



VHA DIFFUSION OF EXCELLENCE

Shark Tank



2024 Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Shark Tank Competition

Applicant Frequently Asked Questions

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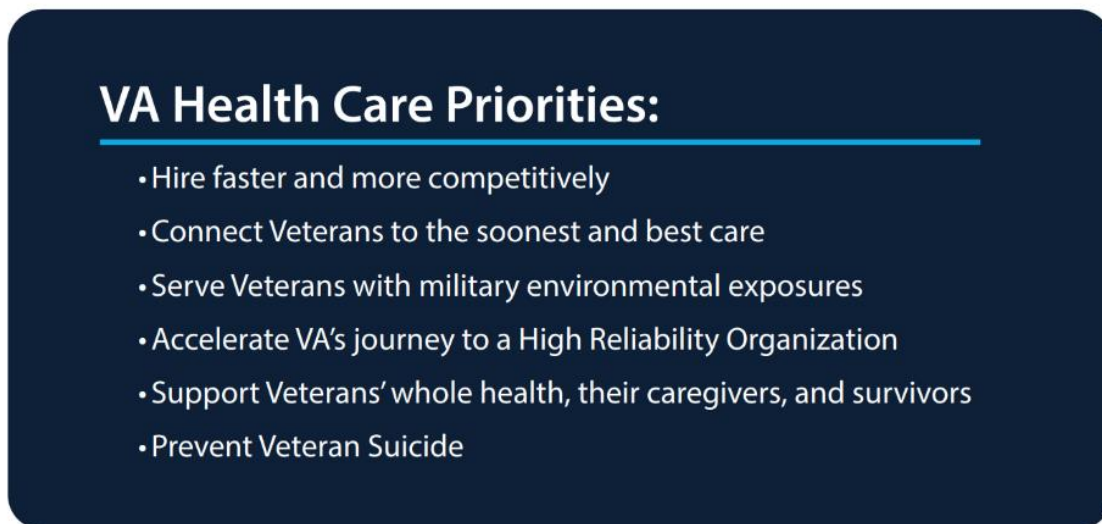
VHA Shark Tank Competition Overview

What is the VHA Shark Tank Competition?

The VHA Shark Tank Competition shines a spotlight on employees passionate about solving some of the toughest challenges across VHA. It provides them with a platform to present to all levels of leadership and contribute to elevating the standard of care for Veterans. This year, Diffusion of Excellence is celebrating its 10th VHA Shark Tank Competition. Since its inception, the competition has identified over 90 employee-led health care solutions and replicated them over 1,000 times across VHA.

Practices must address one of the 2024 VHA Shark Tank Priorities. This year's priorities, seen in Figure 1, align with the [Under Secretary for Health's VA Health Care Priorities](#).

Figure 1. Under Secretary for Health's VA Health Care Priorities



VA Health Care Priorities:

- Hire faster and more competitively
- Connect Veterans to the soonest and best care
- Serve Veterans with military environmental exposures
- Accelerate VA's journey to a High Reliability Organization
- Support Veterans' whole health, their caregivers, and survivors
- Prevent Veteran Suicide

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

- All Veterans
- LGBTQ+ Veterans
- Veterans aged 65+
- Post-9/11 Veterans
- Pre-9/11 Veterans
- Rural Veterans
- Women Veterans
- Veterans struggling with mental health of PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder)
- Veterans at risk of suicide
- Veterans with chronic or complex illnesses
- Minority Veterans
- VA Employees
- Caregivers, Families, and Survivors



VHA DIFFUSION OF EXCELLENCE

Shark Tank



Who can apply to the 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition?

Any current VHA employee who has **successfully implemented** a practice in at least one VHA facility can apply to the 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition. If the employee has implemented the practice successfully at their pilot site, this implementation satisfies the minimum one facility requirement. Additionally, all applicants must have **at least three months** of post-implementation data to support the practice's viability and effectiveness.

An employee can apply 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 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition application process.

Is leadership approval required to apply to 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition?

Leadership or supervisor approval is not required to apply. However, we recommend you make your supervisor aware of your submission. Our goal is to create and foster an open culture of innovation that enables all VHA employees equal opportunity to share their innovative practice.

What are important dates during the 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition?

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Figure 2 depicts key milestones for the 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition. VHA Shark Tank unfolds over several months. The competition season commences with the application launch in spring and culminates with the live event every fall.

