

Request for Proposals

Supporting Community-Based Organizations to Increase Vaccination Coverage Across Different Racial and Ethnic Adult Populations Currently Experiencing Disparities

Date Issued: April 12, 2021

Date Revised: April 14, 2021

Date Revised: April 20, 2021

***Revised version extends the due date from April 26 to May 3, 2021.**

Date Due: **May 3, 2021 by 12:00pm EDT**

CDC FOUNDATION CONTACT

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SECTION I: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

About the CDC Foundation

The CDC Foundation is an independent nonprofit and the sole entity created by Congress to mobilize philanthropic and private-sector resources to support the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's critical health protection work. We are a catalyst for unleashing the power of collaboration between CDC and philanthropies, private entities and individuals to protect the health, safety and security of America and the world. The government has unique capacities as well as limitations. The same is true for the private and philanthropic sectors. We believe that people, groups and organizations have greater positive impact and can accomplish more collectively than individually. By aligning diverse interests and resources and leveraging all parties' strengths, our focused collaborations with private and philanthropic partners help create greater impact than any one entity can alone. Over the past two decades, thanks to our donors, we have launched more than 1,000 health protection programs and raised over \$1 billion to support CDC's work. To keep people healthy, safe and secure, we managed hundreds of CDC-led programs in the United States and in more than 140 countries.

Background

Vaccination is considered one of the most important public health achievements of the 20th century and continues to offer great promise. Vaccines save lives and improve the quality of life by preventing serious infectious diseases and their consequences. However, the benefits of vaccination are not realized equally across the population of the United States. Adult vaccination coverage remains low nationally and significant racial and ethnic disparities exist. The groups experiencing disparities are also disproportionately affected by COVID-19, at risk for serious illness from COVID-19, and/or at high risk for complications from influenza infection.

In February 2021, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) launched a grant program, *Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Adult Immunization*, providing funding and technical assistance to national, state, and local community-based organizations. Made available by CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases' (NCIRD) Immunization Services Division (ISD), the program invests in new and existing partnerships to support tailored COVID-19 vaccine awareness, access, and confidence activities among various populations and communities in the U.S. The program will also support similar activities for the 2021–2022 influenza season and continue to engage national and community-based partners in this work in the years ahead.

The proposed strategy for CDC to fund organizations at the community level includes funding four national organizations: CDC Foundation, Community Catalyst, RF Catalytic Capital, Inc. and Urban Institute. These four recipients are releasing this jointly developed request for proposals (RFP). Prospective applicants are strongly advised to only apply one time through one of these partners' RFPs. On the application form, an applicant can provide consent for their organization's proposal to be shared across the four partners for funding consideration. The CDC program funding provides an opportunity for an extensive partnership network of awardees to broadly promote vaccination and confidence messaging, while leveraging peer insights and authoritative data resources to inform program activities in diverse racial and ethnic communities. These efforts will enhance the resource and evidence base and provide a way forward to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in adult immunization.

Funding Opportunity

The goal of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to support efforts to increase influenza and COVID-19 vaccine confidence and uptake for adults in racial and/or ethnic populations experiencing disparities in the United States. The CDC Foundation will fund an estimated 100 community based organizations (CBOs) to: (1) Equip influential messengers by providing trainings and materials; (2) Increase vaccination opportunities and enhance provider partnerships; and (3) Establish partnerships with state and local health departments.

Awardees of this funding opportunity will participate in a larger learning community, which provides access to subject matter experts, group learning opportunities, peer sharing sessions, materials, relationship building, and one-on-one coaching designed to support awardees in conducting activities to increase vaccine confidence and access within priority populations. The learning community will be made up of a large and diverse cohort of national, state, local, and community-based organizations, all working to address health disparities and advance equity in the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. Awardees will also have the opportunity and be encouraged to share lessons learned, success stories, expertise, materials, and solutions through their participation in the learning community.

