2023 IMPACT REPORT

HEALTH RESEARCH ALLIANCE

A collaborative member organization of nonprofit research funders committed to maximizing the impact of biomedical research to improve human health.
Dear HRA Members,

IMPACT. COLLABORATE. INNOVATE. Those words are used in our strategic plan and many other places to describe how HRA is so successful at maximizing the impact of biomedical research. But in looking back over the past several years, it has become obvious that we need to add LEAD to that list. We are thought leaders – yes. But more importantly we are ACTION LEADERS.

HRA members identify and discuss challenges using formats such as Learning Community open mics, sessions at Members Meetings, or questions posted to the listserv. Once challenges have been identified, we create infrastructure and resources to address those challenges, be it a learning community, a best practices guide, a collaboration with another sector - whatever is needed. We don’t just make recommendations; we act on them. For example, we launched the Inclusive Grantmaking Initiative and hired Jenna Hicks as the lead, to act on our recommendations in "Strategies for inclusive grantmaking" Commentary in Nature Medicine. The IGI has already led to a Bias Mitigation training for staff of HRA member organizations (the reviewer module will come out in 2024) and a Demographic Data Collection Guide (see page 5 for more information).

HRA members asking colleagues for advice is often another spark for action. Via HRA’s listserv, HRA members reached out to colleagues for advice on policies and procedures designed to address toxic behavior in academia. As a result of this dialogue, we launched the Misconduct & Ethics Learning Community to investigate the role funders can and should play. In another example, the newly formed Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Large Language Models (LLM) Learning Community was formed, not only to share challenges and solutions in the area of grantmaking, but explore how this technology can transform biomedical science to advance discovery and benefit patients. These are just a few examples of how formidable leveraging the power of 110 organizations can be.

I look forward to another productive year, as HRA members roll up our sleeves and take action to advance scientific discovery.

MARYROSE FRANKO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
One of the major goals of HRA’s Strategic Plan is to foster HRA community by supporting collaborations, building relationships, and facilitating networking opportunities. In 2023, HRA launched multiple new initiatives to facilitate connections amongst HRA members.

Regional HRA Meetings brought together HRA members in Washington, DC and Phoenix, AZ for informal networking and discussions about DEI strategies. Thanks to the Alzheimer’s Association and the Flinn Foundation for supporting these regional meetings!

**Learning Communities and Interest Groups** facilitate connections between HRA members with similar roles and interests. In 2023, HRA supported 9 learning communities, 2 interest groups, and hosted quarterly CEO Roundtable meetings. Two of these groups were newly formed in 2023:
- Artificial Intelligence and Large Language Models Learning Community
- Clinical Trials Interest Group

**HRA Peer Circles**, part of HRA’s professional development program, are small groups of peers from different HRA member organizations that meet regularly to share ideas and discuss topics of mutual interest. Thanks to Marina Triplett, HRA’s Professional Development Intern, HRA launched the Peer Circles Program this summer. To meet continued interest, a second cohort of Peer Circles was started in the winter. There are now 93 individuals from 60 HRA member organizations participating in the Peer Circles Program!

**Peer Circles Program**
- 93 Participants
- 60 HRA Member Organizations
HRA is proud of the many ways in which we’ve supported the development of the biomedical workforce, including HRA member-supported awardees, graduate student and postdoc HRA interns, and individuals employed by HRA member organizations!

HRA’s Professional Development Program aims to increase organizational and philanthropic sector capacity by enhancing the effectiveness of staff of HRA member organizations. In 2023, we launched the Peer Circles Program to support HRA members in building their networks, and hosted an interactive professional development session at the Fall Members Meeting: Managing Conflict and Challenging Conversations at Work.

The Research Workforce & Early Career Development Learning Community, supported by HRA Intern Jamie Garcia, continued to explore ways to support early career researchers through their 2023 community calls and Members Meeting Sessions:

- April Open Mic (Alumni Networks)
- Leading Edge Symposium
- Fall 2023 Members Meeting Open Mic

The Learning Community submitted a response to the National Institutes of Health Request for Information: Re-envisioning U.S. Postdoctoral Research Training and Career Progression, highlighting the importance of supporting international postdocs, adequate compensation, healthy work environments, and multiple career options.

HRA’s Intern Program

HRA’s Internship Program, established in 2017, has been running strong for 7 years and we are so grateful for and proud of our 14 current and former interns! Our interns have and are supporting HRA’s important projects and initiatives, including organizing our twice-annual members meetings, supporting our learning communities, and facilitating programs like the Peer Circles Program. HRA interns have gone onto full-time positions at HRA member organizations, biotech companies, universities and research institutes, and federal funders.

“I’m extremely grateful for my time as an HRA intern as it gave me the opportunity to do meaningful work that aimed to improve the biomedical research community. I also learned about careers in science philanthropy and was able to create connections with individuals from numerous non-profit organizations which ultimately helped me find and secure a job after graduate school.”