Figure 2. 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition Timeline



2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition Application Process

How can I apply to the 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition?

To apply, please click the "Apply now" link at [VHA Shark Tank](#) on Diffusion Marketplace. Applications open on **April 1, 2024, and close April 30, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. ET**. Late applications will NOT be accepted.

What if I miss the submission deadline?

Late applications will NOT be accepted. Please monitor the [VHA Shark Tank Competition](#) page on Diffusion Marketplace for the most timely competition information.

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

When completing your application, please consider the following:

- Your application will be evaluated on its feasibility, how well it solves its problem, the demonstrated impact to the problem, how it improves satisfaction and experience, and resource requirements. The evaluation rubric is available in the [Appendix](#) of this document.
- You will be able to save your progress in the application and return to it. You can find the application to review the questions, share with your team, and draft responses before applying, in the [Appendix](#) of this document.
- To assess the great innovation practices within VHA, the VHA Shark Tank Competition asks for in-depth information in your application. Be prepared to spend at least 45 minutes completing this application.
- **To protect the privacy of VHA patients and those who care for them, do not include any Protected Health Information (PHI).** To learn more about PHI and the importance of protecting, visit [this link](#).
- Due to LEAF formatting restraints, you cannot paste tables into the application, but you can use bulleted lists.
- Keep your practice title short and easy to remember. Keep in mind that your practice may be replicated in one or more facilities. Avoid VISN and facility specific titles. If you have specific details about your practice that you would like to convey, consider adding a tagline.
- Provide details on the user experience for your target population (e.g., Veterans, employees, caregivers).
- Describe the specific steps to implement your practice, including timeframes.
- Determine whether your practice can be replicated in another VHA facility in approximately 6-12 months.
- List all resource requirements (e.g., employees, equipment) necessary to implement your practice at a new facility.
- Avoid initialisms, acronyms, and jargon.

What types of post-implementation data should my practice have?

Practices must have collected at least three months of data, post implementation. When showcasing your practice's outcomes, use measurable, well-rounded data that highlights your practice's successes, impact, user experience and financial value.

The specific types of data may vary depending on the nature of your practice. In VHA, the term data sources is often used to describe specific bodies of data such as, inpatient data, electronic health record data, mainframe SAS data sets, and the Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW).

The [VA Data Sources Overview](#) defines a data source as where the data comes from or a place to access data for a project or study. These data sources include data reports, data sets, data files, databases, data warehouses, and data repositories.

My practice crosses several 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 priority, so select the one you think will have the most appropriate evaluator for your submission. For more information on the priorities and their subcategories, please visit [Under Secretary for Health's VA Health Care Priorities](#).

What happens after I submit an application?

After you submit a completed application, download a PDF copy of your submission. Please keep this document for your records.

After the application period closes on April 30, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. ET, evaluators will review and score applications. Diffusion will announce semifinalists on June 13, 2024. Semifinalist applications will go through a second round of evaluation and Diffusion will announce finalists August 6, 2024.

Evaluator feedback for practices that do not advance to the second round of evaluations will be sent via email in June 2024.

Who do I contact if I have additional questions?

For questions related to the 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition, please email [VA Diffusion Support](#).

2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition Application Evaluation Process

Who will evaluate the submitted practices?

Medical Center and Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Directors, Innovation Specialists, Systems Redesign Coordinators, and other subject matter experts will review the first round of applications.

During the second round of evaluation, Program Office leaders and members of the Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI) team will review and score semifinalist applications. Evaluators will have approximately three weeks to review applications during each round of evaluation.

What are the application evaluation criteria?

Please find evaluation criteria in the [Appendix](#) of this document.

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 selection.

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

If selected as a **semifinalist**:

- Your application will continue to the second round of evaluation.
- You will not need to take any additional action if selected as a semifinalist.

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

- Attend three information sessions leading up to the October 2024 live VHA Shark Tank Competition.
- Create a page on [Diffusion Marketplace](#) to showcase your practice.
- Create a wish list of resources to help Sharks interested in your practice craft their bids.
- Engage with bidding Sharks interested in your practice in a virtual Q & A session.
- Participate in the 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition in October 2024 at iEX.

