

BWFH Community Health Impact Funds

Mental and Behavioral Health Letter of Intent (LOI) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Questions and Answers 11 through 18 were added on 11/15/2023. Question 19 added on 11/22/2023. Question 2 updated on 1/17/24.

1. Who is eligible to apply?

Only Massachusetts-based not-for-profit organizations and municipalities are eligible for the funds (per MA Department of Public Health requirements).

Internal MGB affiliated community, clinical or research departments are **not** eligible for this funding.

2. What is the timeline for the process?

The proposed timeline is as follows, but subject to change:

- LOI Released: November 1, 2023
- LOI Due: November 29, 2023
- Review of LOIs by the Allocation Committee Members: December 13, 2023
- Allocation Committee Meeting – Final Decisions on LOIs: December 14, 2023
- Notification to Organizations – Moving to Next Round: December 20, 2023
- Invitation and release of the Full Request for Proposal (“RFP”): January 10, 2024
- RFP Responses Due: February 7, 2024
- Goal for Notification of Funding Awards: early to mid-March 2024

3. What are the strategies for mental health that the grants are focused on?

Strategies approved for this funding are upstream, and these investments will lead to downstream impact—influencing health behaviors and outcomes for communities. The strategies include:

- **Strategy 1: Increase Community Health Workers (“CHWs”) and Recovery Coaches.** Through the creation of pipelines, increase the pool of CHWs and Recovery Coaches with specialized mental

health/substance use training who have lived experience,¹ and reflect low-income, immigrant, LGBTQ, and/or older adult populations, as well as communities of color. Through this strategy, community-based organizations will link trained individuals with workforce opportunities.

- **Strategy 2: Community Behavioral Health Services.** Improve access to community behavioral health services through partnerships with community-based organizations. These integrated services are expected to impact the social determinants of health, including housing, employment, education, social environment, built environment, and violence and trauma.
- **Strategy 3: Resource Specialists in the Boston Housing Authority & Schools.** Placing Resource Specialists in Boston Housing Authority (BHA) & Boston Public School (BPS) Sites: Provide funding to place trained behavioral health specialists who have lived experience in BHA and BPS sites.

For example, BPS graduates may be trained in mental health first aid and serve as behavioral health resource specialists in local school systems. Similarly, specialists that may be placed at BHA sites will receive mental health first aid training to create the infrastructure to support BHA residents with behavioral health needs. Community-based organizations who are not currently working with BHA or BPS may apply for this funding – an established relationship is not required. This is only one example of how funds may be used in these settings.

Proposed projects may include one or a combination of strategies.

4. What are the priority neighborhoods?

The grants will focus on the primary service area neighborhoods for Brigham and Women’s Faulkner Hospital. All proposed projects must fully be carried out in one or more of the four noted priority neighborhoods and community members (residing, working, or going to school) in those neighborhoods must benefit from the proposed project.

- Hyde Park
- Roslindale
- Jamaica Plain
- West Roxbury

5. Is there a limit to the amount of funds requested?

At this stage, there is no limit to the amount that can be requested. Each strategy will receive \$500,000 per year – for three years – for a total of \$4.5 million in funding. Matching funds from the applicant are

¹ As defined by the Federal Office of Health and Human Services – Office of Human Services Policy, “People with lived experience are those directly affected by social, health, public health, or other issues and by the strategies that aim to address those issues. This gives them insights that can inform and improve systems, research, policies, practices, and programs (<https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/5840f2f3645ae485c268a2784e1132c5/What-Is-Lived-Experience.pdf>).” In this context the term “Lived Experience” is used broadly and may mean experience living in a certain community, such as based on gender identity, ability, age, and/or race; it may mean experience dealing with behavioral health, including substance use disorder issues; and/or it may mean both of these experiences.

not required for this funding opportunity. Each organization should request an amount that they have the capacity to manage at no more than 25% of their operating budget.

