Overview

RFP: Human Nutrition

The Human Nutrition Task Force of the National Pork Board (NPB) is currently soliciting research proposals in human nutrition. This proposal uses an initial Letter of Intent (LOI) for initial screening.

This request for proposals targets research that can help advance understanding of the role of pork and pork-related nutrients:

1. Within healthy diet patterns across cultures, life stages and socio-economic status
2. Highlight pork as a sustainable protein within the four domains of sustainable food systems [health, economics, society, environment]
3. Using new research methodologies that pioneer exploration of the nutritional value of pork related to specific health outcomes

The deadline to submit letters of intent is Thursday, February 27 at 5 p.m. CT.

What Problem Does This RFP Address?

On behalf of America's pig farmers, NPB provides science-based nutrition information to, and in collaboration with, a variety of stakeholders committed to fostering a healthier society, including health professionals, academics, industry, consumers and media.

NPB is committed to building a strong foundation of high-quality scientific evidence — from observational epidemiological and clinical intervention

studies to modeling and substitution analysis research — that helps determine the health effects of pork consumption across the lifespan.

Priority Focus Areas and Research Questions

Submitted proposals must bring fundamental knowledge and application for continuous improvement relating to advancing the understanding of the role of pork and pork-related nutrients in human health.

Research in these areas may require a variety of disciplines and therefore proposals utilizing a multidisciplinary approach are highly encouraged.

Proposals should reference which focus areas or priority research questions listed below are being addressed. Where applicable, proposals should provide a power analysis to document and ensure sample size is adequate.

Specific research topics and prompts are listed below, not in priority order. All proposals submitted must address at least one of the specific research focus areas or prompts described below. Novel approaches and concepts are encouraged.

1. Establish pork's role in healthy eating patterns across cultures, life stages and socio-economic status.

- How does pork consumption as part of eating patterns affect diet quality and health outcomes across nations? (using representative dietary surveys (e.g., NHANES, KNHANES, SHeS, ENSANUT, ENSIN, UK Biobank, cohort studies))

- Extrapolate the understanding of the inclusion of pork in healthy dietary patterns that include cultural approaches.

2. Highlight pork as a sustainable protein within the four domains of sustainable food systems [health, economics, society and the environment].

- **Economics**: Analyze pork's affordability and cost-per-nutrient compared to other protein sources, highlighting its potential to enhance food security and support sustainable food systems.
- **Society**: Examine pork's role in culturally relevant dishes and its influence on dietary adherence and social acceptance.
- **Environment**: Conduct lifecycle assessments of pork production from farm to table to evaluate greenhouse gas emissions, land and water use, and the impact of sustainable farming practices. Learn more about our six WeCare principles.
- **Protein Quality**: Explore pork's amino acid profile, digestibility, and its role in supporting human health and nutrition.
- **Food Safety & Eating Experience**: Investigate advancements in pork safety, meat science, and how flavor and versatility influence consumer preferences.

3. Pioneer new research methodologies to explore the nutritional value of pork to specific health outcomes.

- Are there unique nutrient biomarkers relative to acute or long-term pork intake (e.g., selenium, choline, thiamin, Vitamin B6)? If so, what are their implications on target health outcomes across disease states and life stages?
- What mechanism of action does pork contribute to health markers as compared to other protein sources?
- What is the role of animal fats (such as pork lard), in human health?

Possible Study Types

- Intervention studies (e.g. randomized controlled trials)
- Observational studies
- Suitable reviews, including systematic reviews and/or meta-analyses
- Modeling or substitution analysis
- Nutrient profiling studies
- Discovery, pilot, pre-clinical or proof of concept studies

Hundreds of recipes, some with full nutrient analysis, are available to investigators for use in developing their LOI submission, as applicable. Please email **nutrition@pork.org** for more information.

Evaluation

Proposals will be reviewed for scientific soundness, ability to meet current objectives and priorities of the NPB human nutrition research program and adherence to **NPB's research integrity guidelines**.

Letters of Intent and if invited, full proposals, will be reviewed by NPB nutrition experts and Human Nutrition Task Force members for scientific soundness.

Preference will be given to projects that involve multi-disciplinary approaches that may include academic and commercial collaborations, except where discovery is needed to establish principles necessary for additional research.

NPB will hold all information provided by the applicant in confidence while the LOI is under consideration. The information contained in the LOI will only be made available to appropriate NPB staff and affiliated Human Nutrition Task Force members.

NPB will evaluate submissions from all investigators in accordance to the 4 best practices described in Leidy et al., (2024) when developing future dietary intervention-based research:

1. Call to Action 1: Carefully Consider the Demographic, Social, and Environmental Characteristics of the Study Participants When Developing the Nutrition Intervention

2. Call to Action 2: Establish a Research Team with Diverse Skillsets

3. Call to Action 3: Publish Sufficient Detail for Replication of Intervention

4. Call to Action 4: Develop Recipes That Can be Easily Converted to Standard Measures and Put into Practice

Reference:

Leidy HJ, Gooding R, Hicks-Roof K. Perspective: Key Considerations When Developing and Publishing Dietary Interventions for Human Clinical Trials. J Nutr. 2024:S0022-3166(24)00475-9

Funding Amount

There is $650,000 in total funding for 2025. The budget request should be appropriate and justified for the work that is being proposed. Below are the study types/designs and general range of funding available.

