



Request for Proposals

Advancing vaccine equity through community-based organizations

RFP Issue Date: May 2, 2022

Submission deadline: May 20, 2022, by 8:00 p.m. ET

Anticipated Period of Performance: July 1, 2022 – April 29, 2023

Proposals received after May 20, 2022, will only be considered after all applications submitted by the deadline have been reviewed, and if funds have not been fully allocated. Potential subrecipients interested in submitting a proposal in response to this Request for Proposals (RFP) must prepare applications in accordance with the instructions contained herein. This RFP establishes minimum requirements an applicant must meet to be eligible for consideration, as well as information to be included in the proposal. This RFP does not obligate Urban to award an agreement, nor does it commit Urban to pay any costs incurred in preparing and submitting a proposal.

Submit a virtual application through <https://urbaninstitute.force.com/cbovaccineconfidence>.

Send any questions to VaccineConfidence@Urban.org.

SECTION I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

About the Urban Institute

The Urban Institute (Urban) is a national, nonprofit research organization based in Washington, DC that provides data and evidence to help advance upward mobility and equity. We are a trusted source for changemakers who seek to strengthen decision making, create inclusive economic growth, and improve the well-being of families and communities. Since being commissioned by President Lyndon B. Johnson more than 50 years ago, Urban has delivered facts that inspire solutions—and this remains our charge today. For more information about us, go to urban.org.

Vaccine Equity Background

Vaccination is considered one of the most important public health achievements of the 20th century and continues to be a critical public health and resilience tool. However, the benefits of vaccination are not realized equally across the population of the United States. While adult vaccination coverage remains low nationally, there are significant geographic, racial, and ethnic disparities. Populations experiencing vaccination disparities are also disproportionately affected by COVID-19, at risk for serious illness from COVID-19, or at high risk for complications from influenza infection.

In early 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) launched a grant program, [Partnering for Vaccine Equity \(P4VE\)](#), to provide funding and technical assistance to national, state, and local community-based organizations (CBOs). The program supports activities tailored to specific communities that improve COVID-19 and influenza vaccine awareness, access, and confidence among adults of color in the US. The program is informed by CDC's framework, [Vaccinate with Confidence](#), which highlights strategies to strengthen vaccine confidence and prevent outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases in the US.

The Urban Institute is one of three national organizations¹ providing passthrough funding and technical assistance to CBOs. Urban conducted two rounds of Requests for Proposals (RFPs) in P4VE program year 1 (May 2021 to April 2022), selecting, in total, 29 CBOs from across the US. This RFP is part of the second year of Urban's P4VE program (May 2022 to April 2023).

Funding Opportunity

The goal of this RFP to select and support up to 20 CBOs in their efforts to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in adult COVID-19 and/or influenza immunization by expanding vaccine coverage, confidence, and access. CBOs will develop and implement health communication and community engagement strategies designed to increase COVID-19 vaccine confidence and acceptance among adults of color.²

Awarded CBOs will receive up to \$80,000 each to implement projects over a 10-month period of performance. They will also have the opportunity to receive free, one-on-one technical assistance from the Urban Institute, designed to support project implementation and build broader, long-term organizational capacity. CBOs will also be able to engage with a large, diverse learning community across

¹ The other two are CDC Foundation and Community Catalyst.

² "Adults of color" are individuals aged 18 and older from racial and ethnic minority groups.

the US, comprised of hundreds of other organizations working to address health disparities and advance equity in the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

Example activities that would be eligible for funding include training trusted peer messengers; delivering locally appropriate, science-based messaging; partnering with a local health agency to improve vaccine dose access; countering misinformation by training facility and outreach staff; launching social media campaigns; and building data on barriers or drivers of vaccine hesitancy. Applicants are encouraged to propose projects or activities that are appropriate for their community and organization and which local data and experience suggest will be effective at improving vaccine equity and coverage.

SECTION II. ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are organizations that are

- (1) based and operating in the United States;³
- (2) nonprofit and tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code except for Colleges, universities, hospitals, health systems, or their fiscal sponsors;
- (3) not currently receiving funding through the IP21-2108 funding mechanism of the CDC's Partnering for Vaccine Equity program⁴

Examples of eligible applicants could include any number of CBOs, such as faith-based entities; vaccine advocacy organizations; public health focused associations; and civic, cultural, and social organizations that have the capacity to educate and engage communities of color who are at increased risk of getting COVID-19. CBOs should have demonstrated experience effectively engaging with at-risk populations in the community.

As stated above, colleges, universities, hospitals, health systems, or their fiscal sponsors are not deemed eligible for funding under this project. Federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) are eligible to apply but are not the primary focus audience under this RFP so are encouraged to also explore other funding streams specifically designed for FQHCs.