If you are a **Promising Practice**, or winner, of the 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition, you will:

- Attend post-competition information sessions.
- Participate in Diffusion of Excellence Base Camp in-person in early 2025 to collaborate with your implementation team and create an implementation plan for Facilitated Replication.
 - Implementation teams consist of:
 - **Diffusion Fellow** (DF)– Promising Practice team member(s) (That’s you!)
 - **Implementing Facility Fellow** (IFF) - Representative from the winning Shark bid facility or VISN

- An **Implementation Lead** from Diffusion Support
 - Any other individuals supporting Promising Practice implementation
- Participate in Facilitated Replication by collaborating with your implementation team for six to eight months to replicate your practice in the winning Shark bid facility or VISN.
 - Join regular calls to collaborate with and advise the implementation team.
 - Plan for future implementations of your Promising Practice.
 - Please note that as a Promising Practice, implementing in a new facility can be time consuming. Diffusion and your implementation team will work to make the process efficient.

2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition Bidding Process and Event

Who are Sharks? Can I serve as a Shark?

Only Medical Center and VISN Directors serve as Sharks and bid resources to implement finalist practice(s). If you are a Medical Center or VISN Director and are interested in serving as a Shark, please contact the [VA Diffusion Support Team](#).

How does the bidding process work?

Medical Center and VISN Director Sharks review finalist practice materials and submit bids of resources for practices they are interested in implementing at their location. Finalist practice materials include their Diffusion Marketplace page, bid wish list, and virtual presentation of their practice. There is no minimum or maximum number of practices that Sharks can bid on.

Examples of resources that Sharks may bid include:

- One or more part-time or full-time equivalents (FTEs)
- Travel funds
- Designated space in their facility
- Time and/or other resources to help support implementation

What happens on the day of the 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition?

Diffusion of Excellence will host the 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition in Fall 2024 at the VHA Innovation Experience (iEX). More details of the marquee event will be available soon.

Promising Practice Designation and Implementation

What happens after the VHA Shark Tank Competition?

Finalist practices who receive a Promising Practice designation at the 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition will select a winning bid and proceed into Facilitated Replication with the Shark's facility or VISN. Facilitated replication kicks off with Diffusion's Base Camp in early 2025.

Finalist practices that are not designated as Promising Practices will not continue with Diffusion's Facilitated Replication and implementation process. There are still many benefits to participating in the VHA Shark Tank Competition such as exposure to a wide VHA audience, including leadership. Many participants who are not designated Promising Practices enjoy success from attention and inquiries outside of Diffusion's standard implementation pathway due to their participation in VHA Shark Tank.

What is a Promising Practice?

A Promising Practice, as defined by Diffusion, is a distinction granted to VHA Shark Tank winners. Diffusion works with guidance from evaluators and leadership to select around 10 Promising Practices from the pool of finalists identified in the second round of application evaluation. Diffusion identifies Promising Practices based on the potential viability and replicability of a practice, the number of bids received, and available evaluation data. Promising Practices continue working with Diffusion to implement and replicate their practice through Facilitated Replication.

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

Being named a Promising Practice comes with significant benefits. If a finalist's practice becomes a Promising Practice, the finalist and their team members are known as Diffusion of Excellence Fellows (Diffusion Fellow). The benefits include:

- Recognition from VA and VHA senior leaders
- Invitation to attend Diffusion of Excellence Base Camp in early 2025
- Access to project management and practice diffusion training
- Access to communication (e.g., graphics, toolkits) and technical (e.g., data analysis) support
- Support for conference submission development
- Consideration for national practice rollout
- A continued presence on Diffusion Marketplace and access to future community opportunities

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

VHA Diffusion of Excellence specializes in scaling emergent, high-impact healthcare practices across the nation's largest integrated healthcare system consisting of more than 300,000 employees serving over nine million Veterans. 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 promising practices across VHA, naming it Diffusion of Excellence.

