FAQs for the HSR&D 2009 CoE Solicitation

Q1. Are the Center PI and Center Co-PI required to have 50% effort designated for Center activities? What are considered Center activities?

Answer. Yes. The requirement for the Center leadership to commit 0.5 FTEE to CoE activities has been in place for many years. The 1204.3 handbooks from 2001 forward and the FY2005 Solicitation explicitly state this requirement. The current solicitation is consistent with this requirement by stating the Center Director and Associate Director must: "Devote at least 0.5 full time employee equivalent effort (FTEE) to CoE activities."

Center activities would include administrative oversight, mentoring, program development, recruiting, and many other leadership tasks. The 0.5 FTEE time allocation "cannot overlap with other research activities such as funded research projects."

Q2. To calculate the number of funded PIs in the CoE applications, will the HSR&D annual report definition of PI be used for the eligibility criteria? Or will current HSR&D funding be used.

Answer. The following is the description in the solicitation for eligible PIs:

Eligibility. At the time of application there must be a minimum of <u>four</u> VA HSR&D funded principal investigators (PI) engaged in research projects (IIR, SDR, QUERI, or special solicitations) at the time of application submission and <u>one</u> or more of the following for a total of <u>five</u>:

a. <u>One additional</u> VA HSR&D funded PI engaged in research projects (IIR, SDR, QUERI, or special solicitations), **or**

b. <u>One</u> HSR&D Career Development Awardee.

Note: Consistent with HSR&D Center Annual Reports, Principal Investigators are defined as individual primary HSR&D funded PIs rather than investigators supported by other funding sources. If an investigator is a PI on more than one funded HSR&D project at their location that meets HSR&D criteria (such as an Investigator-Initiated Research (IIR), Service-Directed Research (SDR), or Service-Directed Projects (SDP)), only one of the projects is eligible toward the number of funded PIs at that site. Co-PIs do not count. These projects are expected to have a funding period of <u>two</u> years or greater and extend at least through the first fiscal year of the Center's new funding (FY 2010).

The following are some examples of HSR&D projects that could potentially be considered toward eligibility by HSR&D and the CoE reviewers:

- If a proposed Center PI received a funding approval notification letter for an HSR&D project, but may not have started the project yet.
- If a PI receives an approval notification letter for a conditional response submission, HSR&D and the reviewers may consider that for eligibility as well.
- If a project from the March 2009 HSR&D Scientific Merit Review Board meeting is approved for funding prior to the CoE review meeting, it will be considered one of the projects to meet the eligibility criteria.
- If an investigator receives approval for an HSR&D Career Development Award prior to the CoE review meeting, **and** the proposed Center has not already counted one of these currently funded Career Development awards toward the minimum eligibility criteria.

This is interpreted as individual PIs rather than simply funded investigators, and a PI can only be counted once. Only the primary HSR&D PI is calculated in this eligibility criteria. If an investigator is PI on two funded HSR&D projects at their location (i.e., IIR, SDP, etc.), only one of the projects would be eligible toward the number of funded PIs at that Center. Co-PIs do not count and the projects are expected to have approximately 2 years or greater of funding. This is consistent with the FY06 annual report calculations of funded PIs at current Centers.

Q3. Would the following projects count toward eligibility?
1. An IIR that is scheduled to end 6/2010.
2. An IIR that is scheduled to end in 2011 and a PI at our facility is the site PI of the overall project. No, the PI must be the primary project PI, not a site PI.
3. QUERI Center Funds that are scheduled to end in 2011.

Answer.
1. Yes, a project ending 6/2010 would be applicable if it is at least 2 years in duration.
2. No, the PI must be the primary project PI, not a site PI.
3. No, QUERI Center funds are considered administrative funds, not project funds. QUERI projects, such as an SDP and some RRPs can be eligible, but not core Center funds.