



## **Request For Proposal**

### **Vaccine Equity Grant Initiative**

April 08, 2021

## Overview

The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and functions as the local public health department for the City of Boston. BPHC's mission is to protect, preserve, and promote the health and well-being of all Boston residents, particularly the most vulnerable populations.

The Mayor's Office of Health and Human Services (HHS) is the largest cabinet in the city of Boston with ten departments and offices that span work across multiple communities all striving to create a healthier Boston. Committed to promoting and ensuring the health and well-being of the city's most vulnerable residents, HHS provides a wide array of critical programs and services all while advocating for systemic change to tackle root causes of some of the most pressing challenges in the city of Boston.

Through shared leadership, BPHC and HHS have been working together to lead the COVID response since January of 2020.

## Background

Across the country, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to disproportionately harm Black, Latinx, Asian, and Indigenous peoples, immigrants, and older adults—hitting these communities first and worst, and reflecting broader public health, economic, and environmental inequities in the United States.

While the introduction of vaccines to fight the Coronavirus has brought hope, the communities most impacted by the virus have had inequitable access to vaccination. Structural barriers like transportation, the digital divide, vaccination eligibility, vaccination site hours of operation, and vaccination site locations have made it more difficult for impacted communities to readily get inoculated. Structural barriers paired with misinformation and distrust, have also furthered disparate outcomes. These barriers and information gaps are directly impacting the lives and businesses of disproportionately impacted Bostonians and will continue to compound if mitigating measures are not taken.

On Friday, March 26, 2021, Mayor Kim Janey announced the Vaccine Equity Grant Initiative to support non-profit organizations working on neighborhood and community centered projects. These efforts will focus on creating equitable access and break down barriers to access for Bostonians disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. This initiative is a one-time investment of a total of \$1.5 million dollars with four-month awards ranging from \$100K to \$250K. BPHC and HHS will select a combination of proposals that serve the widest variety of inequitably impacted populations.

From the beginning of the City's fight against COVID-19, the City's leadership and Public Health Commission have prioritized those most likely to be impacted by the virus and continue to ensure we do not lose sight of those most in need. Addressing the barriers and information gaps experienced by people of color and immigrant communities requires strategies and services that are equitable, culturally and linguistically appropriate, and meet residents where they are. In addition to City efforts, targeted outreach services and support provided in partnership with trusted community partners will allow us to address the causes at the root of disparities in vaccination. A citywide vaccination approach focused on equity will help to ensure that all Bostonians can safely recover from harms caused by COVID-19 over the past year.

## Request For Proposal Timeline

Thursday, April 08, 2021	RFP available online at:  <a href="https://www.boston.gov/Vaccine-Equity">https://www.boston.gov/Vaccine-Equity</a>  <a href="http://www.bphc.org/workingwithus/rfps-and-bids/Pages/RFPs-and-Bids.aspx">www.bphc.org/workingwithus/rfps-and-bids/Pages/RFPs-and-Bids.aspx</a>
Friday, April 2, 2021	Questions due in writing by 5:00 PM EST to:  <a href="mailto:Marta.Rivera@Boston.gov">Marta.Rivera@Boston.gov</a>  <b>Subject:</b> Question - Vaccine Equity Grant Initiative
Monday, April 5, 2021	Responses to questions available by 6:00 PM EST at:  <a href="http://www.bphc.org/workingwithus/rfps-and-bids/Pages/RFPs-and-Bids.aspx">www.bphc.org/workingwithus/rfps-and-bids/Pages/RFPs-and-Bids.aspx</a>
Wednesday, April 14, 2021	RFP due by 5:00 PM EST to:  <a href="mailto:Marta.Rivera@Boston.gov">Marta.Rivera@Boston.gov</a>  <b>Subject:</b> RFP - Vaccine Equity Grant Initiative  <b style="color: red;">NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS EXTENDED DEADLINE</b>
Thursday, April 22, 2021	Notification of Decision by 5:00 PM EST  All applicants will be notified via email of the decision pertaining to their grant request. BPHC has the discretion to extend this time frame if necessary.
Week of April 26 – 30, 2021  Date and time to be determined	Mandatory grantees' meeting with Mayor Kim Janey, Health and Human Services leadership, and Boston Public Health Commission leadership.  All applicants will be notified of date and time of the grant meeting via email. BPHC has the discretion to extend this time frame as necessary.

## Scope of Work

Through this grant opportunity, the City of Boston is seeking organizations to work as community partners with new strategies to target equitable vaccine access in specific ethnic communities, Boston neighborhoods, and other groups experiencing higher rates of COVID-19 positivity. Proposals should target outreach for communities facing barriers in obtaining the vaccine. These include Black/African American, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous, and immigrant communities; persons with disabilities; individuals over the age of 65; and the neighborhoods of East Boston, Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, Hyde Park, Roslindale, and Chinatown, where positivity rates have consistently been higher and vaccination rates have been lower than the citywide average.