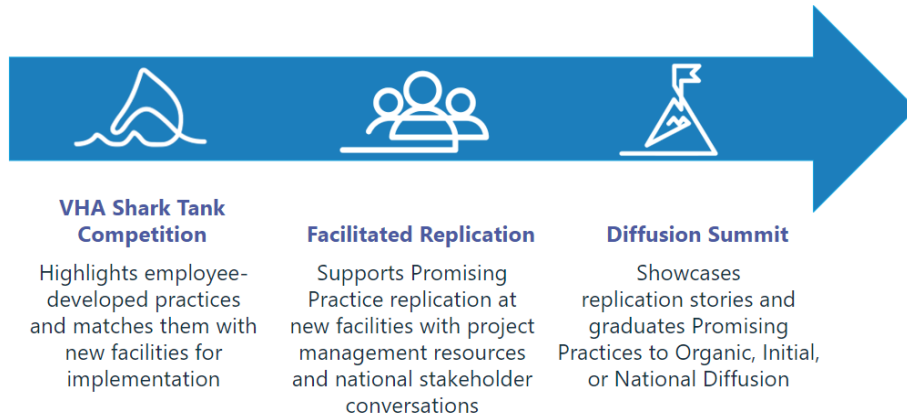
Diffusion of Excellence puts VA's talented clinical and administrative workforce at the helm of enterprise-wide health care improvement initiatives. Since 2015, VHA has held nine Shark Tank-style competitions, followed by the Diffusion of Excellence Base Camp (Base Camp). During Base Camp, the winners, known as Diffusion 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 pairs with national stakeholders to collaboratively develop strategies for national diffusion throughout the VHA healthcare system.

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

How does Diffusion of Excellence work?

Diffusion of Excellence uses the operational model depicted in Figure 3 to identify, replicate, and scale Promising Practices across VHA.

Figure 3. Diffusion of Excellence Model



Why should I join the Diffusion of Excellence community?

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 Diffusion Marketplace?

[Diffusion Marketplace \(Marketplace\)](#) is a web-based platform that enables VA employees to share, discover, and implement innovations across the healthcare system. Marketplace helps employees access and spread innovative healthcare ideas and solutions that positively impact Veterans lives. Marketplace offers easy access to a range of innovations, marketing materials, and contact information for the innovators. Employees can collaborate with innovation creators and their local teams to identify and adapt new innovations to fit their facility's specific needs. Marketplace strengthens VHA in becoming a learning healthcare system, fostering a culture of continuous improvement in Veteran healthcare.

Appendix

2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition Application

This is a copy of the questions and various prompts an applicant will encounter when completing the 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition application. This copy is intended for reference only and the live application may have slight variation.

Survey Text	Answer Choices
Introduction	
To assess the great innovation practices within VHA, VHA Shark Tank Competition asks for in-depth information in your application. Be prepared to spend at least 45 minutes in one sitting completing this application. You will be able to save progress of your application prior to submission.	
Your application will be evaluated on its feasibility, meaningfulness, and strategic value to VHA. Your application will be reviewed by subject matter experts from various disciplines and program offices.	
To protect the privacy of VHA's patients and those who care for them, do not include any Protected Health Information (PHI). To learn more about PHI and the importance of protecting it, visit this link .	
If you have any questions, please email the Diffusion Support Team at VADiffusionSupport@VA.gov .	
VHA Shark Tank Competition Eligibility	
Before proceeding to the rest of the application, answer the questions below to ensure you're eligible for the VHA Shark Tank Competition.	
To be eligible to apply, you must currently be an active VA employee. Are you currently an active VA employee?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No
You have indicated that you are not currently an active VA employee, so you are ineligible to apply for VHA Shark Tank at this time. To learn about other ways to get involved in innovation with VA, check out Pathfinder.VA.gov . If you have any questions, reach out to the Diffusion Support Team .	
To be eligible, your practice must be successfully implemented in at least one VHA facility. This could be any VHA facility, including your parent facility. Has your practice been successfully implemented in at least one VHA facility?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No
You have indicated that your practice is not currently implemented in at least one VHA facility, so your practice is not eligible at this time. To learn about other ways to get involved in innovation with	

VA, check out Pathfinder.VA.gov . If you have any questions, please reach out to the Diffusion Support Team .	
To be eligible, your practice must have collected at least three months of data from field tests supporting your practice's viability and effectiveness. Has your practice collected three months of post- implementation data from field tests? For examples of data types, please review the Applicant FAQs document.	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No
If you have indicated that your practice does not currently have three months of data from field tests supporting practice viability and effectiveness, it is not eligible at this time. To learn about other ways to get involved in innovation with VA, check out Pathfinder.VA.gov . If you have any questions, please reach out to the Diffusion Support Team .	
To continue with your application, click "Start" to proceed to the next page.	
Team Member Information	
First Name:	
Last Name:	
Please enter your VA Email Address:	
VA Position Title:	
Are you affiliated with any Innovation Ecosystem programs?	Option 1: Innovator's Network (iNET) Option 2: Diffusion of Excellence/Diffusion Talent Accelerator (DTA) Option 3: National Centers for Innovation to Impact Option 4: IE Fellowships Option 5: No
Role in your team:	1. Team Leader 2. Innovation Specialist 3. Data Support 4. Leadership Liaison 5. Technical Implementation 6. Systems Redesign Support 7. Public affairs 8. Fiscal planning 9. Other
If Other, what is your role?	

