

Questions and Answers

Issued Date: May 17, 2024

Solicitation Title: Community Innovation Grants

Addition(s)/Change(s)/Clarification(s):

- Change in Solicitation Response Due Date
- Change in Terms and Conditions
- Other

Please Note the Following Addition(s)/Change(s)/Clarification(s):

1. One of the agencies I engage with sees adolescents for restorative dental care who do not have insurance. Does this count as eligible for Access to Health Care Services -People without health insurance?
A: Yes
2. Can current grantees apply again?
A: Eligible organizations may receive funding from the Community Innovation Grants for Racial and Health Equity once per calendar year per project. You may apply for a different project, but not the same as the one that is currently funded.
3. We just recently received word that we were granted the Ramsey County Opioid Response Grant from Ramsey County. The Opioid grant goes towards our intervention programming for youth with SUD's, while funding from the Community Innovation Grant would go towards the prevention programming that we are pursuing to provide racial and health equity for our Karen and Karenni communities. Is it possible to still pursue this upcoming grant if we have a separate grant from Ramsey County?
A: Yes, as long as the application addresses one of the CHIP Priority Areas included in this funding opportunity: Racial and Health Equity; Healthy Eating, Active Living and Tobacco-Free Living; Access to Health Care Services; Mental Health and Well-being; or Violence Prevention
4. Must the audience served reside in Ramsey County? Or does the proposer need to have an address in Ramsey County?
A: Grantees must provide services to or support programming that benefits Ramsey County residents. The awardee does not need to have an address in Ramsey County.
5. Is there a similar program in Hennepin County?
A: Unknown
6. Are the 8 priority areas like steps in order by priority or are they all equal priority?
A: There are only 5 Priority Areas included in this funding opportunity. They are all equal priority.

7. How long has this fund been administered? And can we see a list of past awardees along with the description of their programs or projects?

A: The first round of this project was 2023-2024. Current grantees are listed on our [website](#).

8. Is there a maximum page length for the proposal?

A: No

9. I only see 5 priorities listed in the application. Does the RFP only focus on a subset of CHIP priorities?

A: Yes, this round of funding is focusing on only 5 of the CHIP priorities: Racial and Health Equity; Healthy Eating, Active Living and Tobacco-Free Living; Access to Health Care Services; Mental Health and Well-being; or Violence Prevention

10. Besides the completed application form, are there any other documents that need to be submitted?

A: Not at the time of submission. If awarded, there will be a contract negotiation period in which the selected grantee will be required to submit a detailed/narrative budget, a detailed workplan with a timeline, and possible other documents. It may vary per grantee.

11. If you receive an advance, does the balance of the grant come at the completion of the project, or in stages? How does the payment process work?

A: Advance funds are available at the start of the contract term. Ramsey County will work with the grantee to establish a "spenddown" timeline, during which the grantee will submit documentation to detail the advanced funds. The grantee will be able to submit monthly invoice to document additional expenses. Invoices will be paid as a reimbursement.

12. Is there a date by which projects must be completed?

A: Contracts will be a 12-month term. All work must be completed by the contract end date.

13. Can a publisher or broadcaster participate in the grant for outreach purposes?

A: Yes, if the activities support one of the CHIP priorities. Community Outreach would fall under the Planning and Development activity area.

14. What other funding sources from Ramsey County on climate change are available?

A: One item from Ramsey County Environmental Health is the Deconstruction grants, designed to keep construction materials out of the landfill: <https://recyclingandenergy.org/deconstruction/>

Food Recovery grants: <https://bizrecycling.com/grants/food-recovery-grant/>

The Climate Equity Action Plan will provide micro-grants for community-led climate action in the county. The timeline for these activities is not yet established. The full plan can be found [here](#).

15. Are we able to apply for a grant for a project we are currently doing?

A: Yes, if these funds will enhance your activities and meet the CHIP Priority Areas and stated Activity Areas.

16. Of the 5 CHIP priority areas, is it possible to know which areas had more applicants last time around?

A: The 2023-2024 grantees are listed on our [website](#), with detail about their chosen Priority Area(s).

