



UPDATED AUGUST 2023

Support to Advance Research (STAR) Program - 2023 Student Surveys

The [Support to Advance Research \(STAR\) Program](#) is adapted from the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine's [CAFME Educational Research Alliance Program](#). The STAR program allows PA faculty researchers to submit up to 10 survey questions to be included in the [2023 PAEA Student Surveys](#). Please limit the number of open-ended questions (each with a 250-character limit) to a maximum of three questions. Because the survey takes a considerable amount of time to complete, applicants should be aware of the burden that they are placing on respondents.

PAEA works with accredited member programs to collect rich data from matriculating and graduating students. Students complete the [Matriculating Student Survey \(MSS\)](#) upon their entry into PA school and provide information on their decisions to apply, reasons for choosing the profession and their program, academic and employment history, and more. Graduating students complete the End of Program Survey (EOPS), reporting information on their experiences during PA school, future practice plans, satisfaction with their programs, and other important insights. Both the MSS and EOPS also collect in-depth data on student demographics, well-being, career aspirations, and finances. Proposals should be appropriate for student respondents. Researchers that seek data better provided by program directors or faculty are encouraged to submit proposals for the STAR program for PAEA's [Program](#) or [Faculty](#) surveys.

The overall goals of the PAEA STAR Program are to:

- Increase the quality and frequency of research and scholarly activity among faculty of PAEA member institutions
- Improve the process for surveying constituents with better questions and fewer surveys
- Provide a clearinghouse of data that faculty of PAEA member institutions can use to produce scholarly work

SUBMISSION

We will begin accepting applications on **Tuesday, June 13**. Applications must be submitted through the [PAEA Research online application platform](#) no later than **11:59 p.m. ET on Sunday, August 20**. You may view a user guide for the online application platform [here](#).

If you do not receive an email confirmation within two business days, please call 703-651-8540 or email Research@PAEAonline.org to verify that your submission was received.

ELIGIBILITY

The principal investigator (PI) must be a faculty member at an accredited PAEA member or institutional colleague program in good standing and be employed by the educational institution for a minimum of 20 hours per week for the duration of the project. A letter from the program director or dean attesting to the PI's relationship with the PA program is required. No member serving on a committee/workgroup having oversight for this program may submit proposals; members serving on committees/workgroups without oversight responsibilities are welcome to submit proposals.



This project must be research-oriented. A research question or hypothesis should be the focus of the study. The results of the study must have some application to PA education or workforce issues. Priority will be given to proposals that receive high scores on the evaluation criteria, are likely to yield a high-quality, peer-reviewed publication, and are aligned with PAEA's current research priorities:

1. Increasing capacity in clinical education
2. Attracting and retaining students and faculty from diverse backgrounds

These topics address PAEA Strategic Goals B and C, which focus on preparing the next generation of PAs who deliver quality patient care and are representative of our nation's population and eliminating systematic racism and bias in PA education.

However, projects can investigate a range of issues, including:

- Workforce readiness of PA program graduates
- Understanding and improving didactic education
- Challenges and solutions to issues in clinical education
- Equipping PA students for expanded leadership roles in health care
- Building the pipeline of PA students from diverse backgrounds
- Barriers to the creation of progressive learning environments for PA students

A proposal is accepted under the condition that the PI makes changes to the questions as requested by the reviewers and the PAEA Research Team (if required).

The PI must sign the PAEA research agreement and complete the research project within 18 months of receiving the data. The PI is to submit a final project report to PAEA Research Team within 90 days of the end of the study. The project will be deemed complete when the final report has been approved by PAEA.

APPLICATION

Before submitting, please carefully review the formatting guidelines and required materials detailed below. Applications that are not formatted correctly or that are missing required elements may be delayed or not considered.

Proposals must be correctly formatted and blinded, and may not exceed 3 pages (see the note below for exceptions to the page count), and must include all the sections outlined below, which should be clearly labeled.

