



Request for Applications (RFA)

Colorado Department of Public Health and
Environment

RFA #27553294

Project Background and Overview

According to the CDC, health equity is reached when everyone has the opportunity to attain their full health potential without being disadvantaged by their social position or other socially determined circumstances. Health inequities are reflected in disparities in length of life; quality of life; rates of disease, disability, and death; severity of disease; and access to treatment. Increasing health equity requires attention to specific populations for whom the social determinants of health are directly linked with higher rates of negative health outcomes.

In Fall 2020, the Newcomer Health Program piloted a Cultural Navigation program through the Center of Excellence in Newcomer Health to supplement state and local public health COVID-19 case interview and contact tracing (CI/CT) efforts in priority population communities. Since the launch of the pilot program, Cultural Navigation efforts have expanded and grown.

The primary goal of the Cultural Navigation program is to engage cultural navigators in public health response efforts that affect priority population communities, including but not limited to refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants, and migrants. Navigators are often culturally and linguistically congruent with the communities they serve. Navigators are an essential component of the public health team, assisting with bi-directional communication between communities and public health professionals and providing key insights into addressing cultural aspects during public health activities. The secondary goal of the Cultural Navigation Program is to facilitate culturally sensitive health education messaging in priority population communities, which can also prime individuals for public health interventions.

To advance the goals and activities of the Newcomer Health Program, support Colorado's disease control, prevention, and public health response efforts, and optimize health outcomes, this Colorado Department of Public Health and

Environment (CDPHE) Request for Applications (RFA) is being put forth to make funding available through a competitive RFA process to better serve priority population communities. CDPHE seeks to expand the pool of cultural navigators who will be engaged in state and local public health efforts surrounding disease control, prevention, and public health response activities, including but not limited to immunizations, testing, education, community outreach, and public health response initiatives, for non-English speaking communities in which culture, and not solely language, is identified as a primary barrier to engagement with public health.

Awardees will be able to hire, contract, or support existing staff as cultural navigators to help public health communicate culturally appropriate messages and understand cultural nuances that might inform public health approaches, direct services, communications, and related public health interviewing.

The primary goal of this RFA is to provide cultural navigation support to state and local public health agencies conducting immunization clinics in communities with language and/or cultural barriers. The secondary goal of this RFA is to conduct culturally relevant immunization outreach and education. The tertiary goal of this RFA is to support vaccine-preventable public health interviews that affect priority population communities. Organizations should also be willing and able to support other public health efforts related to disease control and emergency response, including, but not limited to supporting testing events, public health interviews, consultation with public health teams during response efforts, or behavioral health response in communities with language and/or cultural barriers as additional funding becomes available. The SOW that is expected for this project can be found via the [Cultural Navigation RFA SOW Draft](#).

Project Budget Period, Funding Period, and Budget Requirements

Budget Period

The budget period for the COVID-19 Immunizations Cultural Navigation Initiative and a vaccine initiative focused on seasonal flu vaccinations particularly in farmer work communities lasts from contract execution to June 30, 2025. The grant will approach an estimated total of \$950,000 , with the actual amount awarded depending on the number of selected applicants. Additional funding and/or funding streams may become available to add funds to established contracts and extensions may occur through 2028. **Note:** The state will not reimburse any costs incurred by the applicant prior to the issuance of a legally executed contract. Source documentation demonstrating actual expenses incurred will be subject to review.

Budget Requirements

Indirect (F&A) Cost Rate:

Definition: Indirect costs are those that have been incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot be readily identified with a particular final cost objective or grant account. Indirect costs may be called Facilities and Administration costs (F&A) at some agencies. Indirect costs are different from administrative costs in most cases. For example, a program employee can be considered administrative and not be included in an organization's indirect costs. Costs classified as indirect can differ depending upon your organizational structure and accounting practices but some common examples include depreciation on buildings and equipment, operating and maintenance costs of facilities, and general administrative expenses such as the salaries and expenses of executive officers and accounting or legal staff.

- If Applicant's organization or business maintains an indirect or F&A rate and Applicant chooses to include this cost on the application budget, it is expected

that the amount budgeted will reflect the organization's or business's approved rate. Be prepared to submit one of the following if awarded:

- Federally Negotiated Indirect Rate Agreement: An entity that receives funding directly from the federal government is eligible to recover indirect costs by using a federally negotiated indirect cost rate from their Federal cognizant agency.
- CDPHE Negotiated Indirect Rate Agreement: An entity that does not have a current negotiated indirect cost rate with a federal agency AND does not receive federal funds directly from a federal agency can negotiate an indirect cost rate with the internal audit unit at CDPHE.
- Alternatives to a negotiated indirect cost rate:
 - de minimis indirect cost rate: The de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) is available to all non-Federal entities (2 CFR 200.414(f))
 - Direct Charge All Expenses: Organizations may elect to direct charge all allowable expenses on their billings for each contract, grant or award. Billed costs will be subject to field review by the CDPHE.

Salary Cap:

- Cap on Salaries (Division H, Title II, General Provisions, Sec. 202): None of the funds appropriated in this title shall be used to pay the salary of an individual, through a grant or other extramural mechanism, at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. Effective January 3, 2021, the salary limitation for Executive Level II is \$221,900.
- Note: The salary rate limitation does not restrict the salary that an organization may pay an individual working under an HHS contract or order; it merely limits the portion of that salary that may be paid with federal funds.

Salaried and hourly employees vs. contractors on the budget submission

- Salaried and hourly employees are categorized as employees of the

organization (W-2/W-4 employees). Organizations must have a way to track and report the time and effort spent under this funding stream.

