

Background

The HER NOPREN WIC Learning Collaborative is a multidisciplinary team of researchers and practitioners committed to improving the health of those pregnant and lactating along with infants and young children through improved research, policy, and practice of the [USDA Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children \(WIC\)](#). This Collaborative is a joint effort of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's [Healthy Eating Research \(HER\) program](#) and the CDC's [Nutrition and Obesity Policy Research and Evaluation Network \(NOPREN\)](#).

Purpose

The HER NOPREN WIC Learning Collaborative Research Impact Award is intended to acknowledge, elevate, and disseminate peer-reviewed publications in the past calendar year that are generating or have the potential to generate a high impact on WIC policies, systems, or environment (PSE) changes or development and validity of research measures relevant to WIC.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the award, a publication must have been published in a peer-reviewed journal between December 16, 2023, and December 15, 2024, and findings should inform policies, systems, and environmental (PSE) strategies relevant to the WIC program. Please note that commentaries are not eligible. Any individual may nominate a study for consideration (self-nominations are encouraged). We especially welcome nominations of papers by early career researchers (within ten years of their doctorate or other terminal degrees). Nominations will be submitted online ([click here](#)).

The award is given to the corresponding author(s) of the publication on behalf of all the co-authors on the articles. Authors must be willing to present findings on a WIC Learning Collaborative webinar. Past awardees are highlighted at <https://nopren.ucsf.edu/wic-learning-collaborative>.

Selection Committee

The award will be determined by a selection committee comprised of up to five WIC experts, in addition to NOPREN, HER, and WIC LC leadership. The WIC Learning Collaborative will host an open call for members to serve on the selection committee, with consideration given to those representing a broad range of knowledge about the WIC program, including research expertise, lived experience, program administration, and/or policy expertise. Those on the selection committee will not be eligible to submit a publication for consideration.

Review Process

All nominations submitted by the deadline on **December 16, 2024**, will undergo an initial review by WIC LC Leadership. Those meeting the eligibility requirements will then undergo a full review by the selection committee. Submissions will be reviewed based on the following factors:

- Research has potential to inform policy, systems, or environmental approaches or strategies relevant to the WIC program
- Scientific rigor of the research design, methods, and analysis of the study
- Relevance to populations at highest risk for nutrition and weight-related health inequities and integration of equity in the study

Award Announcement & Promotion

The finalists (up to five) determined by the selection committee will be invited to give a brief 5-10 minute presentation of their research findings during the virtual WIC LC Research Impact awards ceremony in early 2024, with the ultimate award winner being announced during the ceremony. **All finalists and awardees will be publicly acknowledged at the NOPREN and HER annual meetings in Durham, NC, March 12-14th, 2025.** Their work will be highlighted through various dissemination channels, including the NOPREN News and website, the National WIC Association newsletter, HER and NOPREN social media, and other WIC-related research organizations' networks.