cost required for your practice. (required | **numerical value only**)
27. List the material resources (e.g., equipment, information technology (IT) support, space) needed to replicate your practice. (required | **100 words**)
28. Estimate the total material resource cost required for your practice. (required | **numerical value only**)
29. Are there any proprietary components for your practice?
- Yes
 - i. If yes, please elaborate.
 - No
30. Does your practice currently utilize simulation training, or could it benefit from incorporating simulation training in the future?
- Yes
 - i. If yes, please elaborate.
 - Maybe
 - No
 - I don't know
31. Does your practice require external contracting support to implement?
- Yes
 - i. If yes, please elaborate.
 - No
32. Was a transformational coach involved during your practice implementation?
- Yes
 - i. If yes, please elaborate on their involvement.
 - No
33. Have you produced any peer-reviewed studies related to your practice?
- Yes
 - i. If yes, please elaborate and provide the link(s) to the abstract.

- No
34. Did your practice receive Spark, Seed, and/or Spread funding from the VHA Innovators Network? (required)
- Yes
 - No
35. Did your practice receive funding from a source other than the VHA Innovators Network? (required)
- Yes
 - No
36. If you responded yes to the question above, please provide: (optional)
- Name of Funding Source
 - Total Funding Amount
 - Duration of Funding
37. Does your practice have any support other than funding from a National Program Office (e.g., Office of Rural Health, Office of Connected Care, Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention)? (required)
- Yes
 - i. If yes, please elaborate.
 - No
38. Provide any additional information on your practice below. (optional)

Feedback (Optional)

39. Have you previously applied for the VHA Shark Tank Competition?
40. How did you hear about the VHA Shark Tank Competition? (optional)
- All Employee Email
 - Blog Post
 - Facility Poster/e-Board
 - Innovation Specialists
 - Social Media
 - VA Pulse
 - VA Colleague
 - Other
 - i. If "Other," please list here:
41. Would you like to see any changes or improvements on the next VHA Shark Tank Competition application? If so, please explain. (optional)