

Washington State Department of Health Request for Application (RFA)

Application Title: Birth Equity Project Community Engagement Facilitator

Estimated Funding Range: Maximum amount: \$25,000 per award

Expected Number of Awards: One (1) – Three (3)

Expected Period of Performance: February 15, 2022 – April 15, 2022

Funding Purpose

The Washington State Department of Health is seeking one or more facilitators to guide future funding opportunities for community-based perinatal health improvement projects. The facilitator(s) will work in collaboration with DOH's Perinatal Health program staff to seek guidance from priority populations on the focus of the upcoming funding opportunity, through activities such as conducting key informant interviews or connecting with existing coalitions serving the priority populations. The facilitator(s) will be expected to gain input from Black/African American, Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaska Native communities, since the health of these communities will be the focus of the future funding opportunity. DOH is seeking input on priorities that include, but are not limited to, geographic focus, cultural and linguistic approaches, evidence-based or community-informed interventions, subpopulations, or organization type. DOH is also seeking input on the process for the RFA, including on aspects such as applicant review committee criteria and components of the RFA itself (e.g., letters of intent, site visits, interviews with applicants, etc.).

Background

Maternal health, birth outcomes, and infant mortality rates in a population are associated with factors such as quality medical care access, health status, and public health policies and practices, as well as social, economic, environmental, and political conditions that influence health. In 2019, Washington state's Native American/Alaska Native population had the highest infant mortality rate, at 10.3 per 1,000 live births, followed by Non-Hispanic (NH) Black/African American communities at 9.3 per 1,000 live births, and the Pacific Islander population at 6.8 per 1,000 live births. The infant mortality rate in white populations was 4.1 per 1,000 live births (2019). These disparities have been relatively constant over the past two decades in Washington, and they result from a long history of racism and inequitable institutional and systemic practices.

The Washington State Department of Health Birth Equity Project was developed to invest in community programming to improve birth outcomes for Black/African American, Pacific Islander, and American Indian and Alaska Native women and infants in Washington state. Funding was initially awarded through a competitive request for application (RFA) process in 2019, and DOH is preparing to release a second open RFA process in 2022.

This new funding opportunity will be awarded to at least three (3) organizations serving Black/African American, Pacific Islander, and American Indian and Alaska Native women and infants in Washington state. To develop this funding opportunity, DOH is seeking input from the statewide birthing community.

Key Deliverables by April 1, 2022

- Establish an equitable, inclusive process to help identify Birth Equity Project funding priorities
- Develop an engagement plan to conduct key informant interviews, listening sessions, or both with priority populations
- Identify existing coalitions and networks serving the priority populations, to connect with for guidance
- Develop the final report with recommendations to be shared with DOH

Desired traits and experience

- Demonstrated commitment, familiarity, or lived experience with at least one of the three priority populations. DOH recognizes that within these communities, there are numerous racial and ethnic groups, with different health outcomes and experiences within the health care system. In your application, please explain your connection to these priority populations as specifically as possible, highlighting the racial or ethnic group with whom you work most closely.
 - Black birthing community
 - This could include individuals with origins in any of the Black racial or ethnic communities of Africa or the Caribbean, as well as African Americans.
 - Pacific Islander birthing community
 - This could include individuals with origins in any of the original peoples of Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
 - American Indian and Alaska Native birthing community
 - This could include individuals with origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America—including Central America—and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- Experience as a liaison between government systems and community groups
- Understanding of the impact of structural racism on maternal and infant health outcomes
- Experience identifying and convening community members
- Ability to align and synthesize community feedback for use in decision making

Contract

Contract funding up to \$25,000. DOH will provide funding for community participation that is not included in this contract.