Proposal Formatting and Required Elements

General

1. Completed proposal cover sheet (completed online, not included in the page count)
2. Abstract (200-word limit)
3. Problem statement and/or research question(s)
4. Background and brief review of literature on the topic, including what new knowledge will be generated, as well as the significance of research questions
5. Objectives, aims, and hypotheses of the proposed research question
6. Proposed survey questions (maximum of 10 questions; this includes all branching questions)
7. Analysis plans including details regarding specific statistical tests and how they address the research question



8. Timeline that demonstrates that the project can be realistically completed, including deliverables, within 18 months of receiving the data.
9. Dissemination plans
10. Additional requested data from the 2023 Matriculating and End of Program Surveys with justification for the request. Data must be directly related to the proposal's research question and cannot identify programs or students.

Appendices

1. Letter from Program Director or Dean attesting to the PI's relationship to the PA program and confirmation that the PI is assigned at least half time to the PA program
2. Bibliography/reference list (maximum of five)
3. **Proof of IRB** submission, approval, or exemption. The recipient of the STAR Award must provide proof of approval or exemption to move forward with their project.

Note: Appendices are not included in the page count. Appendices 1 and 3 need not be blinded. All decisions of the selection committee are final. If confirmation of receipt of submission is not given within two business days, please call 703-651-8540. Any questions should be directed to Research@PAEAonline.org.

Proposal Formatting

All proposals must adhere to the formatting requirements below:

- Paginated
- One-inch margins
- Left-justified
- Size 12, Times New Roman font

Note: Curriculum vitae, references, and letter of support are exempt from this formatting.

Blinding Requirements

All application materials, excluding the letter from your program director and curriculum vitae, must be fully blinded (i.e., no identifying information may be included). Unblinded applications will not be reviewed. Identifying information includes mentions of participating institutions in the proposal as well as the following information commonly found in a curriculum vitae:

- Letterhead or watermarks from the researcher's institution
- Researcher's name and contact information
- Institutions from which researcher received degrees
- Institutions where researcher has been employed
- Membership in and presentations given at regional conferences or organizations (e.g., Texas Association of PAs)
- Researcher's name in publications and awarded grants
- Geographically or institutionally identifying information in publication titles (e.g., "Health outcomes among a sample of women in Philadelphia")

Overlaying a shape and/or changing the font or background of identifying text is not sufficient. This [guide](#) contains useful information on how to appropriately blind your application materials. You may also email Research@PAEAonline.org with questions.



EVALUATION CRITERIA

Reviewers will consider each of the criteria below in the determination of scientific merit and give a separate score for each.

- Research Question/Study Rationale
 - The research question is clearly articulated, detailed, and testable.
 - The research question is aligned with PAEA research priorities.
 - The project addresses a novel research question that is of critical importance to PA education or the PA profession.
 - The background information was appropriately researched and referenced.
 - The background information demonstrates the significance of the research question.
- Research Methods
 - The submitted survey questions are likely to yield high quality, meaningful data.
 - The analytic plan is outlined effectively and in detail.
 - The proposed analyses appropriately and rigorously address the research question(s) or problem statement with preference given to detailed and sophisticated analyses that move beyond descriptive statistics.
 - The variables of interest and potential confounders are clearly defined.
- Research Outcomes
 - The research team is well-qualified based on education and research experience to carry out the research as proposed.
 - The project demonstrates collaboration between researchers from different institutions or between a junior and more experienced researcher. Preference will be given to collaboration with HBCUs, minority-serving institutions, or tribal colleges.
 - The PI has been involved with PA-related research for fewer than five years.
 - The project can be realistically completed, including deliverables, within 18 months of receiving the data.
 - The proposal is likely to result in a peer-reviewed publication or presentation to the scientific community.
- Overall Quality
 - The quality of the application overall is extremely high and meets the formatting requirements.
- Bonus Points
 - The proposed research addresses how to increase capacity in clinical education.
 - The proposed research addresses how to attract or retain students and/or faculty from diverse backgrounds.