Which VISN are you apart of?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. VISN 1 2. VISN 2 3. VISN 4 4. VISN 5 5. VISN 6 6. VISN 7 7. VISN 8 8. VISN 9 9. VISN 10 10. VISN 12 11. VISN 15 12. VISN 16 13. VISN 17 14. VISN 19 15. VISN 20 16. VISN 21 17. VISN 22 18. VISN 23 19. Not associated with a VISN
If applicable, which VISN 1 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital 2. Manchester VA Medical Center 3. Providence VA Medical Center 4. VA Boston Healthcare System 5. VA Central Western Massachusetts Healthcare System 6. VA Connecticut Healthcare System 7. VA Maine Healthcare System 8. White River Junction VA Medical Center 9. VISN Office
If applicable, which VISN 2 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Albany Stratton VA Medical Center 2. Bronx VA Medical Center 3. Northport VA Medical Center 4. Syracuse VA Medical Center 5. VA Finger Lakes Healthcare System 6. VA Hudson Valley Health Care System 7. VA New Jersey Health Care System 8. VA New York Harbor Healthcare System 9. VA Western NY Healthcare System 10. VISN Office
If applicable, which VISN 4 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Altoona, PA 2. Butler, PA 3. Coatesville, PA 4. Erie, PA 5. Lebanon, PA 6. Pittsburgh, PA 7. Philadelphia, PA 8. Wilkes-Barre, PA 9. Wilmington, DE 10. VISN Office

If applicable, which VISN 5 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Baltimore VA Medical Center 2. Beckley VA Medical Center 3. Huntington VA Medical Center 4. Loch Raven VA Community Living and 5. Rehabilitation Center 6. Louis A. Johnson VA Medical Center 7. Martinsburg VA Medical Center 8. Perry Point VA Medical Center 9. Washington DC VA Medical Center 10. VISN Office
If applicable, which VISN 6 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Asheville VA Medical Center 2. Durham VA Medical Center 3. Fayetteville VA Medical Center 4. Hampton VA Medical Center 5. Richmond VA Medical Center 6. Salem VA Medical Center 7. Salisbury VA Medical Center 8. VISN Office
If applicable, which VISN 7 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Atlanta VAMC 2. Birmingham VAMC 3. Central Alabama Health Care System - East 4. Central Alabama Health Care System - West 5. Charlie Norwood VAMC 6. Carl Vinson VAMC 7. Tuscaloosa VAMC 8. Ralph H. Johnson VAMC 9. Wm. Jennings Bryan Dorn VAMC 10. VISN Office
If applicable, which VISN 8 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bay Pines VA Healthcare System 2. James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital 3. Miami VA Healthcare System 4. North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System 5. Orlando VA Medical Center - Lake Nona 6. VA Caribbean Healthcare System 7. West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System 8. VISN Office
If applicable, which VISN 9 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lexington VA Medical Center 2. Memphis VA Medical Center 3. Mountain Home VA Medical Center 4. Louisville VA Medical Center 5. Tennessee Valley Healthcare System 6. VISN Office
If applicable, which VISN 10 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center 2. Battle Creek VA Medical Center 3. Chalmers P. Wylie VA Ambulatory Care Center 4. Chillicothe VA Medical Center 5. Cincinnati VA Medical Center 6. Dayton VA Medical Center

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7. John D. Dingell VA Medical Center 8. Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center 9. Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center 10. VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System 11. VA Northern Indiana Health Care System - Marion Campus 12. VA Northern Indiana Health Care System-Fort Wayne Campus 13. VISN Office
If applicable, which VISN 11 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jesse Brown VA Medical Center 2. Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital 3. Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center 4. Capt. James A. Lovell FHCC 5. William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital 6. Tomah VA Medical Center 7. Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center 8. VA Illiana Health Care System 9. VISN Office
If applicable, which VISN 15 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. St. Louis VA Health Care System 2. Kansas City VA Medical Center 3. Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans' Hospital 4. Eastern Kansas Health Care System 5. Robert J. Dole VA Medical Center 6. Marion VA Medical Center 7. John J. Pershing VA Medical Center 8. VISN Office
If applicable, which VISN 16 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alexandria VA Health Care System 2. Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System 3. G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery VA Medical Center 4. Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System 5. Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center 6. Overton Brooks VA Medical Center 7. Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System 8. Veterans Health Care System of the Ozarks 9. VISN Office
If applicable, which VISN 17 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amarillo VA Health Care System 2. Central Texas Veteran Health Care System 3. El Paso VA Health Care System 4. South Texas Veterans Health Care System 5. VA North Texas Health Care System 6. VA Texas Valley Coastal Bend Health Care System 7. West Texas VA Health Care System 8. VISN Office