Eligible projects are those that

- (1) focus on unvaccinated adults (18+) of color;⁵
- (2) focus on vaccination for COVID-19, influenza, or both;

³ This includes organizations in any of the 50 states, the District of Colombia, or US territories. Foreign-based organizations or US-based organizations proposing projects conducted in foreign countries are ineligible to apply.

⁴ You are not be eligible to apply if you are currently receiving funding through the IP21-2108 funding mechanism administered by the CDC Foundation or Community Catalyst. If, however, you have *previously* received IP21-2108 funding from CDC Foundation, Community Catalyst, or the Urban Institute *and* this funding has ended or will end before July 1, 2022, you are eligible to apply. If you have any questions about this please email: VaccineConfidence@urban.org

⁵ Although funded activities may benefit other population groups, due to the conditions of the source funding, competitive proposals must focus intentionally on adults of color.

- (3) address documented barriers to vaccine confidence and access; and
- (4) use a community-based approach that emphasizes engagement and appropriately tailors activities and materials to the focus population and context.

SECTION III. EXPECTATIONS OF AWARDEES

This project will require consistent communication and partnership between Urban and the CBOs selected pursuant to this RFP. Organizations will enter into a formal subaward agreement with Urban, and I be expected to identify a responsive point of contact to I participate in regular meetings with Urban, submit quarterly performance reports (using a template designed by the CDC), implement project activities consistent with their approved proposal, and participate in learning opportunities.

SECTION IV. PROJECT TIMELINE

The anticipated period of performance is July 1, 2022 through April 29, 2023 (10 months), and applicants should submit budgets and workplans that align with these dates.

May 2, 2022	RFP release
May 12, 2022	RFP Q&A webinar (register here)
May 20, 2022, at 8:00 p.m. ET	Application submission deadline (submit here)
Early to mid-June	Selection notification
July 1, 2022	Estimated project implementation start date
April 29, 2023	End of implementation period (10 months)

SECTION V. HOW TO APPLY AND APPLICATION ATTACHMENTS

Interested parties should complete the following steps to submit an application:

1. Use [this link](#) to **create an account on the Urban Institute grants portal**.
 - a. Once you create your account, navigate to “Funding Program” at the top of the screen and find the “Partnering for Vaccine Equity” opportunity.
2. You will be prompted to **enter basic organizational information** such as name, address, employer identification number/tax ID, unique entity ID issued by the federal government,⁶ and points of contact. Then, you will be prompted to save your application.

⁶ All entities receiving federal funds must obtain a unique entity ID (UEI) upon registering through the federal government’s website at SAM.gov located [here](#). Organizations already registered in SAM previously with a DUNS number can access their UEI which was automatically assigned by following the steps on [this page](#) at SAM.gov. If your organization has not yet obtained its UEI by the deadline for proposal submissions, indicate this with a “TBD” in this field; note that Urban cannot issue a subaward to any organization without this number or registration on SAM.gov so this should be completed as soon as possible.

3. Next, you will be taken to a summary of your information. At the bottom of the page, you should **upload the following attachments**:
 - a. Proposal narrative (.doc, .docx, or .pdf format) (see details in Section VI below on what to include)
 - b. Project budget **using this template** and a budget narrative (see Section VII below)
 - c. A copy of your organization’s annual operating budget and most recent audited financial statement⁷
 - d. A copy of your Internal Revenue Service determination letter
 - e. Federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA), if applicable (see Section VII. for more information on these costs including what is allowable without a NICRA).
4. Select “Submit” to **submit your application**. You will receive an email confirmation.

If you encounter technical difficulties at any stage, please email VaccineConfidence@Urban.org.

SECTION VI. PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Although there is no set maximum for the length, as a guide and based on previous subawards, proposal narratives are generally 12,000 characters or less (roughly 4 single spaced pages). Proposal narratives should include the following information:

- **Community context and organizational capacity.** In this section, detail the community served by your organization and provide specifics to support your status as a trusted, capable, and experienced community partner.
 - i. What has been the impact of COVID-19 or influenza on your community? You may include data on risk factors and vaccination rates in your area.⁸
 - ii. What is your organization’s mission? What activities do you conduct, and who do you serve?
 - iii. What prior experience or relationships does your organization have that would make you a trusted community partner capable of implementing this project?⁹
- **Project plan.** In this section, detail the goals, activities, and mechanics of your proposed project and why you think it will be effective.
 - i. What population(s) will your project focus on? (Provide zip codes or county name(s) and basic demographic information.) Why are you focusing on this population?
 - ii. What are your proposed project goals and activities? This should address why your plan is feasible.

⁷ If an audited financial statement is not available, upload a copy of your most recent annual financial report and/or Form 990. Additional information may be required for organizations selected for participation.

⁸ See, for instance, <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>.