Funding

- Applicants may apply for a grant of up to two (2) months. The estimated period of award is February 15 – April 15, 2022.
- Funds are not to exceed twenty-five thousand (\$25,000) for the grant period (February 15 – April 15, 2022).
- Allowable expenditures include:
 - Salaries, benefits, goods, and services
 - In-state travel related to activities required in the statement of work (documented transportation and lodging expenses plus per diem and mileage at [Washington state rates](#)).
- Non-allowable costs include:
 - Funds for research
 - Clinical care, except as allowed by law
 - Reimbursement of pre-award costs, unless DOH provides written approval to the recipient
 - Generally, recipients may not use funds to purchase furniture or equipment. Any

- o such proposed spending must be clearly identified in the budget.
- o Other than for normal and recognized executive–legislative relationships, no funds may be used for:
 - publicity or propaganda purposes to prepare, distribute, or use any material designed to support or defeat the enactment of legislation before any legislative body.
 - the salary or expenses of any grant or contract recipient, or agent acting for such recipient, related to any activity designed to influence the enactment of legislation, appropriations, regulation, administrative action, or Executive order proposed or pending before any legislative body.

Electronic Funds Transfer

The State of Washington prefers to use electronic payment in its transactions. The successful contractor will be expected to register as a [statewide vendor](#) (if not currently registered). This allows contractors to receive payments from all participating state agencies by direct deposit, the State’s preferred method of payment.

Informational Call

DOH will hold an informational call on Wednesday, January 5, 2022 from 9:00– 10:00 a.m. This is an opportunity for interested applicants to ask any clarifying questions about the RFA and application process. Applicants can also email any questions or concerns to Caroline.Sedano@doh.wa.gov

Topic: **Birth Equity Project Community Engagement Facilitator Informational Call**
 Time: Wednesday, January 5, 2022 from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89574452052?pwd=aURHbzdhSLAwTzQ5eWxLTTY2Z0FIUT09>
 Meeting ID: 895 7445 2052
 Passcode: 153637
 One tap mobile +12532158782,,89574452052#,,,,*153637# US (Tacoma)

Submission of Applications

Please send the completed application with all attachments to Caroline.Sedano@doh.wa.gov no later than **Friday, January 14, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.** Please use the application checklist to ensure all materials are included with your submission. For all submission materials, please use 12-point font and follow the page limits listed below.

Application Timeline

This schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the Washington State Department of Health (DOH). DOH must be in receipt of all required documents by the due dates and times specified.

Application Release Date	Friday, December 17, 2021
Informational Call	Wednesday, January 5, 2022, 9:00 a.m.
Application Due Date	Friday, January 14, 2022, 5:00 p.m.
Estimated DOH Internal Review	Monday, January 20, 2022 – January 31, 2022
Estimated Notification of Contract Awards	February 1, 2022
Anticipated Contract Start Date	February 15, 2022
Anticipated Period of Award	February 15, 2022 – April 15, 2022
Email applications and questions to	Caroline Sedano Caroline.Sedano@doh.wa.gov

Application Evaluation

An evaluation committee made up of DOH staff and community representatives will be established to judge the merit of eligible applications. Applicants will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria	Points
Experience utilizing a culturally responsive and health-equity-centered approach while working with at least one of the following: Black/African American birthing communities, Pacific Islander birthing communities, or American Indian/Alaska Native birthing communities, through community engagement efforts, project development, and other collaborations	35
Ability to synthesize community feedback from representatives of priority populations into an actionable report	25
Workforce capacity, including leadership support, reflective of at least one of the following: Black /African American communities, Pacific Islander communities, or American Indian/Alaska Native communities	25
Letters of support (this can include an organization you plan to partner with for this project or a partner you've worked with in the past)	15
TOTAL POINTS	100

Application Checklist

Send all forms to Caroline.Sedano@doh.wa.gov. Please use the included Exhibit forms to complete the application: Applicant Information Form (Exhibit 1), Project Work Plan (Exhibit 3), and Budget Narrative (Exhibit 4). The Project Narrative (Exhibit 2) does not have a set template, but should be written in 12-point font. If there are any technical issues using the included Exhibit forms, applicants can use another format, but it must include all elements included in the Exhibit forms.

