



## Section C – RFA SCOPE OF WORK

### I. Introduction

In the Spring of 2021, the CDC released Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) number CDC-RFA-OT21-2103, entitled National Initiative to Address COVID-19 Health Disparities Among Populations at High-Risk and Underserved, Including Racial and Ethnic Minority Populations and Rural Communities. Austin Public Health (APH) applied and was awarded \$4,087,502 for the program titled, “Reach In, Reach Out and Vaccinate: Place-based Outreach & COVID-19 Vaccination for Populations of Focus in the Austin Area (Reach In, Reach Out)”. Through this program, APH and partners will coordinate to improve the health and socioeconomic disparities in Austin for minority populations, particularly Black/African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos/Latinx, immigrants and refugees and other populations that lack access to health care, transportation, healthy foods, and other equitable determinants. The collaborative approach enables greater capacity to meet needs of focus populations and reach expected outcomes.

Approximately \$2.7 million of the total funding will be awarded to social service agencies for vaccine outreach in communities of color. Austin Public Health seeks to fund qualified non-profit providers with a strong connection to the community that could include:

- Organizations providing social services within the social determinants of health such as basic needs, housing, transportation;
- Organizations providing social services within the prioritized list of zip codes: 78602; 78617; 78660; 78664; 78705; 78721; 78723; 78724; 78741; 78744; 78745; 78752; 78753; 78758
- Organizations with demonstrated experience with the Community Health Worker model or grassroots organizing outreach efforts to promote the COVID-19 vaccine to populations at a high risk of severe COVID-19 disease
- Organizations with experience offering social services to and/or organizing within immigrant and refugee populations who speak limited English
- Organizations with innovative ideas for connecting basic needs resources and COVID-19 outreach

### II. Background & Purpose of Funding

APH seeks to fund outreach efforts to promote the COVID-19 vaccine with populations at high risk of severe COVID-19 disease including populations of color, immigrants and refugees, lower income, and older adults, who have suffered disproportionate rates of COVID-19 disease.

As of mid-August 2021, among populations of color, Black residents make up 7.8% of the population, 8% of COVID-19 cases, but as of 8/20/2021, 11% of local deaths from COVID-19. Latinx residents make up 33.9% of the population, but 42% of COVID-19 cases, and 50% of deaths from COVID-19. Older adults (60 years of age or older) are at highest risk of mortality



from COVID-19, making up only 9% of the population, but 11% of COVID-19 cases and 79% of deaths from COVID-19.<sup>[1],[2]</sup>

The COVID-19 Delta variant and its lineages comprise 99% of the COVID-19 viruses sequenced in the United States. The same percent (99%) is seen for Health and Human Services Region 6: Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

The objectives of the funding are for qualified non-profit providers to:

- Increase trust regarding the COVID-19 vaccine
- Increase access to and provide navigation support for obtaining the vaccine and vaccine booster, COVID-19 testing and personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Provide education about vaccine facts, transmissibility, how to keep children safe, and COVID-19 general information.

### III. Funding and Timeline

**Department:** Austin Public Health

**Services Solicited:** Vaccine Mini-Grant Funding

**Available Funding:** Up to \$2,700,000 total

**Awards:** Austin Public Health anticipates awarding multiple Agreements. The minimum request is \$100,000 for the full term up to 18 months. The maximum request is \$500,000.

**Contract Term:** The Agreements will have a contract term ending on April 30, 2023. Insurance will be required for this agreement and proof will be submitted with the second deliverable.

### IV. Priority Populations and Program Services

#### Priority Populations

Primary focus should be on low-income residents of Austin/Travis County living at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Priority populations within the focus populations should include:

- People of Color
- Documented or undocumented Immigrant or Newly Resettled Refugee Communities
- Residents of the following Austin/Travis County zip codes that show higher transmission rates and/or lower vaccination rates: prioritized list of zip codes; 78602; 78617; 78660; 78664; 78705; 78721; 78723; 78724; 78741; 78744; 78745; 78752; 78753; 78758

Subpopulations may include:

- Seniors
- People with High-Risk Medical Conditions

<sup>[1]</sup> Local population data from [U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Austin city, Texas](#)

<sup>[2]</sup> COVID-19 case and mortality rates from [Austin Travis County COVID-19 Public Dashboard \(arcgis.com\)](#), pulled on August 20,2021



- People Experiencing Homelessness

#### Program Services Requirements

Successful applicants will build community resources and relationships within communities of color by providing education and outreach and developing promotion campaign strategies that:

