

About the Early Stage Investigator Work Group

The Early Stage Investigator (ESI) Work Group is a new work group specifically for junior investigators conducting research. The work group is supported by Healthy Eating Research, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Membership in the work group is open to postdoctoral fellows and researchers within 10 years of their doctorate degree (PhD, DrPH, ScD, JD, MD, etc.) who conduct research to improve nutrition equity, diet quality, and/or reduce obesity among children and their families. The first cohort launched in August 2021 with approximately 30 invited participants. Members are both HER grantees and researchers new to the HER network.

Since the outset of the HER program, one of our primary goals has been to build a vibrant, interdisciplinary field of research and a diverse network of researchers. We work toward this goal by leading three work groups—1) [Early Childhood](#), 2) [Healthy Food Retail](#), and 3) [COVID-19 School Nutrition Implications](#)—in collaboration with CDC's Nutrition and Obesity Policy Research and Evaluation Network (NOPREN) to facilitate collaboration and increase the quality and quantity of research and best practices in their respective fields. This ESI work group will be an important mechanism for continuing to support junior investigators in the field of nutrition.

Work Group Goals

Overall Goal: To support professional development, facilitate collaboration, and build the field of diverse early stage investigators conducting research to improve nutrition equity, diet quality, and reduce obesity among children and their families.

Longer-Term Goals:

1. Increase interdisciplinary collaboration and coordination among ESIs and experienced HER researchers.
2. Increase access to and sharing of measurement tools, data collection, and findings among ESIs.
3. Increase the number and capabilities of ESI applicants for HER proposals.
4. Increase the amount and quality of research conducted by ESIs.

Meeting Frequency and Format

Full work group meetings are held every month for approximately one year and consist of a variety of formats including panel presentations, skill-based workshops, participant research presentations, and group discussions. The topics for the meetings are decided by the two work group chairs and the leadership committee.

ESI Work Group Chairs

1. Gabriella McLoughlin, PhD, MS
2. Chelsea Singleton, PhD, MPH

For more information, please contact:

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