17. What is the source of the funds for these grants? Could the funds be used for match requirements on a government grant to build capacity?
A: These are county levy funds that have been approved by the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners as “community engagement” funds. Yes they may be used for match requirements.
18. Is it acceptable for the work plan to include activities considered both capacity building and planning/development or do we need to choose one?
A: Applicants may choose more than one Activity Category.
19. Is it preferable to have projects fit into one priority area?
A: Each organization may only submit ONE application and may only select ONE Priority Area.
20. If we intend to use the grant for capacity building and/or planning and development, can we assume that the expectations around “providing services” and outcomes like “numbers served” and “description of services residents were linked to” would not be relevant if we are not planning to provide direct services during this phase? Essentially, will the expectations and outcomes be measured to align with the activity category we select?
A: Yes, outcomes and measures will be aligned with the Activity Category(ies) selected. Provide anticipated performance measures and outcomes in your application narrative.
21. If we are asking for the 25% advance, would the 12-month time frame begin then or in August?
A: The start date will be determined by when the contract is officially signed. No work can begin before the contract is in place. The end date will be 12 months after the start date. The advance funds do not have any impact on the contract start and end date.
22. In terms of the criteria and expectations, can you say more about what the “ongoing monitoring activities and information training as necessary” might include, both in terms of the frequency and scope? What kind of time commitment might this entail?
A: Those details will be established individually with each grantee. It may include monthly meetings throughout the contract term, or it may include more frequent meetings at the beginning of the contract term and taper off over time. It will be determined individually.
23. Can you say more about the scope and expectations related to the “up to four written reports” that are required?
A: Those details will be established individually with each grantee. Reporting may include quarterly updates. Ramsey County will provide more guidance and/or templates to each grantee.
24. Can you choose and mix from each category to a specific target population?
A: Each organization may only submit ONE application and may only select ONE Priority Area. However, the application can focus on multiple Activity Categories within the selected Priority Area.
25. Is there any competitive advantage to proposing a new project, or continuing work on an existing project? Or is it more about the impact?
A: New projects or existing projects are weighted equally. Please provide detail about the anticipated impact and outcomes.
26. Are there restrictions on what funding can be used for? For example, any limitations on using funding for health care supplies or equipment like vaccines?

A: Budget expenditures must be in line with project goals and activities. The application requires a budget summary. If awarded, grantees will be required to submit a detailed budget summary during the contract negotiation period.

27. What happens if a group is chosen initially but their work plan and/or budget don't make sense? Do you pick another applicant from the list?

A: Once a grantee is awarded, they will be required to submit a detailed work plan, timeline and a detailed budget summary during the contract negotiation period. The Project Coordinator will have regular meetings with grantees, and ongoing conversations about the work plan and budget. If the activities change over time, it will be addressed via an amended work plan and budget, as long as the activities and expenses continue to support the original goal(s) of the application.

28. Are religious organizations eligible to apply?

A: Yes. Applicants must be an organization registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State or have a relationship with a fiscal agent. If you use a fiscal agent, you must provide the fiscal agent's name, contact information, and a letter of support from the fiscal agent.

29. A representative from our organization couldn't attend either of the pre-proposal sessions. Were any of them recorded? If yes, where would I find the recording(s)?

A: The sessions were not recorded. All of the questions posed during the session are included in this document with answers. The PowerPoint slides are posted on our website under [application documents](#).

30. Are for-profit organizations able to apply for the grant?

A: Yes.

31. We're interested in helping tackle Goal 4: Mental Health and Wellbeing. We've previously partnered with Human Resources to provide professional development training for Ramsey County employees. We would like to propose that we partner with Ramsey County's Human Resources Department, benefits team and Race and Health Equity Department to execute our proposed "Well-being @ Work" program. Would that be permitted under the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), criteria and focus?

A: Applicants must provide services to or support programming that benefits Ramsey County residents, not Ramsey County employees.

32. We are a small business enterprise certified under the Central Certification Program (CERT) that has previously contracted with Ramsey County. Would that have an adverse effect on our evaluation criteria?

A: No.

33. Is there a specific font and size that you want us to use for the Innovation Grant application?

A: No.

34. In the CHIP document, there are specific health measures and outcomes for each priority area. Do proposals have to match these more specific outcomes or can proposed projects focus on other measures and outcomes that align with the priority area? For example, could access to quality prenatal care or early childhood development screening be considered in alignment with the Access to Healthcare Services priority?

A: Yes, those examples would be in alignment with Access to Health Care Services. Please provide detail in your application that describes activities that will impact anticipated outcomes.

35. Similarly for the Racial and Health Equity priority, the CHIP seems to be focused more internally on building Ramsey County employee and institutional capacity around racial/health equity. Are proposals in this priority area limited by this focus or can racial and health equity be interpreted more broadly— i.e., community-based health equity projects that focus on a specific population to improve health outcomes and/or advance systems change?