If applicable, which VISN 19 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eastern Oklahoma VA Health Care System 2. Fort Harrison VA Medical Center 3. Oklahoma City VA Health Care System 4. VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System 5. VA Salt Lake City Health Care System 6. Cheyenne VA Medical 7. Sheridan VA Medical Center 8. VA Western Colorado Health Care System 9. VISN Office
If applicable, which VISN 20 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anchorage VA Medical Center 2. Boise VA Medical Center 3. Portland VA Medical Center 4. Portland VA Medical Center - Vancouver 5. Seattle VA Medical Center 6. American Lake VA Medical Center 7. Roseburg VA Medical Center 8. White City VA Medical Center 9. Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center 10. Jonathan M. Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center 11. VISN Office
If applicable, which VISN 21 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Central California Health Care System 2. Manila Outpatient Clinic 3. Northern California Health Care System 4. Pacific Islands Health Care System 5. Palo Alto Health Care System 6. San Francisco VA Health Care System 7. Sierra Nevada Health Care System 8. VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System 9. VISN Office
If applicable, which VISN 22 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System 2. VA Loma Linda Healthcare System 3. VA Long Beach Healthcare System 4. New Mexico VA Health Care System 5. Northern Arizona VA Health Care System 6. Phoenix VA Health Care System 7. VA San Diego Healthcare System 8. Southern Arizona VA Health Care System 9. VISN Office
If applicable, which VISN 23 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fargo VA Health Care System 2. Iowa City VA Health Care System 3. Minneapolis VA Health Care System 4. Omaha VA Medical Center--VA Nebraska-Western Iowa HCS 5. Sioux Falls VA Health Care System 6. St. Cloud VA Health Care System 7. VA Black Hills Health Care System - Hot Springs Campus 8. VA Black Hills Health Care System - Fort Meade Campus 9. VA Central Iowa Health Care System 10. VISN Office
Do you work in a National Program Office?	<p>Option 1: Yes Option 2: No</p>

If yes, what National Program Office are you a part of?	
Do you have leadership buy-in or support at your facility?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No
Please provide names, titles, and VA email addresses of any key members involved in this effort. Please enter this information as such: First Name, Last Name, Title, VA Email Address;	
Who is your practice's team leader?	
Who is your practice's main Point of Contact?	
Practice Information and Metrics	
Practice Title:	
If your practice had a tagline that captured the attention of an audience, what would it be?	
<p>The 2024 VHA Shark Tank priorities mirror the VA health care priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire faster and more competitively • Connect Veterans to the soonest and best care • Serve Veterans with military environmental exposures • Accelerate VA's journey to a High Reliability Organization • Support Veterans' whole health, their caregivers, and survivors • Prevent Veteran suicide <p>Learn more about the VA health care priorities, here.</p>	
Select the 2024 VHA Shark Tank Priority most relevant to your practice.	Option 1: Hire faster and more competitively Option 2: Connect Veterans to the soonest and best care Option 3: Serve Veterans with military environmental exposures Option 4: Accelerate VA's journey to High Reliability Organization Option 5: Support Veterans' whole health, caregivers, and survivors Option 6: Prevent Veteran suicide

