



Community-Based Organizations

Infectious Disease

08/16/2021

I. Background

The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) is the local public health department for the City of Boston. Our Mission is to protect, preserve, and promote the health and well-being of all Boston residents, particularly the most vulnerable and historically marginalized.

The Boston Public Health Commission has received two federal grants to address racial and ethnic health inequities in COVID-19 risk, vaccination, access to care, resources, and information. These awards will strengthen Boston's infrastructure to address current and future public health crisis and to address the social inequities that put Black, Latinx/Hispanic, and other people of color and immigrant residents at greater risk for disease and for social issues including poverty, housing and food insecurity and low wages that contribute to disease risk.

One funding stream through the US HHS Office of Minority Health is to advance health literacy for an equitable community response to COVID-19. The other, through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is to address COVID-19 health disparities among populations at high risk and underserved. These two-year awards have already started.

Across the nation, COVID-19 capitalized on and accelerated racial and ethnic health and social inequities. In 2020, Boston's Mayor declared racism a public health crisis and directed the Boston Public Health Commission and City departments to implement strategies to eliminate structural and institutional racism. These grants will capitalize on and accelerate that work to strengthen COVID-19 mitigation strategies and address ongoing disparities, particularly in vaccination, for our immigrant Black and Latinx/Hispanic population across the City of Boston.

As part of BPHC's efforts to have an equitable procurement process, BPHC will consider and encourage unrepresentative businesses that includes; Minority-owned Business Enterprises (MBE), Women-owned Business Enterprises (WBE), Veteran-owned Business Enterprises (VBE), Disability-owned Business Enterprise (DOBE), Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Business Enterprises (LGBTBE), and local businesses to apply to this RFP.

II. Description of Opportunity

BPHC is issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to seek 6 qualified community-based organizations to undertake outreach and education activities with specific racial, ethnic, immigrant and other demographic communities including youth and families, to promote COVID-19 vaccine education and to contribute to the evaluation of methods and messages to inform future public health campaigns. Competitive applicants will be organizations that work directly with members of specific racial, ethnic, and other demographic communities in Boston. A crucial element of our strategy will be health promoters—community members trained and employed to conduct outreach activities within their communities and social networks, and who could be present at vaccination clinics.

Working with key partners, and with our minority-serving institutional partner (the Mauricio Gastón Institute at the University of Massachusetts, Boston), we will evaluate, develop, and implement health literacy strategies for our focus population. Some activities will be broad-based; others will use culturally, and linguistically appropriate messages focused on specific groups and tailored to their concerns, hopes and interests—e.g., Haitian Americans, Brazilian immigrants, younger Latinx men, LGBTQ youth, parents of young children.

We have also identified several potential new areas on which our activities might focus: COVID-19 vaccination for children and youth; booster shots; and potential discrimination against groups who may be perceived not to be adequately vaccinated (regardless of the vaccination status of individuals within those groups).

The goals of this project include:

- Build capacity and infrastructure to embed culturally appropriate infectious disease and health outreach and education into their core function and mission. Using “health promoters” through these organizations is a key component to respond to future challenges around COVID 19 and other infectious diseases (such as the need for booster shots, the vaccination of school aged children etc.) Organizations will be prepared and equipped to disseminate testing, vaccination and other information and resources to a wide and diverse audience.
- Understand the relationship between different social determinants of health and COVID-19 and vaccination status and address social determinants of health that may create challenges to health management, increase risk for disease and present barriers to vaccination and other prevention activities.
- Contribute to rigorous evaluation including key informant interviews, focus groups, social network mapping and other qualitative and quantitative evaluation activities to: (1) determine which groups are most affected by inequities in COVID-19 vaccination, testing and treatment outcomes; (2) understand what kinds of messages and outreach strategies can best engage these groups and improve uptake of COVID-19 vaccination, testing, and treatment; (3) evaluate project strategies based both on specific objectives (# vaccinated, # tested), on how residents, community leaders, health care workers and others describe their experiences with these engagement learn to develop a multicultural and multilingual model of communication, engagement, healthcare delivery and preparedness for socially vulnerable populations.

III. Timeline

Monday, August 16, 2021	RFP Legal Notice publication in The Boston Globe
Monday, August 16, 2021	RFP available online at www.bphc.org/RFP by 12:00 PM EST
August 16 through 23, 2021	Submit questions between August 16, 2021 and August 23, 2021 to SSanchez@bphc.org Subject – Community-Based Organizations
Thursday, August 26, 2021	Responses to questions available for viewing on www.bphc.org/RFP by 5:00 PM EST
Friday, September 3, 2021	Proposals due via email by 12:00 PM EST – Sarimer Sanchez, MD MPH Bureau Director, Infectious Diseases Bureau SSanchez@bphc.org NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS DEADLINE
Friday, September 17, 2021	Notification of Decision
Friday, October 1, 2021	Start Date

IV. Eligible Applicants

Examples of applicants may include community health centers, neighborhood organizations, faith-based, and worker and immigrant organizations and others that engage Black and other people of color, Latinx/Hispanic, immigrants, LGBTQ+ community and youth/families in the City of Boston. There will be a particular focus on immigrant communities in Dorchester, East Boston, Hyde Park, Mattapan, Roslindale and Roxbury.

