

NIH launches \$500 million contest to produce best COVID-19 test

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(HealthDay)—A competition between researchers is part of a \$1.5

billion program that seeks to speed development of accurate, quick, and easy-to-use COVID-19 tests, the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced Wednesday.

The NIH invites "all scientists and inventors with a rapid testing technology to compete in the COVID-19 testing challenge for a share of up to \$500 million over all phases of development." The goal is to make millions of tests a week available to all Americans by the end of this summer and to have even more in time for the flu season.

"We need all innovators, from the basement to the boardroom, to come together to advance [diagnostic technologies](#), no matter where they are in development," NIH Director Francis Collins, M.D., Ph.D., said in an institute news release. "Now is the time for that unmatched American ingenuity to bring the best and most [innovative technologies](#) forward to make testing for COVID-19 widely available."

"The technologies will be put through a highly competitive, rapid three-phase selection process to identify the best candidates for at-home or point-of-care tests for COVID-19. Finalists will be matched with technical, business and manufacturing experts to increase the odds of success," the NIH news release stated. "If certain selected technologies are already relatively far along in development, they can be put on a separate track and be immediately advanced to the appropriate step in the commercialization process."

"Projects will be assessed at each milestone and must demonstrate significant progress to receive continued support," said the NIH, which is working on the initiative with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority.

More information: [More Information](#)

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