⁹ For instance, do you have demonstrated organizational experience engaging and educating community stakeholders, leading health equity initiatives, and/or collaborating with public health agencies or other local organizations? If you don’t have health equity experience and capabilities, how does the experience and capacity you do have translate to this project?

- iii. Why will your approach and strategy be effective at improving vaccine confidence and coverage (rates)?
- **Outputs and outcomes.** In this section, quantify your estimated impact and describe how you plan to measure that.
 - i. How many individuals do you estimate to be reached by your activities?
 - ii. What are the anticipated direct, tangible outputs of your activities?
 - iii. What are the anticipated outcomes (i.e., changes anticipated to occur in people or conditions as a result of the activities and outputs by the end of the grant term)?
 - iv. How will you measure these outputs and outcomes?

SECTION VII. BUDGET AND BUDGET NARRATIVE

Budget. Applicants must include a budget that outlines proposed expenditures for the project implementation period that uses [this template](#). Line items should be categorized according to your organization's policies and procedures (e.g., some agencies may include rent as a direct cost, while others may include as a part of its indirect costs, etc.). The total budget must not exceed \$80,000.

Budget narrative. Please provide a separate budget narrative document to correspond to the line-item estimates in your budget. This narrative should include justifications for the costs, assumptions, and methodologies relevant to the cost components. If such costs are a part of the submitted budget, consider the following in your narrative:

- **Salaries and wages.** Detail each position and relevancy to your project. Note, this section should include personnel employed by your agency only; staff from partnering organizations, consultants, and other contractors should be detailed in the subcontract line item.
- **Fringe benefits.** Include numerical rate and description of components (e.g., health insurance, FICA, pension, etc.); or attach most recent indirect cost rate agreement if fringe rate is incorporated therein.
- **Subcontracts and consultants.** Detail services to be procured outside your organization; include justification for each and explain how the cost estimate was derived.
- **Other direct costs.** Provide justification and breakdown of each cost (e.g., supplies, equipment, incentives, etc). If including travel, provide the travel purpose, destinations, and estimates for airfare, lodging, etc. per person. Travel costs must be applied in accordance with your organization's established travel policies and procedures which must also meet the requirements of 45 CFR Part 75.474.
 - **Direct costs that are unallowable** under the conditions of the P4VE program as specified by CDC include the following:
 - i. food and beverage
 - ii. personal protective equipment
 - iii. actual vaccine doses and booster shots
 - iv. testing kits

v. financial incentives to get vaccinated¹⁰

- **Indirect costs.** If your organization has an approved federally recognized negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) with the Federal Government, this rate can be used and the current NICRA provided as justification for any indirect costs included in your budget. In the absence of a rate agreement, your agency can elect to use a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC). Your narrative should indicate the proposed use of the de minimis rate, but no documentation is required to further justify its use. Please note that as described in § 200.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both.

SECTION VIII. APPLICATION SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications will be reviewed by a selection committee to ensure requirements outlined in this RFP are met; proposal narratives specifically will be scored using the rubric below.

Domain	Selection Criteria	Score
Organizational mission, populations served, and past experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarity of goals and alignment of goals with activities • description of demographics and relevant health characteristics of the at-risk populations in the community • demonstrated experience engaging community stakeholders in the development of community-driven, culturally appropriate initiatives and education campaigns 	35 points
Project plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compelling, realistic, and evidence-based approach and activities to address a clearly defined problem • detailed description of how your organization will engage the community in all aspects of the program and who specifically your partners will be throughout the program • feasibility of the proposed plan 	35 points
Clear outputs, outcomes, and impact (M&E)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear and realistic estimates of the project’s anticipated results, including number of individuals that will be reached and expected outputs and outcomes • clear system proposed to track these performance measures • evidence that the organization has tracked performance before and embraces a data-driven performance management model 	15 points

¹⁰ However, other incentives (e.g., for participation in a survey, focus group, or educational event) are allowable under the P4VE program so long as each incentive is under \$100. These incentives must have a clear, justifiable rationale which should be detailed in the budget narrative.

Budget and budget narrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear and detailed budget with separate narrative; justifiable, allowable expenses that are aligned with the project plan • documents adhere to RFP and federal guidelines • budget at or below the established ceiling amount (\$80,000) 	15 points
		100 points

SECTION IX. APPLICANT QUESTIONS

Email. Please direct application questions to VaccineConfidence@Urban.org. Questions and answers will be regularly updated in [this document](#) (also linked from <https://www.urban.org/vaccine-confidence-rfp>). Questions will not be attributed to specific organizations or people.

Q&A webinar. Urban will host a voluntary webinar to answer questions related to this RFP on **May 12, 2022 at 3pm Eastern**. [Register here](#) in advance. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. The webinar recording will be available [here](#) after the event.