The [*National Strategy for the COVID-19 Response and Pandemic Preparedness*](#) highlighted that “the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed and exacerbated severe and pervasive health inequities among communities defined by race, ethnicity, geography, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other factors.”¹ In addition, long-standing systemic health and social inequities have put many people from racial and ethnic groups at increased risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19². Evidence increasingly shows that some racial and ethnic groups are being disproportionately affected by COVID-19².

[*Vaccinate with Confidence*](#) is CDC’s strategic framework to strengthen vaccine confidence and prevent outbreaks of Vaccine Preventable Diseases in the United States³. The Framework advances three key priorities:

- **Protect Communities** by supporting states, cities, and counties to find under-vaccinated communities and take steps to protect them.
- **Empower Families** by expanding resources for health care professionals to support effective vaccine conversations with parents and community members.
- **Stop Myths** by working with local partners and trusted messengers to improve confidence in vaccines among at-risk groups.

This funding opportunity aims to address health disparities and advance health equity in communities of color. Through this funding opportunity, support will be provided for CBOs to develop and implement effective health communication and community engagement strategies designed to increase COVID-19 and influenza vaccine confidence and acceptance in communities of color who are at increased risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19 and influenza. Below is a list of illustrative activities that might be supported under this funding opportunity:

References

1 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/National-Strategy-for-the-COVID-19-Response-and-Pandemic-Preparedness.pdf>

2 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/race-ethnicity.html>

3 <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/partners/vaccinate-with-confidence.html>

- Identify and train trusted community-level spokespersons (e.g., faith leaders, teachers, community health workers, radio DJs, local shop owners, barbers) to communicate the burdens of influenza and COVID-19 and the importance of influenza and COVID-19 vaccination through local media outlets, social media, faith-based venues, community events, and other community-based, culturally appropriate venues.
- Develop or adapt and implement social media campaign strategies to mitigate and address influenza vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine misinformation and disinformation.
- Develop and tailor education and outreach materials and/or leverage materials from the program and other recipients and CBOs involved in the program.
- Connect vaccination providers with places of worship, community organizations, recreation programs, food banks/pantries, schools and colleges/universities, grocery stores, salons/barber shops/beauticians, major employers, elder housing locations and other key community institutions to set up temporary and/or mobile influenza and COVID-19 vaccination sites, especially in communities experiencing disparities.
- Build partnerships with health care providers to increase provider understanding of the populations of interest and interventions to increase vaccination rates for these populations. Advocate for dialysis centers, prenatal care centers, well-baby care clinics, family planning clinics, dentists' offices, nursing homes, COVID-19 testing sites, and other specific provider sites or programs to deliver influenza vaccines where patients are already seeking care for themselves or their family members.
- Work with vaccination service providers to expand the types of health professionals (e.g., community health workers, patient navigators, patient advocates) and administrative staff (e.g., front desk workers) engaged in promoting vaccination and increasing referrals of individuals to influenza and COVID-19 vaccination sites.
- Provide technology literacy trainings to support increased understanding of virtual technologies commonly employed to schedule vaccination appointments (e.g., how-to guides and events on using Zoom and other virtual meeting technologies)
- Collaborate with state and local health departments – state immunization programs in particular – on mobile influenza and COVID-19 vaccination clinics, education campaigns, and other vaccination activities in communities experiencing disparities.

Deliverables

All awardees will be expected to complete the following activities and deliverables below:

- Provide brief monthly progress reports on basic activity metrics (see below list of potential indicators)
- Participate in regularly scheduled conference calls with other awardees and subject matter experts to share progress on activities and discuss lessons learned
- Share sample materials and communication products with the CDC Foundation for dissemination via a soon-to-be developed Resource Hub
- Submit final narrative report to describe: Stakeholder collaboration, successes, challenges, lessons learned, event and activity metrics (i.e.: number of website visitors, hotline callers, virtual event participants, etc.)

