

MICHIGAN HEALTH ENDOWMENT FUND

2019 Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyles Webinar Q&A

Concept Papers

Q: How soon should we expect feedback after submission of the concept paper?

A: The program team will do their best to get you timely feedback, usually within about a week. We anticipate receiving many concept papers and will respond to them in the order received, so we recommend submitting your concept paper early in order to get feedback more quickly.

Q: If our concept paper or proposal isn't approved, do you do feedback calls?

A: Yes, the program team is happy to discuss with you why a proposal is declined either by email or phone.

Q: If we are not comfortable with a budget estimate at this time, is a very rough budget description acceptable?

A: Yes. We will not hold you to any specific budget numbers submitted in your concept paper.

Q: Do you need a secure partnership agreement for the concept paper?

A: No. However, if you plan to collaborate with external partners, it will be important to clearly identify their roles and include letters of support from those organizations in your proposal.

Budget Questions

Q: What is the required minimum amount of an organization's operating budget?

A: We do not set a minimum required organizational operating budget. However, we do require that an organization apply for no more than 20% of their operating budget.

Q: What do you allow for indirect costs?

We consider indirect costs to be things like administrative support, general office expenses, rent, and utilities. Essentially, they are costs associated with a project that are not in direct service of the project.

Q: What is the allowed indirect rate?

A: In the 2019 Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyles grant round, an organization may apply for an indirect rate of up to 10% of their total grant budget.

Q: How many hours per week must an employee work to be considered full-time?

A: It depends on how the applicant organization defines full-time. Some internal policies state 40 hours, while others state 35 or less. The Health Fund will work within the defined parameters of the applicant.

Q: Can the requirement of 1 FTE be spread over multiple employees? For example, can the applicant agency have 1.75 FTE spread over 4 part-time people?

A: Yes. The Health Fund requires an organization to have at least one full-time equivalent employee.

Q: Is there a certain % of budget that must be allocated to evaluation?

A: No, the Health Fund does not require a certain percentage of the budget be allocated to evaluation. It depends on the project activities and nature of the evaluation.

Q: Is there a particular expenditure ratio that is frowned upon? For example, if a huge part of the budget is for consultants, how might that be perceived?

A: It depends on the project. We encourage you to submit a concept paper and we will provide targeted feedback on the budget.

Q: If we have a smaller project is it OK to ask for a smaller amount over two years, e.g. \$150K instead of \$500K?

A: Absolutely! \$500,000 is the maximum award amount, but we do not set a minimum request amount.

Q: Are there any matching funds required?

A: No, the Health Fund does not require matching funds. However, projects that leverage funds from other sources or projects in which the applicant is contributing some of the project costs in-kind are viewed favorably.

Q: Can funds be used to purchase land?

A: No, the Health Fund does not allow grants to be used to purchase land.

Q: Would travel for participants be included?

A: Yes, we do allow for participant travel costs as part of a request.

Q: When funding positions, will you fund hours for an already full-time employee?

A: Yes, we will fund partial salary costs of a full-time employee.

Q: Could you please reiterate the items excluded from consideration concerning large equipment items?

A: We do not provide funding for large equipment such as vans or the purchase of multiple bikes to give away. However, we would consider equipment purchases (outside of vans) if they are part of a larger health improvement program and essential to carrying out the work.

Number of Applications

Q: Can one organization submit more than one concept paper?

A: Yes, an organization can submit more than one concept paper. However, it is important to keep in mind that the Health Fund will likely only fund one project per organization. The program team can help you decide which project(s) to proceed to a full application with through the concept paper process.

Q: Can one organization apply for more than one grant opportunity?

A: Yes, an organization can apply for more than one grant in a given cycle. However, it is unlikely that the Health Fund will approve more than one grant per organization in a single grant cycle. The program team at the Health Fund is happy to provide feedback on multiple ideas through the concept paper submission process to identify which project(s) would be most competitive.

Q: Can an investigator be involved in more than one application?

A: Yes. However, it is important to keep in mind that the Health Fund will likely only fund one project per organization. The program team can help you decide which project(s) to select for a full application through the concept paper process.

Q: If you currently have funding from MHEF, does this disqualify you from applying for funding for this opportunity?

A: No, the Health Fund does not have any policies against funding an organization in multiple program areas or grant cycles. However, the Health Fund will not likely continue to fund a project we have already funded under a new grant program or cycle, unless otherwise discussed with your program officer.

Q: Could an organization apply for TWO opportunities? For example, a technology enhancement AND a behavioral health services grant?

A: Yes, an organization may submit more than one proposal under any of the eight focus areas. However, it is important to keep in mind that the Health Fund will likely only fund one project per organization. The program team can help you decide which project(s) to select for a full application through the concept paper process.

Q: Can a proposal be a one-time project responsive to the immediate needs to the community, and thus program sustainability is not needed?

A: Yes. Be sure to clearly state this and why it is a one-time need in your answer to the sustainability question.

Project Activities

Q: Can you elaborate on the definition of "community setting"? Would a physician's office or a hospital be considered to be in a community setting?

A: That depends on the project and the different levels of collaboration involved. We encourage you to submit a concept paper to get specific feedback on your project.

Q: Do you welcome statewide work?

A: Yes! The Health Fund is interested in statewide work as well as work that addresses policy change at the state level.

Q: Can the grant be used for capital projects that would fulfill a place-based project proposal?

A: The Health Fund does not provide funding for capital expenses. Should you still have questions related to your specific idea, we encourage you to submit a concept paper.

Q: Are you primarily looking at nutrition rather than lifestyle related approaches to health?

A: The Health Fund is open to either approach.

Q: Is there a separate process for application for a planning year vs. the full grant application?

A: No. Please be sure to clearly note that you are applying for a planning grant in the project description.

Evaluation and Outcomes

Q: Will the evaluation officer weigh in on the review of concept papers and/or applications to ensure the evaluation plan is rigorous and 'do-able'?

A: The evaluation officer is available to discuss individual evaluation plans should you have questions prior to submitting a concept paper or proposal. The evaluation officer will also be part of the review process and may send back questions or comments regarding your evaluation plan.

Q: Is the Logic Model or Theory of Change included as part of the 10-page narrative limit?

A: No. We expect a logic model or theory of change to be included as an attachment, and it will not count toward the 10-page limit.

Q: Is using an external evaluator required/preferred?

A: Not necessarily. It depends on the project scope, activities, and goals.

Collaboration

Q: Is it required to have community partners?

A: Community partnerships are not required, but they can be helpful in making your proposal stand out, depending on what you are trying to do.

Q: Could collaborators be from outside of MI?

A: Yes, if the needs of a program cannot be met through collaboration with individuals or organizations in Michigan. This is left up to the organization to decide.

Target Population

Q: Are Head Start centers included in your RFP priorities, when the RFP states school-based?

A: Yes, we encourage early childhood education providers to consider applying.

Q: Is there a preference for quantity in terms of impact? For example, would a project designed to improve outcomes for a relatively low number of participants (e.g. 50) be viewed less favorably than a project aiming for a higher number of participants (e.g. 50)?

A: Yes, the Health Fund expects that any projects funded under the Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyles grant initiative targets either a large number of individuals or has a significant geographic scope.

Q: What age group do you consider to be children/adolescents and older adults?

A: We define children as age 0-18 and older adults as over the age of 60.

Q: Has the fund ever made grants to programs that fit into the focus areas but do not specifically focus on children or seniors?

A: Yes. However, many of those projects are funded under another invitation-only program area, Special Projects and Emerging Ideas, and cover large portions of the state or are statewide in scope. We will also consider projects that may have a broad reach, either in number of individuals served or geographically.