A: Yes, applications should provide detail about the community/communities (focus population(s)) that you plan to serve.

Definitions:

- **Racial equity** is a process of eliminating racial disparities and improving outcomes for everyone. It is the intentional and continual practice of changing policies, practices, systems, and structures by prioritizing measurable change in the lives of people of color.
- **Health equity** is the state in which everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their highest level of health. Achieving this requires ongoing societal efforts to:
 - Address historical and contemporary injustices.
 - Overcome economic, social, and other obstacles to health and health care.
 - Eliminate preventable health disparities.

36. Does the organization applying needs to be a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization or just needs to be registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State?

A: Applicants may be for-profit or non-profit.

37. Can media organization apply this grant if we want to create outreach programs in Somalia with info videos and community forums that address gun violence, mental health and healthy eating? Can for profit media company also apply for this grant if they are registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State?

A: Yes, Community Outreach would fall under the Planning and Development activity area. Applicants may be for-profit or non-profit.

38. Are organizations eligible to apply for the Ramsey County CHIP – Community Innovation grant if the applicant organization is not located in Ramsey County but the proposed work/project will be entirely within Ramsey County?

A: Grantees must provide services to or support programming that benefits Ramsey County residents. The awardee does not need to have an address in Ramsey County.

39. We are partnering with community organizations in Ramsey County to provide education and support to Latine Minnesotans with epilepsy. The clinics are based in Ramsey County, and we know that the majority of their patients live in Ramsey County. However, some of their patients may not live in Ramsey County. If we provided an event at Ramsey County clinic or formed a partnership to serve patients at a Ramsey County clinic and we ended up serving patients who do not live in Ramsey County, is that allowable? Or would we need to restrict attendance only to Ramsey County residents? Also, would a

virtual event hosted in partnership with a Ramsey County clinic (but may be attended by a patient who does not live in Ramsey County) be eligible for support?

A: As long as the primary focus of your activities will provide services to or support programming that benefits Ramsey County residents, it's fine to have a few participants who fall outside of that perimeter. With virtual events, we ask that you focus on Ramsey County residents via promotion or marketing of the event.

40. We purchase our food in bulk and place them into meal bags to distribute to students and distribute around 12,000 meal bags each week. We track the cost/bag and amount of bags distributed, so in financial reporting for reimbursement would be able to provide all of that information as a bag, but our receipts of the food we purchase would not match exactly what is going towards the costs in our proposal. Would the number of bags distributed to the schools in our proposal and the cost/bag be specific enough information for financial reporting purposes?

A: Each grantee will be offered an invoice template, created by the Project Coordinator, to be submitted for reimbursement. The Project Coordinator will work with the grantee to determine the detail of the document, building from the submitted budget. In the scenario described, a cost per bag would be sufficient, with narrative to detail the bulk purchases. It would also be possible to submit the bulk receipt as supporting documentation with a narrative that says, XX dollars or XX percent is being included in the current invoice.

41. How is staff time tracked? Can you give a percentage of time that goes to the schools in this proposal and calculate it from that or do you need staff to record timecards down to the minute of time for this project?

A: Reporting of staff hours varies with each Grantee. It could be a full FTE, it could be a percentage, it could be a detailed document reporting hours per person. If awarded, that detail will be finalized and agreed upon during the contract negotiation period.

42. Do you require demographic information (race, socioeconomic status, etc.) of participants in reporting?

A: Yes, depending on the Activity Areas selected in your application, you may be asked to provide performance measures or outcomes reporting that includes, for example, the number of Ramsey County residents served by age, race, ethnicity, location, zip code, etc.

43. Are there any restrictions on grant spending? For example, if we wanted to pilot new nutrition/health cooking workshops for youth and families at one of our St. Paul locations, would curriculum development, staff time, supplies, and food be eligible expenses?

A: Yes, those are all eligible expenses. Budget expenditures must be in line with project goals and activities. The application requires a budget summary. If awarded, grantees will be required to submit a detailed budget summary during the contract negotiation period.

All Addendum(s) are to be acknowledged on the Solicitation Cover Page to be included with your submission. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY RESULT IN REJECTION OF THE SOLICITATION RESPONSE. Unless otherwise specified above, the Solicitation Response due date and time all other Terms and Conditions remain the same.

Sincerely,

Procurement Specialist

Ramsey County representatives recommending this Addendum acknowledge that all Ramsey County solicitation policies and procedures have been followed.