- Intervention Studies
  - $60,000 to $350,000
- Observational Studies
  - $20,000 to $120,000
- Non-Human Studies
  - Up to $150,000
- Reviews
  - Up to $75,000
- Seed grant/pilot funding/early career
  - Up to $30,000

We encourage both early career and established researchers to submit, the grant value can be used as seed funding, as a new project or continuation/extension of a previous project.

Researchers are encouraged to find co-funding or matching funds or in-kind contributions for the project when possible.

Eligibility Requirements

Anyone may submit proposals for research projects. However, it is preferred that the principal investigator have a PhD, MD, or equivalent degree and be a

research staff or faculty member at a non-profit academic or research institution.

The proposed study must adhere to NPB's **research integrity guidelines**.

Letter of Intent Format Requirements

Letters of intent should include the following information within two pages:

- Project title
- First and last name
- How NPB's research priorities will be addressed
- Brief background or statement of purpose
- Hypothesis or specific aims
- Experimental approach
- Expected budget and study timeline (broad estimates are fine)
- Expected outcomes and importance to the pork industry
- References (if applicable)
- CV's and/or Collaborating researcher details (optional)

Format requirements:

- **Start by downloading this template**
- Submit a Word doc (not PDF), three pages max — include the completed cover page plus a two-page LOI
- Please name your file as follows: LAST NAME, FIRST INITIAL – Proposal
- 12-point, Times New Roman font
- Double-spaced
- Margins of .5" on left, right, top and bottom
- A CV is not required, but if included, CVs will not count against page totals

How to Submit a Letter of Intent

Instructions:

Go to porkcheckoff.org and under the Research tab at the top of the webpage, navigate to Research Request for Proposals.

On the Pork Checkoff Research RFPs page, you will see a section that says, "Proposal Ready?". Under that section, location and click on "Create New Account." Note: If you already have an NPB Research Portal account set up, you may sign in.

The "Create New Account" link will take you to our new Proposal Portal where you will fill in your First Name, Last Name, and Email. Click "Sign Up."

An email notification from the National Pork Board will be sent to your registered email address for you to complete the registration process. Click on the URL Link in the email and create your new password.

Once you have set up your password, you have created an account.

To submit LOI:

Login to the NPB Research Portal. Once logged in, click on Submit Proposal at the top of the page. Click on the drop-down menu to select Human Nutrition RFP – 2025 and click on Next.

The next page will ask if you are submitting an Letter of Intent or Proposal. Please click on Letter of Intent and click Next. You will then fill out your LOI information on the next couple of screens.

Towards the end of the process you will be asked to upload your LOI document.

Please title your document as follows: LAST NAME, FIRST INITIAL –2025Human Nutrition LOI. The page will not show your uploaded file, but when complete, click Next and then Submit.

The NPB system will confirm receipt of the application with an automatic email.

Due Date

The deadline for submitting letters of intent (LOI) is **Thursday, February 27 at 5 p.m. CT.**

Projects that are selected to move forward will be invited to submit a full proposal. Principal investigators will be notified by **March 28** via email and provided further instructions.

If selected, full proposal applications will be due **April 23.**

Frequently Asked Questions

- My university/organization is based outside of the United States. Can I still submit a proposal to the National Pork Board?
    - Yes. The National Pork Board partners with researchers in the United States and other countries. The objectives of the research project must benefit United States pork producers and the United States pork industry.
- How long does it typically take to review Letter of Intent submissions? Can I contact the National Pork Board about the status of my Letter of Intent?

    - National Pork Board staff – including nutrition experts and the Human Nutrition Task Force members, will review all Letters of Intent within approximately 3-4 weeks of the deadline for submission. Inquiries on the status of your Letter of Intent should be directed to **nutrition@pork.org**.

- Do you offer samples of pork or pork products to researchers to conduct their studies?
    - National Pork Board does not store any samples of pork or pork products, or coupons for pork or pork products, that are available for researchers to conduct studies.

- Does NPB fund research on all types of pork and/or pork products?
    - Yes. Research on all types of pork and pork products is at the heart of the National Pork Board's mission and is funded by Pork Checkoff dollars.

- What can I request to be funded in the budget?
    - Graduate student support, student and other hourly labor, and post-doctoral support will be allowed. Partial support for principal investigators (PI) on less than a 12-month salaried appointment will be allowed. However, you must include a detailed budget narrative addressing the amount of requested support in relation to the PI project time commitment to justify the expense. Disposable equipment, such as test tubes, etc., is allowed.

- What will NOT be funded if included in the budget?
    - Overhead and indirect costs are NOT covered by Checkoff research funds. Non-disposable equipment is not allowed unless explained in the proposal, included in the budget, and approved in advance by the Board.

Other Questions?

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