Selected applicants will be chosen for their connection to communities most affected by inequities in vaccination, testing and treatment, evidence of current efforts addressing COVID-19 and vaccination and for their readiness to scale up quickly for a fast-moving project. Additionally, engagement in efforts addressing social determinants of health with their population of focus will be key critical in the selection process. Examples of social determinants of health that may create challenges to health management, increase risk for disease and present barriers to vaccination and other prevention activities include overcrowded or unstable housing, lack of sick time or inability to request time off, immigration status, jobs with high exposure to the public, lack of adequate childcare and a dependence on public transportation.

Organizations will contribute to the project's evaluation which will require them to support focus groups, surveys, key informant interviews, town halls, social network mapping and other activities and will require the successful applicant to participate in documentation of activities.

BPHC has long been committed to addressing racism and the health and other impacts of systemic racism. This includes how we provide services and how we spend our money. As part of BPHC's efforts to have an equitable procurement process, BPHC will consider and encourage under-represented businesses including Minority-owned Business Enterprises (MBE), Women-owned Business Enterprises (WBE), Veteran-owned Business Enterprises (VBE), Disability-owned Business Enterprise (DOBE), Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Business Enterprises (LGBTBE), and local businesses to apply to this RFP. As many nonprofits may not be certified as 'Business Enterprises', we have provided opportunity for applicants to demonstrate their commitment to racial equity through the application process. Eligible certified nonprofits including, Minority Only (MNPO), Women Only (WNPO), Minority Women Only (MWNPO) are also encouraged to apply.

V. Funding Availability

Selected applicants will receive up to \$200,000 each year of 2 years. Funds may go toward staffing including health promoters, project management staff, and other staff critical to planning, implementation, evaluation, and fiscal and program management.

It can go to support community engagement including stipends for community members to engage in evaluation or program activities, costs of events and food and to support costs associated with addressing social determinants of health among the applicant's priority population.

A priority of this opportunity is identifying effective health communication strategies to increase vaccination among historically marginalized populations and to evaluate these strategies. It is also to identify and address social barriers to vaccination. For instance, if lack of childcare to support time getting vaccinated or if the vaccinated person has side effects, funds can be used to support childcare or to pay for lost work time for those without sick days. Other social barriers preventing individuals from receiving vaccinations can also be addressed via this funding.

VI. Application Process

Please answer the following questions in no more than 4 pages. Required attachments are not part of the 4-page limit.

1 ½ pages/20 points

- Describe your organization, including mission, core functions including programs and services, staffing (and volunteer) capacity, demographic make-up of leadership and staff.
- Include if you are certified as an MBE, WBE, VBE, MNPO, WNPO, MWNPO, DOBE, LGBTBE, and/or local (Boston) businesses or organization.
- Please describe if you use CLAS standards (The National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services). If you do not use the CLAS standards, please give specific examples of how your organizational practices are consistent with the standards. If not yet consistent, please describe your plans and resources needed to implement the CLAS standards in your organization with this funding opportunity
<https://thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/assets/pdfs/EnhancedNationalCLASStandards.pdf>

½ page 10 points

- Describe your population(s) served including race and ethnicity other demographic, numbers (served, membership, etc.), geographic location and/or other community definition (e.g.: age, LGBTQ status, country of origin, work).

1 page 20 points

- Describe your ability and plan for recruitment for and/or participate in key program and evaluation activities.
- Describe your staffing infrastructure that can support your plan implementation, meetings and trainings, financial management, and reporting.

If staff must be hired or contracts must be created, please include plan and timeline.

Organizational capacity for dedicated staff member/hires a staff member to participate in evaluative process and meet regularly with Gaston Institute, BPHC, and CBOs.

Should include ability to offer or plan to recruit health promoters.

1 page 15 points

Description of current/past activities supporting COVID-19 and vaccine outreach and education.

- Describe prior communications and strategies done to address COVID-19 vaccination, testing, messaging, and mitigation strategies, including strengthening vaccine confidence. Describe the demographic and geographic communities in Boston that your work has focused on.
- Include efforts to address social or economic barriers to vaccination.

VII. Attachments

ATTACHMENTS (not included in page limit)

Resumes and/or job descriptions for key personnel that will be involved in grant and description of role.

Budget (use format below)

Financial Capability Form(attached)

Mission/Vision and/or diversity and inclusion statement. If your organizations commitment to racial justice and equity is not explicit in your mission, vision and/or if you do not have a diversity statement, please submit a statement describing your organizations commitment.

PROPOSED BUDGET

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>AMOUNT REQUESTED FOR YEAR 1</u>	<u>AMOUNT REQUESTED FOR YEAR 2</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
Personnel (include each staff position, FTE on this project and brief description of work)			
Participant Support Stipend Positions (include total #, estimated hours/week, amount per stipend and brief description) and Participant Incentives (how many/what/how much)			
Supplies (include description and number of items)			
Travel (local for staff and participants)			
Equipment			
Social Determinant of Health (describe intervention and cost per person).			
Other Project Costs (ex: printing and translation, food and event costs, meeting costs).			
Indirect or detailed administrative costs. (10% cap if organization does not have a current federally negotiated rate) Participant Support Costs are ineligible to receive Indirect Cost.			
Total Costs			

VIII. Submission Instructions

Please submit your Proposal to:

Sarimer Sanchez, MD MPH

Bureau Director, Infectious Diseases Bureau

Boston Public Health Commission

Email: ssanchez@bphc.org

Phone: (857) 383-8913

NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS DEADLINE, SEPTEMBER 3, 2021 by 12:00PM EST

APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT A - Financial Capability Form

ATTACHMENT B – Enhanced National CLASStandards

ATTACHMENT C – Living Wage Ordinance