Please select the target population your practice benefits.	Option 1: All Veterans Option 2: LGBTQ+ Veterans Option 3: Veterans aged 65+ Option 4: Post-9/11 Veterans Option 5: Pre-9/11 Veterans Option 6: Rural Veterans Option 7: Women Veterans Option 8: Veterans struggling with mental health of PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) Option 9: Veterans at risk of suicide Option 10: Veterans with chronic or complex illnesses Option 11: Minority Veterans Option 12: VA Employees Option 13: Caregivers, Families, and Survivors Option 14: Other (please specify)
If Other, please specify your target population:	
What is your practice's problem statement?	
What led to the identification of the problem your practice addresses (research, patient feedback, issue, etc.)? Please explain in 2-3 sentences.	
How does your practice address the problem identified in your problem statement? Please summarize in 2-3 sentences.	
How long has your practice been implemented in your current facility?	1. 3 to 6 months 2. 6 months to 1 year 3. 1 to 2 years 4. Longer than 2 years
How many sites is your practice currently implemented in?	1. 1 site 2. 2-4 sites 3. 5-9 sites 4. 10+ sites
Why should VHA devote resources toward solving this problem across facilities? Please summarize in 1-2 sentences.	
What critical metrics does your practice use to measure its impact in addressing your problem statement (e.g., reduced infection rates, improved patient/employee satisfaction, demonstrated cost savings or avoidance)?	
Please describe how your practice tracks and collects metric data to determine your practice's success and 2-3 sentences summarizing the quantifiable impact your practice has had on your target population.	

In 2-3 sentences, tell us a story about a time your solution worked (e.g., a time when your solution changed a Veteran's life, a time when it improved how VA employees do their work and deliver care). Please provide a quote from this experience if possible.	
Has your practice published any studies or been featured in any articles (locally or nationally)?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No
Please provide a summary of your study and provide links to the abstract(s) and article(s).	
Practice Implementation and Replication	
It is important to understand a practice's process from its inception through its maintenance. Please describe, in narrative form, the optimal process for implementing and maintaining your practice using 3-5 sentences.	
How long do you anticipate it will take to replicate your practice in another VHA facility?	Option 1: 1-3 months Option 2: 4-6 months Option 3: 7-9 months Option 4: 10-12 months Option 5: 12+ months
In 3-5 sentences, please highlight any bright spots or challenges you discovered when you implemented your process. If you would change your process going forward, please explain why.	
All innovative practices face some sort of risk and that is okay. Please select all types of risk that apply to your practice.	Option 1: Time Option 2: Technology Option 3: Funding/Resources Option 4: Process Option 5: Other
Please explain what specific time related risks your practice faces and what your mitigation plan is for these risks.	
Please explain what specific technology risks your practice faces and what your mitigation plan is for these risks.	
Please explain what specific funding/resources risks your practice faces and what your mitigation plan is for these risks.	
Please explain what specific process related risks your practice faces and what your mitigation plan is for these risks.	
You indicated that your practice faces a unique risk. Please explain what specific risk(s) your practice faces and what your mitigation plan is for these risks.	
List the optimal personnel resources needed to replicate your practice and the amount of time required by each of them (e.g., Registered Nurse - 15 hours/week, Business Analyst 40 hours/week)	

List the optimal material resources (e.g., equipment, information technology (IT) support, space) needed to replicate your practice.	
Will your practice need any external licensing or contracting work to successfully implement in a new facility?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No
Please elaborate on your external licensing or contracting needs.	
Has your practice received funding?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No
Has your practice received Spark, Seed, and/or Spread funding from the VHA Innovators Network?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No
Which stage(s) of Spark, Seed, and/or Spread did your practice receive funding for?	1. Spark: Idea 2. Spark: Challenge 3. Seed 4. Spread
Total funding amount.	
Has your practice received funding from a source other than the VHA Innovators Network?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No
Name of funding source.	
Total funding amount.	
Duration of funding.	
Please provide anything else about your practice that you'd like to share with us.	
VHA Shark Tank Interactions	
Have you previously applied for the VHA Shark Tank Competition?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No
How did you hear about the VHA Shark Tank Competition?	Option 1: All Employee Email Option 2: Email Blog Post Option 3: Facility Poster/e-Board Option 4: Innovation Specialists Option 5: Social Media Option 6: VA Colleague Option 7: Pathfinder Option 8: MS Teams Meeting Option 9: Other
If Other, how did you hear about the VHA Shark Tank Competition?	
What was your experience applying to the 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition?	Option 1: Excellent Option 2: Good Option 3: Average Option 4: Poor Option 5: Very Poor

Elaborate on your experience of applying to the VHA Shark Tank Competition.	
Final Page	
<p>Congratulations, you have successfully submitted your 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition application! Thank you for investing your time, thought, and effort into your submission. You will receive a copy of your submission via email, please download and keep a copy of your submission for your records. Your application will now be reviewed by subject matter experts from across VA and the Diffusion of Excellence team to determine semifinalists. You can expect to receive an update on your application in June.</p> <p>If you have any questions, please contact VADiffusionSupport@VA.gov.</p>	

2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition Evaluation Tool

Below is a copy of the evaluation rubric evaluators will use when reviewing and scoring 2024 VHA Shark Tank Competition applications. This copy is intended for reference only. The final evaluation tool may have slight variation from the version below.