During this phase of the process, the Allocation Committee will gain an understanding of the creative ways organizations and municipalities may invest this funding. Funding limitations might be established during the next phase when invitations go out for the Request for Proposals (RFPs).

6. How do I submit an application for an LOI?

All interested non-profit organizations and municipalities that want to apply for funding must complete the LOI questions via the [Survey Monkey Apply](#) portal by 5pm on November 29, 2023.

You will need to register for an account to gain access.

Late letters of intent will not be accepted.

Alternatively, if you prefer to submit a video application, please submit a less than 5-minute video that responds to all of the LOI questions outlined in the application on the [Survey Monkey Apply](#) portal. Upload and email that video to: tsylven@bwh.harvard.edu. Videos are due by 5 pm on **November 29, 2023**. Late submission videos or those over 5 minutes will not be considered.

7. Can one organization apply for more than one grant?

Yes, organizations can submit more than one LOI if the organizations have several different projects in mind. However, please note that every LOI submitted is competing against all the others in the pool, even against those submitted by its same organization.

8. What are the restrictions on the usage of these funds?

Funds must address social determinants of health (SDOH) and health equity with an upstream (structural/policy) approach to improving community health in the target area.

Non-Allowable Expenditures

1. Medical treatments.
2. Clinical/community linkage programs for existing or future patients.
3. Capital and operating expenses for medical programs.
4. Costs of transportation to/from the hospital and services unless necessary to accomplish objectives of a specific CHI strategy.
5. Reimbursed services, costs associated with developing or expanding interpretive services.
6. Funding support for CHIP coordinating organizations (Boston Collaborative, etc.).

9. Will there be an opportunity to learn more or ask questions?

Yes, we will be holding office hours for potential applicants that have questions on any aspect of the process or application. Office hours will be held during the weeks of November 6 and 13th, 2023. Office hours will be held in 15-minute increments and interested parties may sign up for these sessions at <https://calendly.com/bwfhimpectfunds>.

For more specific questions, feel free to contact **Tracy Sylven** at tsyiven@bwh.harvard.edu

10. What criteria will be considered in the evaluation of the LOI?

The Allocation Committee will be looking for the following criteria in the LOI:

- Is the application complete and on-time?
- Does the project clearly address one or more of the strategies?
- Is the project 100% dedicated to the priority neighborhoods as identified in the description?
- Is the project upstream and impact a policy, system, or other change?
- Does the project address equity by benefitting disenfranchised groups?
- Does the applicant group or organization reflect the capacity to manage and implement the project?
- Does the project outline collaboration and/or community engagement?

NOTE: Questions and Answers 11 through 18 were added on 11/15/2023.

11. Are indirect/overhead costs allowed in the budget?

Yes, but only 10% or below so that the dollars are the most impactful on the communities.

12. What does the question on Technical Assistance mean on the LOI?

This question is meant to inquire if anyone has a need for assistance in completing the application. If you need help, please see the [SMApply Guide here](#).

13. Will an MOU be required for partnerships in full proposal?

Letters of support will likely be required.

14. What will be the evaluation requirement?

We will hire an outside evaluator that will assist organizations that are funded to meet the evaluation requirements.

15. What is the timeline to start project after award notification?

No more than a 90-day planning phase is acceptable.

16. Are organizations outside of the 4 priority neighborhoods eligible to apply?

They are as long as 100% of the funds are used to serve the needs of the residents/students in one or more of the four neighborhoods (Hyde Park, Roslindale, Jamaica Plain and West Roxbury).

17. Can proposals be partially awarded?

Yes.

18. How will organizations know what other entities are applying for collaboration purposes?

Once the deadline has passed for the Letter of Intent (LOI), Brigham and Women's Faulkner Hospital staff will determine how the hospital will bring together applicants that have synergies – this may be done via an applicant Zoom meeting or a list of potential applicants and a short summary of their projects.

19. When on November 29th is the LOI due?

5 pm.