Potential indicators include:

- Number and types of local leaders and community members trained
- Number and sub-populations reached by community-level spokespersons
- Percentage of trained community-level spokespersons showing increased competence in implementing training objectives
- Number and types of audience-tested and culturally appropriate messages promoting COVID-19 vaccination
- Number and types of people reached by social media messaging promoting COVID-19 vaccination
- Number and types of events/campaigns held to promote COVID-19 vaccination
- Number and types of people reached by events/campaigns promoting COVID-19 vaccination
- Survey: Number and degree to which people’s vaccination sentiments changed
- Number of referred vaccination recipients
- Survey: Increased awareness of vaccine opportunities
- Number of referred individuals vs actual vaccination recipients
- Number of vaccination venues supported
- Number of individuals reached by activities (i.e. number of individuals attending listening sessions, number of communications campaigns launched, etc.)

Timeline

April 12, 2021	RFP Release
April 19, 2021	Applicant Conference Call
May 3, 2021	RFP Submission Deadline
May 17, 2021	Selection Notification
May 17-31, 2021	Finalize Agreements and Transfer of Initial Funding
June 1, 2021	Anticipated Project Implementation Start Date
TBD	Project Kickoff Call
June 1, 2021- April 14, 2022	Implementation period of up to 10.5 months

**Please note that the timeline is subject to change*

Funds Available

CDC Foundation intends to award an estimated 100 subawards ranging from \$50,000 - \$100,000 per funded project. The final award amount is contingent on submission of a detailed and reasonable budget proposal to be approved by the CDC Foundation. Based on funding availability and performance, funded projects may request and receive costed extensions to continue activities beyond the current Year 1 end date of April 14, 2022.

SECTION II: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) or under an IRS code other than 501(c)(3). Examples of CBOs can include faith-based organizations, vaccine advocacy organizations, public health focused associations, and civic and social organizations that have the capacity to educate and engage communities of color. Colleges, universities, hospitals, or health systems or their fiscal sponsors are not eligible for funding under this project.

SECTION III. APPLICATION INFORMATION

Application Content and Form

The below information will be requested on the application form that can be accessed at this link: [Supporting Community-Based Organizations to Increase Vaccine Coverage](#)

1. Organization Information
 - Organization Name, Address, Website, and Mission
 - EIN/Tax ID
 - DUNS Number - To request a DUNS number, visit <https://www.dnb.com/duns-number/get-a-duns.html>
 - Non-profit status
 - Year established
2. Project Description
 - Project Title and Problem Statement with Objective(s)
 - Geographical information (implementation cities, counties, states, zip codes/census tracts). See below section on Applicant Resources for additional data.
 - Describe demographics and characteristics of the target populations in the community.
 - Describe the proposed strategies/activities.
 - Describe experience in engaging community stakeholders in the development of community-driven, culturally appropriate initiatives.
 - Describe prior experience or progress with providing science-based information to at risk populations.
 - Describe how your organization will engage the community through all aspects of the project. Community partners could include health care providers, community health center outreach teams, mutual aid organizations, faith community leaders, civic leaders, vaccination sites, or others.
 - Describe how your organization will collaborate to achieve project objectives. With whom will you collaborate and how?
3. Outputs/Outcomes
 - Estimated number of individuals who will be reached by the proposed activities.
 - Describe direct, tangible results of activities.
 - Describe changes anticipated to occur in people or conditions as a result of the activities and outputs by the end of the grant term.
4. Budget and Budget Narrative

- Provide a detailed budget with supporting narrative for all anticipated costs not to exceed \$100,000 with an expected implementation period of June 1, 2021 through April 14, 2022. If the proposed implementation period will start later, please develop your budget to accurately reflect activities based on your proposed start and end dates. Please note that budgets may not run past April 14, 2022. The requested project funds can include the following costs: Salary, Fringe Benefits, Supplies, Equipment, Travel (meal and incidental expenses), Contractual, Other Direct Costs and Indirect Costs. For Indirect costs, an organization must submit documentation of their Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), otherwise the maximum allowable indirect rate is 10%.
- Please use the [Budget Narrative Template](#) that is provided on the CDC Foundation RFP website. The budget narrative should conform with the [CDC Budget Preparation Guidelines](#).
- Upload a copy of your organization's annual budget and most recent audited financial statement (Note: If one is not available, upload a copy of your most recent annual report).