- 1) Provide education and outreach to priority population
  - Develop tailored messages for the specific priority population with a culturally and linguistically appropriate language access plan
  - Increase trust regarding the COVID-19 vaccine
  - Provide tailored education about vaccine facts, transmissibility, and impact on specific priority population
  - Disseminate up-to-date APH and CDC COVID-19 information
- 2) Provide social services and navigation support to address barriers
  - Provide navigation support for obtaining the vaccine and vaccine booster, COVID-19 testing and personal protective equipment (PPE)
  - Increase access to basic needs services exacerbated by the pandemic – unemployment, food insecurity, rent assistance, etc.
- 3) Identify and train trusted messengers to deliver COVID-19 vaccine safety and effectiveness to these communities and populations
  - These trusted messengers can include, but are not limited to: Faith leaders; Teachers; Community Health Workers; Radio DJ's; Barbers; Local Proprietors; Community and Civic Leaders
  - These trusted messengers will deliver their COVID-19 vaccine promotion material and information through English and multilingual outlets, local media outlets, social media, faith-based venues, community events, and other culturally appropriate venues
- 4) Coordinate cross-agency outreach efforts with the Austin Public Health, Travis County and other vaccine distributors by providing the following support for outreach events where vaccinations are available
  - a. Plan and co-host outreach and vaccine events at community-based settings appropriate for specific priority population
  - b. Provide volunteer greeters/translators
  - c. Canvas specific neighborhoods to promote vaccine events
  - d. Assist at call centers or make direct calls
- 5) Share community needs and promotion plans with larger COVID-19 vaccine response partners including regular updates to vaccination distribution coordination meetings

#### Other Possible Activities

- Participate at planned PPE distribution, testing, or other events.
- Participate in meetings with APH Public Information Officer to inform messaging.

#### Agency Experience and Preferences

##### ALL Applicants must demonstrate:

- Trusted relationships with priority populations adversely affected by COVID-19 and ability to address barriers to vaccines or facilitate access to vaccines.



- Culturally and linguistically appropriate language access plan that reflects the priority populations, with appropriate staff or volunteers that reflect the population including languages spoken by the priority populations and needs of the community.
- Capacity to develop promotional strategies that are cultural and linguistically appropriate for the priority populations.
- Ability to track and report type of events, number of individuals reached, and their demographics.
- Experience providing health-related outreach and/or addressing barriers to vaccines and facilitating access to vaccines.
- Experience coordinating with vaccine distribution efforts and other vaccine outreach organizations; and/or a willingness to coordinate with those entities.

Additional points will be awarded to organizations that demonstrate:

- Experience outreaching on other diseases/health conditions.
- Knowledge of the community's barriers to obtaining vaccines and reasons for hesitancy.
- An outreach plan that utilizes a linguistically and culturally appropriate community health worker approach and/or grassroots approach. (See the [Community Health Workers Toolkit](#) for more information.)

#### V. [Application Format and Submission Requirements](#)

The Application must be submitted in Partnergrants: [Partnergrants database](#).

Responses should be included for each question.

Since APH is only accepting applications in Partnergrants, all Applicants must do the following to get registered in Partnergrants:

1. Confirm that their organization is a registered vendor with the City of Austin.
  - To find the City of Austin Vendor Number please, visit [Austin Finance Online](#) and search for the organization's legal name.
  - To register to become a potential City of Austin vendor, go to [Austin Finance Online](#) to register.
2. Be a registered user in the Partnergrants system. The applications will be submitted through this web-based system.
  - [To register, visit the Partnergrants](#) site and click on "Register Here."
  - Note that the organization's City of Austin Vendor number is required to complete registration in Partnergrants.

**Required APH Documents:**

**The following must be completed and/or submitted in Partnergrants.**



FORM NUMBER	TITLE	Requires Applicant Response DUE
1	OFFER SHEET	Wednesday, September 29, 2021 by 3 PM CST In Partnergrants
2	RFA APPLICATION	
3	COA CERTIFICATIONS AND DISCLOSURES	
SECTION NO.	TITLE	Form input in Partnergrants DUE
A	THRESHOLD REVIEW FORM	Tuesday, September 14, 2021 by 3 PM CST

**VI. Evaluation Factors**

Considerations will be given to organizations that have:

- Demonstrated experience with linguistically and culturally appropriate interventions to shape a support outreach effort
- Trusting relationships with populations at high risk of severe COVID-19 disease
- Capacity to increase outreach efforts immediately and efficiently

A total of 100 points may be awarded to the application. All applications will be evaluated as to how the proposed program aligns with the goals of this RFA and whether each question has been adequately addressed.