Funds will be prioritized to organizations proposing partnership models that include a clinical/vaccine partner and a community-based organization to allow for specific efforts to reach populations with both clinical services and

wrap-around services. Funds will also be prioritized for new partnership models or organizations that have not yet been fully engaged in this work. Access and awareness strategies include:

- **Direct, in-person outreach** – to target populations with direct efforts to schedule individuals for vaccine appointments directly out in the community.
- **Public awareness efforts** – to target specific populations or neighborhoods to build confidence in vaccines and their effectiveness that are culturally specific to the communities being connected with.
- **Wrap around supports** – to create equitable access to vaccine appointments through methods including transportation support, interpretation services, companion programs, and support dedicated staff working to get residents into vaccine appointments.
- **Direct clinic support** – to expand outreach or on-site services through additional staffing to support access to vaccines, including access during non-traditional hours or at non-traditional locations.

Proposals need to support one or two of the inequitably impacted populations and/or neighborhoods included below:

- Black/African American
- Latinx
- Asian
- Indigenous
- Immigrants
- Persons with disabilities
- People over 65 of all of races/ethnicities
- East Boston
- Roxbury
- Dorchester
- Mattapan
- Hyde Park
- Roslindale
- Chinatown

The types of activities funded through the Vaccine Equity Grant Initiative include:

- **Direct, in-person outreach** to targeted populations to get them into appointments for the vaccine (not general outreach or awareness-building, but a team of appointment-setters; think census takers)
- **Public awareness efforts** targeting specific populations or neighborhoods to build confidence in vaccines' effectiveness, e.g. using multilingual young adults as ambassadors. Integrate all tools that are available for public awareness to stop the spread of the virus, including testing for COVID-19.
- Additional **wrap around supports needed** to create equitable access to vaccines appointments including transportation support, help with interpretation services, companion programs, and dedicated staff to get residents into appointments, etc.
- **Direct clinic support** can be for staffing for outreach or on-site services to support access to vaccines for inequitably impacted populations, including access to non-traditional hours or locations etc.

### Period of Performance and Reporting

The start date of the grant shall commence with the mandatory meeting to be scheduled for the week of April 26, 2021, and the period of performance will extend through August 15, 2021.

Grantees will be required to provide a monthly report by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month for the prior month for both financial and programmatic aspects of the grant. Programmatic progress is to be reported as a narrative on the activities, outputs, and key metrics as described in proposal scope of service.

Financial progress is to be reported using a BPHC-provided template. All grant expenses reported must be accompanied by supporting documentation, such as receipts, invoices, etc.

## Grantee Requirements

Selected Grantees are required to sign the BPHC Standard Contract and required forms, including the Federal Provisions Addendum.

Grantees must have an active [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) registration.

## Proposal Requirements

To be considered for award, the proposal must include the following in this order:

1. Vaccine Equity Grant Initiative Cover Page (Appendix A, page 5)
2. Project Rationale
  - a. Which type of activities are included in the proposal? Clearly state the activities from the options identified in the RFP.
  - b. Who is the target or focus population? Clearly state from the options identified in the RFP the one or two specific target populations. Why is the organization best suited to impact the selected populations?
  - c. What is the proposal strategy? How will this approach make the intended impact of this initiative?
3. Organizational Experience & Ability
  - a. Provide background and history of the organization and any entities involved in the project.
  - b. Describe the organization's experience providing similar services, including working with the focus population, community mobilization and outreach in Boston.
  - c. Explain organizational partnerships linking community organizations with clinical partners. *Preference will be given to organization's proposals detailing strong partnerships.*
4. Organization's detailed Scope of Work
  - a. Include a calendar of activities for the four-month grant period of performance (April 26, 2021 – August 15, 2021).
  - b. Share key performance indicators that will be tracked and reported on each month. Be sure to include the organization's current capacity and tools/software that will be utilized to capture this information.
5. Project Budget
  - a. Detailed budget with corresponding budget narrative  
*Note: CARES Act funding does not allow use of an indirect cost rate. In order for administrative costs to be allowable on this grant the costs must be 1. budgeted as direct costs, 2. defined as administrative costs in the budget narrative, and 3. unaccounted for in any approved indirect cost rates currently being used by the organization.*
6. Grantee Financial Capability Form (pages 6 - 9)

*Final proposal should not exceed 5 pages, not including the Cover Page and the Financial Capability Form.*

# Appendix A

## Vaccine Equity Grant Initiative Cover Page

Organization Full Name	
Doing Business As Name	
Organization Address	
Contact Name	
Contact Phone	
Contact Email	
Organization URL	
TIN	
DUNS or UEI	
Descriptive Title	
Amount Requested	

Does the organization give permission to HHS to share the proposal with any other potential funders?

Yes  No

### Potential Conflicts of Interest

Does the organization or related/partner organization have any employees or Board members who are currently employed with BPHC or the City of Boston?

Yes  No  N/A

If Yes, describe the connection below.

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*For Potential Conflicts of Interest: This does not disqualify from submitting proposal or receiving the grant.*

*For more information visits the link below*

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/summary-of-the-conflict-of-interest-law-for-municipal-employees>