



Get Your GACA ON: *Advice from Former GACAs on How to Write a Successful Application*

Laura K. Byerly, MD

Lauren R. Hersh, MD

Bronwyn Keefe, MSW

Mamata Yanamadala, MBBS

Eric Widera, MD (illustrious alumni)

Objectives

- Describe the **key elements** of the GACA individual career development plan (including mentorship) that prior recipients have identified as successful
- Identify **pitfalls** to avoid when preparing a GACA application in terms of career development plan, project scope, and evaluation.
- Foster a **sense of calm** and collectiveness because you all can do this!

What is the Geriatric Academic Career Award (GACA)?

- Deadline: Thurs., November 3, 2022
- 4 years of funding (7/1/2023-6/30/2027)
- \$81,746/awardee; Up to 26 Awards
- Grant to institutions on behalf of individual
- Eligible applicants:
 - Accredited health professions schools or graduate programs approved by the Secretary including schools of allopathic medicine, osteopathic medicine, nursing, dentistry, pharmacy, allied health, physician assistant programs, chiropractic, podiatric medicine, optometry, public health, and veterinary medicine.
 - Accredited graduate programs in health administration and behavioral health and mental health practice including clinical psychology, clinical social work, professional counseling, and marriage and family therapy.
 - Tribes and tribal organizations are eligible if they otherwise meet the eligibility requirements.

Story time

“When I was in your shoes...”

- Emotional reactions
- Why this **is** the right time (even if it doesn't feel like it!)
- Initial processes we followed

Tips for Writing a Strong Application (from HRSA and GACA Alums)

- **Goals and objectives** - *should be clearly defined and specific.*
 - Clear-purpose/Focused
 - Well-organized: clear objectives
 - Leadership Training outlined in plan (don't underestimate this part!)
- **Need** - *includes both the need for the service or activity that the grant will support and also your organization's track record in fulfilling that need.*
 - Timely topic (is it within the NOFO targets?)
- **Response and impact** - *should clearly show how you plan to achieve the purpose of the grant program; include supporting data whenever possible.*
 - Well-organized: clear metrics
 - Feasible metrics

Tips for Writing a Strong Application (from HRSA and GACA Alums)

- **Resources and capabilities** - *defines the knowledge, staffing and fiscal stability that you have to carry out your proposal and meet the goals of the grant program.*
 - Well-developed Curriculum Vitae/Publication Track Record (you and mentor)
 - Strong Mentor (both in application development and mentorship role described in application)
- **Budget** - *a realistic plan that matches your goals and objectives and includes a narrative that justifies the costs.*
 - Don't waste funds! Use them wisely! Use all of them!
 - Indirect costs are a thing (8%)

GACA Awardees' Insights

- Use the NOFO as your scaffolding
- Don't be creative with wording
- Don't overpromise (you will have to do it...)
- Write peer-mentoring into your GACA
- Build flexibility into your application. It's hard to plan for 4 years.
- Use your mentor well
- Follow the HRSA directions closely and submit application prior to deadline
- Track everything well (# and type of learners!)
- Present & publish!
- Plan for promotion during your GACA!

Unsuccessful Elements

- Institutional changes
- Choosing training/coursework that doesn't advance your professional development
- Not including training that could have advanced goals
- Taking on too many tasks
- Inadequate networking
- Capturing all the work done/reporting
- Lack of interprofessional education

Challenges with the Grant (once you have it!)

- Reporting requirements (long progress reports)
- Mandatory participation in all monthly calls
- Changes in GACA plan require prior approval
- Cannot transfer the award to another institution
- Grant funds may not match inflation/salary increases

JUST DO IT.



**KEEP
CALM
AND
JUST
DO IT**



ZEN CAT

Reach out with any questions! (truly, seriously, we are here!)

Laura Byerly: byerlyla@ohsu.edu

Lauren Hersh:
Lauren.Hersh@jefferson.edu

Bronwyn Keefe: Bronwyn@bu.edu

Mamata Yanamadala:
mamata.yanamadala@duke.edu

Dropbox for GACA Applications and
“score sheets”:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/nd34d6isxm2bk8dxzk4qe/h?dl=0&rlkey=jgyg74yq7j03xj289qf5g0qs4>