- Lindsay Redman-Rivera, Program Officer at Health Resources in Action, former HRA Intern
The Health Research Alliance launched the Inclusive Grantmaking Initiative (IGI) in 2022, thanks to generous support from the Doris Duke Foundation, James S. McDonnell Foundation, and the Rita Allen Foundation. In 2023, Jenna Hicks was hired as the IGI Project Lead.

The IGI has made great progress in 2023 by creating new resources to support HRA members: the Bias Mitigation in Peer Review Training for Program Staff, and a Guide to Collecting Demographic Data.

HRA continued to enhance members’ efforts in the DEI space via DEI Learning Community Calls, and dedicated Members Meeting sessions, including:

- Evidence-based Strategies that Lead to a Diverse Awardee Portfolio (Spring Members Meeting)
- Strategies for Collecting Demographic Data
- Open Mic – International Diversity
- Discussion of NASEM report on Advancing Antiracism and DEI
- How Minority Serving Institutions Advance Antiracism & DEI

This year, HRA also established a new Clinical Trials Interest Group, which is initially focusing on increasing DEI in clinical trials. So far, discussions have centered around ways to increase access to clinical trials, including online Trial Finder tools.
In 2023, HRA continued striving to improve the scientific research process by providing resources and support for HRA members to explore, develop, and implement open science practices.

Thanks to support from a generous HRA member, we launched the **Exploring the Value of Open (EVO) Program**. The EVO Program, led by consultant Kristen Ratan from Stratos, explores why and how to implement open research policies and practices, and ways to measure their impact.

EVO webinars focused on data sharing, open publishing, policies, and measuring impact. Check out the recordings and associated resources:

- The 2023 Federal Year of Open Science Initiative
- HRA Facilitating Open “Birds of a Feather” Series: Data Sharing
- Intro to Health Open Research: An open research publishing option using F1000
- Data Sharing and Policy Landscape
- Data Sharing – Best Practices and Measuring Impact

The EVO Program also facilitated small group “Birds of a Feather” cohort working sessions and one-on-one consultative sessions with Kristen Ratan. In these sessions, participants worked through challenges and explored strategies to identify appropriate approaches for their organizations.
Multiple Learning Community Calls, Members Meeting sessions, and HRA webinars explored strategies for measuring and communicating your organization’s impact in 2023.

HRA Members Meeting sessions and webinars presented strategies and considerations for communicating your organization’s impact:
- **Open Mic: Developing strategic approaches to communicating the value of your research**
- **Approaches to track and highlight the successes of our grantees**
- **Strategies for Communicating Your Organization’s Impact**

In addition to HRA Members Meeting sessions and webinars, multiple Program Evaluation Learning Community Calls and resources highlighted ways in which organizations can measure and communicate their impact:
- **Going Beyond Bibliometrics: A system to track the progress and impact of biomedical research funded by Susan G Komen**
- **HRA Analyzer Lunch and Learn**
- **Utilizing Visualization for Program Evaluation Part 2: Practical strategies for effectively communicating evaluation findings**
- **Evaluation Tools for HRA Members (compiled in 2023 by the Program Evaluation Community Co-Chairs)**

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**HRA Analyzer**

**HRA Analyzer** is HRA’s real time, searchable database of awards made by HRA member organizations, hosted by Dimensions. Use HRA Analyzer to:
- Search for funding in specific research areas and categories
- Track individual grants by associated publications
- Visualize funding data from both HRA organizations and NIH

The quality of Analyzer depends on member organizations submitting data!

**2023 HRA Member Grants**

Statistics using data in HRA Analyzer

- **8,699** HRA member grants active in 2023
- **$5.4B** Funding awarded for grants active in 2023

Data from 64 HRA member organizations
LOOKING FORWARD TO 2024

SAVE THE DATE: SPRING 2024 MEMBERS MEETING
To support the goal of facilitating accessible Members Meetings, the Spring Members Meeting will be all-virtual in 2024! We will host multiple sessions during the week of March 11, 2024, spread out over several days to minimize Zoom fatigue. In line with recommendations made by the Members Meeting Task Force, the Fall 2024 meeting will be hybrid (in-person, and live streamed virtually). We’re grateful for the continued support of HRA Intern Mandy Westland in organizing the Members Meeting program!

PRIORITIES FOR 2024

• HRA will continue exploring ways to improve the culture of research by expanding on existing efforts (like those of the Research Workforce & Early Career Development and Misconduct & Ethics Learning Community)
• HRA will facilitate opportunities to learn how to leverage the power of AI to support grantmaking and advances in health research
• HRA will welcome a new Executive Director! After almost 10 years leading HRA, Maryrose is retiring this Spring.

THANK YOU!
We are grateful for support provided by member organizations above and beyond dues.

Thank you to those who serve on the Board of Directors and learning community co-chairs.
51 EVENTS
Including Learning Community Calls, Members Meetings, Regional Meetings, and webinars.

78 SPEAKERS
Presented at HRA events, not including informal speakers at Open Mic-style events. These 78 unique speakers came from 54 unique organizations (25 HRA member organizations and 29 non-member organizations).

2000+ ATTENDEES
Across Learning Community Calls, HRA webinars, CEO Roundtables, Members Meetings, and Regional Meetings in 2023. Join us for an event in 2024!