Submitting a Proposal

Application materials should be submitted by **12:00pm EDT on Monday, May 3, 2021** through the **online application form - [Supporting Community-Based Organizations to Increase Vaccine Coverage](#)**. Notification of receipt of the application will be sent.

SECTION IV: APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA

Domain	Selection Criteria	Score
<p>Organizational Mission, Populations Served and Past Experience</p>	<p>Project title, problem statement and objectives</p> <p>Description of demographics and relevant health characteristics of the at-risk populations in the community.</p> <p>Demonstrated experience in engaging community stakeholders in the development of community-driven, culturally appropriate initiatives.</p> <p>Prior experience or progress with providing science-based information to at risk populations.</p>	<p>25 Points</p>
<p>Well-defined Community Engagement Approach and Activities (Project Plan)</p>	<p>Feasibility of proposed plan.</p> <p>Detailed proposed strategies, activities, and timeline for completing work.</p> <p>Description of how your organization will engage the community through all aspects of the project.</p> <p>Description of how and with whom organization will collaborate to achieve project objectives.</p>	<p>25 Points</p>

Clear outputs, outcomes, and impact (M&E)	Detailed deliverables specific to the proposed project. Estimate number of individuals who will be reached by the proposed activities Description of populations that will be reached (race/ethnicity, age, special needs) Describe direct, tangible results of activities Description of changes anticipated to occur in people or conditions as a result of the implemented activities and outputs by the end of the grant term.	25 Points
Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative	Detailed budget and narrative that follows the CDC Budget Preparation Guidelines	25 points
		100 points

Review and Selection Process

Completed eligible applications submitted by the **May 3, 2021** deadline will be evaluated and scored in accordance with the review criteria stated above. All applicants will receive a notification of whether their proposal was selected for funding. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified as to whether their application is under review by another Prime Partner. The CDC Foundation will not provide scores or specific review feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

SECTION V. APPLICANT CONFERENCE CALL

The CDC Foundation will host an applicant conference call to answer questions related to this RFP on **April 19, 2021 from 2:00pm – 3:00pm EDT**. Applicants are encouraged to submit questions by 12:00pm EDT on April 19, 2021, via email at RFPQuestions@cdcfoundation.org. The submitted questions and responses will be shared on the conference call and made available on the CDC Foundation’s website on the RFP page following the call.

Please register in advance for the meeting:

https://cdcfoundation.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEtf--rqzMtHdR_1cqygQzevUVzTQCYhIXr

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

SECTION VI. APPLICANT RESOURCES

The CDC Foundation encourages applicants to review the following resources to help inform and prepare an application:

- [CDC Social Vulnerability Index](#) - Uses 15 U.S. census variables to help local officials identify communities that may need support before, during, or after disasters. This resource can help CBOs identify vulnerable communities.
- [U.S. COVID Community Vulnerability Index \(CCVI\)](#) - Surgo Ventures created the COVID-19 Community Vulnerability Index to leverage the power of data to understand how and why communities are vulnerable. Site offers data on COVID cases, deaths, testing, hotspots and the relationship to vulnerability.
- [Funding Restrictions](#) - Items that cannot be supported with this federal funding.
- [CDC Budget Preparation Guidelines](#)
- [Racism and Health](#) is CDC's new web portal designed to be a hub for public and scientific discourse on the subject.
- [CDC's COVID Data Tracker](#) provides maps and charts tracking cases, deaths and trends of COVID-19 in the United States and is updated daily.