



# NIH HEAL Initiative® Website Phase 1 User Testing Moderator's Guide

## I. Introduction

This document outlines the plan for conducting the Phase 1 usability test for HEAL.nih.gov. The goals of user testing are to determine whether the NIH HEAL Initiative® website is meeting target audiences' needs and to identify opportunities to enhance user experience.

### Usability Test Objectives

- Validate the importance of identified top tasks among key audiences
- Assess usability of the Funded Projects database, including search and filter functions and results formatting

### Methodology

#### *Methodology Overview*

This user testing will be in-person, moderated testing. Each participant will be scheduled for a 20-minute testing session.

#### *Participants*

HEAL Initiative® project researchers

#### *Process*

At the beginning of each session, the moderator will explain the purpose of the session and what the participant should expect. (Participants will have already completed a consent form so that their recorded actions and comments may be used anonymously in the analysis and report.)

The moderator will ask the participant a few questions about their previous experience using the NIH HEAL Initiative® website. The participant will then be asked to complete sample tasks on the HEAL website. The moderator will frequently prompt the participant to think out loud so that a verbal record of their interaction with the website exists. A note taker will also observe and record the participant's comments and actions.

## II. Script

*[Note: The moderator will read the script below, deviating only if needed to keep the participant on track.]*

Hi, [INSERT PARTICIPANT NAME HERE]. My name is [INSERT MODERATOR'S NAME], and I'm going to be walking you through this website user testing session. How are you today?

Let's begin with an overview of what to expect from the session.

We invited you to participate in this activity to evaluate the NIH HEAL Initiative® website. We want to hear about your previous experience using the website, gain insights about what it's like for people to use it, and be sure people can find the information they need.

I want you to know that we're testing the site, not you. You can't do anything wrong here. There are no incorrect answers, and you can't make any mistakes. Also, we want to hear exactly what you think, so please don't worry that you're going to hurt our feelings or those of anyone associated with the website. Our goal is to use all the feedback we gather today to improve the website.

As we go along, I'm going to ask you to think out loud, to tell me what's going through your mind. This will help us to understand areas of the site that may need improvement.

If you have questions, just ask. I may not be able to answer them right away, since we're interested in how people do when they don't have someone sitting next to them, but I will try to answer any questions you still have when we're done.

As we stated in the consent form, we're going to record the computer screen and what you have to say during the test. We won't be recording your image. The recording will be used only to help us figure out how to improve the site, and it won't be seen by anyone except the people working on the project. It also helps me, because I don't have to take as many notes.

Let me take a moment to start the recording. *[The moderator starts recording.]* OK, the recording has begun.

*[Note: The moderator does not read the subheads below, such as "III. Warm-Up Questions." They are to facilitate review of the document.]*

## III. Warm-Up Questions

1. What type of device do you most often use when you access the Internet—for example, desktop or laptop computer, mobile phone/smartphone, tablet, etc.?
2. Have you participated in a website usability test before?

*[The participant will begin by viewing the NIH HEAL Initiative® homepage.]*

#### **IV. Interview Questions**

1. How frequently, if ever, do you use the NIH HEAL Initiative® website?

*[If the participant has not used the website before, the moderator will ask the following.]*

1a. Of everything you see on this page, including the menu options and page content below, what appeals to you the most, and why? Where would you click first? Please go ahead and click.  
*[Skip to question 4.]*

2. What do you use the website for? Is it meeting your needs? Why or why not?
3. Which pages of the website do you visit? Please navigate to the page that is most important to you.
4. What information on this page appeals to you the most? Why?
5. Is there anything you would change about this page?
6. Is there anything else you would change about the site?

#### **V. Tasks**

*[If the participant has not already navigated to the Funded Projects database, the moderator will direct them to this page.]*

1. Have you used this page to search for projects before? If yes, please tell me how you have used it.
2. Please search for a project that is similar to yours, or show us how you'd look for something that is similar to your area of research. Which search fields would you use?

- 3.—What do you think about the search filter options that are provided in the dropdowns? Can you think of any other options that you would want to include? Or would you want to see fewer options?
  
4. What do you think about the way these search fields are set up? Is there anything that you would change about the way these search fields or search results are organized?

## **VI. Debrief**

Those are all of the questions I have for you today. Is there anything else you would like to say about the website? Do you have any questions for me?

## **VII. End of the Test**

This concludes our test. We really appreciate you taking time out from your day to help us improve the website.