

Small Grants to Advance Translational Science (S-GATS) Program

Stakeholder Engagement Plan Overview

The Tufts CTSI prioritizes stakeholder engagement as a tool to speed the translation of knowledge into health improvement. Stakeholder engagement allows investigators to engage others (patients, communities, caregivers, clinicians, researchers) to help speed up the translation of research discoveries into impact on health. Stakeholders can play key roles from problem identification and specification, protocol design and recruitment, through the interpretation and dissemination of results. They often provide perspectives, knowledge, skills, and awareness of unmet needs that can stimulate productive questions and highlight crucial evidence gaps, thereby helping us to improve all aspects of research. To this end, a stakeholder engagement plan is required for all S-GATS applications.

The following document outlines some of the key elements of developing a stakeholder engagement plan. If invited to submit a full proposal, the S-GATS Program will provide a more comprehensive document with general guidance for developing an effective stakeholder engagement plan.

1. Identify relevant stakeholder groups

Before you start developing your stakeholder engagement plan, consider who the stakeholders are for your project. They may include a range of individuals and groups who may be affected by your research project, who may have an impact on your research project, and/or who may have an interest in using your findings to address similar translational science challenges.

Consider using [7Ps framework to identify stakeholders](#): patients and the public, providers, purchasers, payers, policy makers, product makers, and principal investigators. There is no expectation that all groups of potential stakeholders would be involved in any given project, but it is important to consider all relevant stakeholders before deciding who would make the greatest impact in your proposed project.

The following questions might be useful to identify the stakeholders in a translational research project:

- In what stage(s) of translational science am I working?
- What stages of research precede, coincide, and follow my research work?
- Who are the leaders in those other kinds of research?
- Does this whole line of research have its sight on human health?

2. Consider possible engagement strategies

Stakeholder engagement should be tailored to meet the specific needs of your unique partnerships with each stakeholder group and must consider the time, feasibility, and budget considerations for each engagement strategy and level of engagement. Remember that building trust, respect, mutual understanding, and shared vision takes time and effort. Do not get discouraged if your initial plan of action does not yield immediate results. Consider adjusting your approach, if and as needed.

The following questions might be useful to consider how stakeholders can/should be engaged in your project:

- How does my research get designed, funded, and started?
- What are the procedures for carrying out this research?
- What are the procedures for disseminating and promoting the research?
- Can stakeholders have opportunities to influence, change or even determine my decision-making about these procedures?
- How can I structure engagement activities that bring about helpful stakeholder input into these procedures?