- Complete Applicant Information Form (Exhibit 1)
- Complete a Project Narrative describing the project (no more than five (5) pages using the outline provided in Exhibit 2)
- Complete the Project Work Plan template (Exhibit 3) describing the specific goals, activities, and timeline for the project
- Complete the Budget Narrative (Exhibit 4) for your project

Applicant Information

1. Name of Organization:
2. Primary Mailing Address:
3. Telephone Number:
4. Tax Identification Number (TIN):
5. UBI Number:
6. Primary Contact Person Name and Title:
 Email Address:
 Phone Number:
7. Secondary Contact Person Name and Title:
 Email Address:
 Phone Number:

Project Narrative

Maximum of five (5) pages; 12-point font

Applicants must write a narrative addressing the topics below. When writing your narrative, please use the headings below in bold, in the same order they are listed below.

- **Application Focus:** Please indicate which community or communities your organization will involve in your engagement and outreach strategy. Check all that apply—but ensure you can address each application question for each community identified. DOH recognizes that within these communities, there are numerous racial and ethnic groups, with different health outcomes and experiences within the health care system. In your application, please explain your connection to these priority populations as specifically as possible, highlighting the racial or ethnic group with whom you work most closely.
 - Black birthing community
 - This could include individuals with origins in any of the Black racial communities of Africa or the Caribbean, as well as African Americans.
 - Pacific Islander birthing community
 - This could include individuals with origins in any of the original peoples of Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
 - American Indian and Alaska Native birthing community
 - This could include individuals with origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America—including Central America—and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- 1. **Professional Background:** Describe your experience partnering with existing community-based coalitions or networks. Include any relevant experience with community engagement working with one or more of the following:
 - Black birthing community (This could include individuals with origins in any of the Black racial communities of Africa or the Caribbean, as well as African Americans.)
Please keep your answers to 300 words:

 - Pacific Islander birthing community (This could include individuals with origins in any of the original peoples of Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.)
Please keep your answers to 300 words:

- American Indian and Alaska Native birthing community (This could include individuals with origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America—including Central America—and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.)

Please keep your answers to 300 words:

2. **Organizational Capacity & Staffing:** What are the responsibilities of the staff who will work on the project? Include a brief summary of your agency’s mission and a description of how your organization meets the desired qualifications:
 - a. Understanding of the impact of structural racism on maternal and infant health outcomes
 - b. Demonstrated commitment to communities of color and historically marginalized groups. Include how this is reflected in the demographics of organizational staff working on this project.
 - c. Experience leading equity-driven, anti-racist processes

3. **Partnerships:** Describe the key partnerships relevant to achieving project goals. Include length of time spent working with these partners, and how working with these partners aligns with your agency’s goals and mission.
 - a. Include as least one letter of support from key partners.

Partnership #1

Partnership #2

4. **Project Approach:** Describe your planned approach to include:
 - Strategies and tactics to identify community members and groups. Detail the number of community leaders or groups you plan to connect with, and how these contacts will contribute to the project.
 - Cultural responsiveness and health equity
 - Plan for summarizing findings into an actionable report to be used by DOH
 - Adaptations made for community engagement during COVID-19 health restrictions, as well as accessibility accommodations

Project Work Plan
Maximum of two (2) pages

Please use this template to describe the specific goals, activities, and timeline for the project. Be as specific as possible with goals and activities. Please include at least two (2) goals. These goals could include achieving the following elements of the project:

- Goal #1: Gather input from Black, Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native birthing community on DOH Birth Equity funding priorities.
 - Include activities related to identifying community experts or people with lived experience for guidance, methods for outreach or gathering feedback, key informant interviews planned, ways to use social media for engagement, or preexisting community meetings or networks to be contacted.
- Goal #2: Write a final report summarizing community feedback on future DOH funding priorities to advance birth equity in the priority populations, and input on RFA processes.
 - Include activities related to areas such as synthesizing information, summary of what will be included in the report, and turning community input into recommendations.

Goal #1:		
Activities	Person/Agency Responsible	Start/End Dates
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

Goal #2:		
Activities	Person/Agency Responsible	Start/End Dates
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

Budget Narrative

Please review the RFA for allowable expenditures. DOH will request a more detailed budget and justification after funds have been awarded.

Budget Category	Total Amount Requested	Brief Justification (2–4 sentences)
Personnel, salaries, and wages		
Incentives for community participation		
Supplies		
In-state travel (if applicable)		
Other expenses		
Total amount requested		