

## Program overview

Patient advocacy organizations are a key source of information, empowerment, and support for patients at every step of their health care experience, helping them and their families navigate the care they need.

Novartis developed the STEP (Solutions to Empower Patients) Program™ to fund innovative projects from United States (US)–based nonprofit organizations that help address some of the most pressing gaps between best practices and the care a patient — or caregiver — actually receives. By supporting the patient advocacy organizations that are best positioned to address these unmet needs, our goal is to help reduce the burden of disease and help create a path to better care.

## Proposal Submission and Review Process

Every year the STEP Program™ addresses a specific disease, condition, or aspect of health care in which advocacy organizations are invited to submit proposals to develop programs or resources that address that one area of significant unmet need. Once the submission period closes, an independent external review committee evaluates the proposals against common criteria and identifies those with the greatest potential to make a positive impact on patients and caregivers.

Each review committee consists of a diverse group of subject matter experts, including health care providers and patients, advocates and/or caregivers, to provide broad perspectives on the submitted proposals. Once the final proposals are identified, recipients are notified and recognized by Novartis.

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