For the most up-to-date version of the evaluation rubric, please visit [VHA Shark Tank](#) on Diffusion Marketplace and click the "Apply Now" button. You will find a link to download a copy of the evaluation rubric on the application landing page.

Evaluation Questions

Please note that all questions on this evaluation are required unless otherwise indicated. You will not be able to submit your evaluation if required questions are unanswered.

Applicants must have successfully implemented their practice in at least one facility. Successful implementation requires launching the practice and having post-implementation data collected for at least three months. The pilot facility fulfills this requirement.

1. Has this applicant successfully implemented their practice in at least one facility? **If no, this submission is invalid and should not be scored.**
 - Yes
 - No

2. Does the practice align with their selected VHA Shark Tank priority? **If no, this submission is invalid and should not be scored.** For the full list of VHA Shark Tank priorities, please [visit here](#).
 - Yes

- No
3. Does the practice have leadership buy-in or support at their facility?
- Yes
 - No
4. Based on the information provided in the application, please score the application according to the criteria below. You may provide a minimum score of 6 points and a maximum score of 30 points.

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5
Feasibility	Not enough information is provided in the application to judiciously score this category	Practice has implemented at only one VHA facility and will take longer than 12 months to replicate.	Practice has implemented at more than one VHA facility and will take more than 12 months to replicate.	Practice has implemented at only one VHA facility and will take less than 12 months to replicate.	Practice has implemented at more than one VHA facility and will take less than 12 months to replicate.
Solving a Problem	Not enough information is provided in the application to judiciously score this category	Practice does not clearly outline a targeted problem, the impact on VHA or how the practice solves this problem.	Practice outlines a targeted problem and the impact on VHA but is not clear how the practice solves this problem.	Practice outlines a targeted problem, the impact on VHA and how the practice solves this problem but struggles with clarity.	Practice clearly outlines targeted problem, why it is a problem for VHA, and how the practice solves this problem.
Demonstrated Impact to Identified Problem	Not enough information is provided in the application to judiciously score this category	Practice fails to demonstrate impact due to lack of data or included data does not indicate impact.	Practice's data-based evidence demonstrates minimal impact.	Practice's data-based evidence demonstrates a moderate impact.	Practice's data-based evidence demonstrates a significant impact.
Improved Satisfaction/ Experience	Not enough information is provided in the application to judiciously score this category	Practice did not describe a time when their solution worked.	Practice described a time when their solution worked, but reaction from target population was limited.	Practice described a time when their solution worked, reaction from target population notated a moderately improved experience.	Practice described a time when their solution worked, and reaction from target population notated a significantly improved experience.

Resource Requirements (Necessary materials, FTEs, specialists, space, equipment)	Not enough information is provided in the application to judiciously score this category	Required resources are not specified in the application.	Required resources are specified in the application, but they are unclear and/or incomplete.	Required resources are understandably specified in the application, but further clarification may be required.	Required resources are clearly specified in the application.
Evaluator Support for Practice	Not enough information is provided in the application to judiciously score this category	This practice does not seem to support a need of VHA and/or does not have enough information to progress to the next round of VHA Shark Tank Competition	There was not enough information and/or support in the application, but I am interested in learning more about the practice	This practice would likely be a good fit for VHA Shark Tank Competition but could use more details	Based on the information presented in the application, I fully support this practice moving to the next round of VHA Shark Tank Competition

5. Are there any similar practices, to your knowledge, currently ongoing within VHA?

- Yes
- No

5.1 If yes, could you please describe the similar practice(s) including the practice leader and where it is implemented if you're aware.

6. Please provide any feedback that would help the applicant improve their practice moving forward. This feedback will be shared with the applicant following the evaluation period. (300 word limit)

7. We welcome your feedback on the VHA Shark Tank Competition evaluation process. Please rate your experience on scale of 1(very unsatisfied) to 5 (satisfied) with each of the following:

- Evaluation rubric scale
- Evaluation rubric criteria
- Use of LEAF application
- Pre-evaluation information and briefing sessions
- Communication with Diffusion of Excellence support team

7.1 If you wish, please elaborate further on your scores (Not Required).

8. Please provide any other feedback you have for the Diffusion of Excellence team here (Not Required).