<b>Section A:</b> Offer Sheet Required	Applicants must print, sign, scan and upload signed forms.	No points, but Applicant must submit Offer Sheet in order to submit RFA
<b>Section E:</b> RFA Application		
Part I: Organization Questions	Questions 1-6	No points awarded, but Applicant must answer all questions.
Part II: Experience	Questions 7 - 8	25 points
Part II: CLAS and Racial Equity	Questions 9-11	25 points
Part II: Program Design	Questions 12 -14	30 points
Part II: Data-Informed Program Management	Question 15	10 points
Part III: Cost Effectiveness	Question 16 and 17	10 points
		<b>Total: 100 Points</b>



### Applicant Minimum Qualifications

All organizations applying for funding must:

- Be a non-profit organization able to conduct business in the State of Texas
- Applicants must demonstrate that they have been delivering high quality social services in Austin/Travis County for a minimum of 2 years.
- Have submitted all applicable tax returns to the IRS and the State of Texas (e.g. Form 990 or 990-EZ and state and federal payroll tax filings)
- Be eligible to contract and not debarred from contracting, according to SAM.gov and Debarment information
- Be current in its payment of Federal and State payroll taxes
- Not owe past due taxes to the City
- Have the ability to meet Austin Public Health's Social Services Insurance Requirements
- Have an active Board of Directors that meets regularly and reviews program performance, financial performance, and annually approves the organization budget

## VII. Additional Information

### City of Austin Information

**Proposal Acceptance Period:** All applications shall remain valid until award, negotiation, and execution of contracts as directed by the Austin City Council.

**Proprietary Information:** All materials submitted to the City become public property and are subject to the Texas Open Records Act upon receipt. If an Applicant does not desire proprietary information in the proposal to be disclosed, each page must be identified and marked proprietary at time of submittal. The City will, to the extent allowed by law, endeavor to protect such information from disclosure. The final decision as to what information must be disclosed, however, lies with the Texas Attorney General. Failure to identify proprietary information will result in all unmarked sections being deemed non-proprietary and available upon public request.

**Exceptions:** Please be advised that exceptions to any portion of the Solicitation may jeopardize acceptance of the application.

**Application Preparation Costs:** All costs directly or indirectly related to preparation of a response to the RFA or any oral presentation required to supplement and/or clarify an application which may be required by the City shall be the sole responsibility of the Applicant.

**Contract Adjustments:** The City of Austin reserves the right to adjust the Agreement amount or scope of work over the contract period based on community needs, Applicant's ability to expend funds in a timely manner or any other factor. When the City determines adjustments need to be made, the City will provide at least a 90-day notice to the Grantee.



### **Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Funds Information**

A recipient of a grant or cooperative agreement awarded by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) with funds made available under the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-123); the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, 2020 (the “CARES Act”) (P.L. 116-136); the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act (P.L. 116-139); the Consolidated Appropriations Act and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplement Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116-260) and/or the American Rescue Plan of 2021 [P.L. 117-2] agrees, as applicable to the award, to: 1) comply with existing and/or future directives and guidance from the Secretary regarding control of the spread of COVID-19; 2) in consultation and coordination with HHS, provide, commensurate with the condition of the individual, COVID-19 patient care regardless of the individual’s home jurisdiction and/or appropriate public health measures (e.g., social distancing, home isolation); and 3) assist the United States Government in the implementation and enforcement of federal orders related to quarantine and isolation.

In addition, to the extent applicable, Recipient will comply with Section 18115 of the CARES Act, with respect to the reporting to the HHS Secretary of results of tests intended to detect SARS–CoV–2 or to diagnose a possible case of COVID–19. Such reporting shall be in accordance with guidance and direction from HHS and/or CDC. HHS laboratory reporting guidance is posted at: [HHS January 8, 2021 Guidance](#).

Further, consistent with the full scope of applicable grant regulations (45 C.F.R. 75.322), the purpose of this award, and the underlying funding, the recipient is expected to provide to CDC copies of and/or access to COVID-19 data collected with these funds, including but not limited to data related to COVID-19 testing. CDC will specify in further guidance and directives what is encompassed by this requirement.

This award is contingent upon agreement by the recipient to comply with existing and future guidance from the HHS Secretary regarding control of the spread of COVID-19. In addition, recipient is expected to flow down these terms to any subaward, to the extent applicable to activities set out in such subaward.