- The organization must keep accurate records of the time spent and activities performed under this award for contracted individuals (W-9/1099 contractors).
 - The organization can charge indirect on up to \$25,000 in expenses per contractor or contract.
- Ensure you accurately categorize the type of employee when completing the budget template.
- For all individuals being paid through this award, the organization must keep records of the time spent and activities billed to the award. This includes both employees of the organization and contractors.

Project Requirements

Eligibility

Eligible applicants must be able to perform the work outlined in this RFA and must be each of the following:

- A community-based organization, non-profit, governmental, or for-profit entity.
 - Currently serving new American or newcomer communities. Specifically, priority will be given to those serving Spanish-speaking migrants, South and Central American indigenous migrants, farmworkers, Afghans, and Ukrainians.
- Employ or contract with staff who are trained to navigate, or are similarly trained as culturally sensitive liaisons between individuals and medical, health, or governmental professionals.
- Adhere to vaccine recommendations made by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and/or the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

Required Project Components

The primary goal of this RFA is to provide cultural navigation support to state and local public health agencies conducting immunization clinics in communities with language and/or cultural barriers. The secondary goal of this RFA is to conduct culturally relevant immunization outreach and education. The tertiary goal of this RFA is to support vaccine-preventable public health interventions that affect priority population communities. Organizations should also be willing and able to support other public health efforts related to disease control and emergency response, including, but not limited to supporting testing events, public health interviews, consultation with public health teams during response efforts, or behavioral health response in communities with language and/or cultural barriers as additional funding becomes available. The SOW that is expected for this project can be found via the [Cultural Navigation RFA SOW Draft](#).

Agencies who apply must clearly identify:

- Cultures and languages they are serving.
- Barriers to the ability to support culturally appropriate immunization-related efforts and public health responses.
- Geographic location(s) of the communities they are serving.
- The ability of their navigators to support public health-hosted events benefiting priority population communities (in-person), public health outreach and education (in person), and public health interviewing (by phone, or in-person). Some of the requirements listed here may be on-call and occur on weekends and evenings.
- The number and qualifications of cultural navigators, including experience in culturally supportive roles, of staff or contracted staff who will be conducting cultural navigation. Cultural navigators will not need to be certified, but they will need to be trained.

- If the organization does not currently have enough navigators contracted or employed to support this award, please describe how the organization will quickly recruit, hire, and train navigators.
- The ability to provide cultural navigation staff access to telephone or computers with internet access.
- The outreach and engagement project(s) proposed that will focus on connecting with priority populations and communities to share immunization information and public health-related messaging in a culturally responsive and appropriate manner in coordination with and approved by CDPHE.
- If they have the expertise to provide additional support and consultation to state and local public health teams working to create a culturally responsive approach.

Allowability

The [Immunizations and Vaccines for COVID-19 Expense Allowability Roadmap](#) outlines allowable and unallowable expenses for the funding stream that is currently available under this RFA. If/when additional funding and/or funding streams become available, organizations will be notified and allowability guidance will be shared.

Tools and Guidance

Definition of Terms

- CDC: The Centers for Disease Control
- CDPHE: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
- Cultural Navigator: Cultural Navigators (CN) are community partners who serve as a trusted and confidential source of information between community members and public health. Cultural Navigators are deeply rooted in their communities, often members of the community themselves, and are uniquely positioned to bridge cultural and linguistic knowledge gaps for health departments. ([CO-COE](#))

- Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)-eligible: Individuals with a status qualifying them to receive ORR benefits. Examples include refugees and asylees. [ORR definition](#)
- Priority Populations:
 - Newcomers/New Americans/immigrant/migrants***: Individuals who arrived in the United States as immigrants or their children. This population includes those who are ORR-eligible (see definition above) and all other immigrants and migrants seeking opportunity, safety, and/or reunification with their families. (Per Office of New Americans and CDC ‘newcomer’, ‘immigrant’, and ‘refugee’ definitions)
 - [Office of New Americans](#)
 - [CDC Immigrant and Refugee Health](#)
 - [CDC Centers of Excellence in Newcomer Health](#)
 - [CDC Newly Arrived Immigrants, Refugees, and Other Migrants](#)
 - ***We recognize that there is no perfect term for our priority populations and that the aforementioned terms may be used interchangeably.
- RFA: Request for application

Selection Evaluation, and Awards

- The technical aspects of applications will be assessed based on the soundness of the applicant's approach and the applicant's understanding of the requirement. Past experience and qualifications will be assessed by considering the extent to which the qualifications, experience, and past performance are likely to foster successful, on-time performance. Technical and past experience assessments may include a judgment concerning the potential risk of unsuccessful or untimely performance, and the anticipated amount of State resources necessary to insure timely, successful performance. The State may use all information available regarding past performance as defined in C.R.S. §24-106-107 et.seq.

- The program has carefully designed a scoring and selection process to ensure fair selection of the best qualified applicants. The selection process is described below. The criteria for scoring are in direct correlation to the required application components.

Applications that fail to follow all of the requirements may not be considered.

- Financial Risk Assessment Rating in Evaluation: The financial risk rating determined from the submitted Financial Risk Assessment Questionnaire or FRMS rating (Local Public Health Agencies only) will be communicated to reviewers during the application review process. Applications that fail to follow all requirements may not be considered.

How to Apply

Responses must be submitted as specified in this announcement. Applications that fail to follow all of the requirements may not be considered.

Fill out the [Google Form Cultural Navigation Immunizations RFA application](#). [PDF of the Cultural Navigation Immunizations RFA Google form application](#). Upload the attachments listed in the required documents section on the Google form.

Required Documents

All applications must include the following in this order:

1. Attachment A

[CDPHE RFA Cover Sheet and Signature Page](#). This must be signed with a wet ink signature by a member of the organization who is legally authorized by the organization to make funding decisions. Please title the document: Organization Name_ RFA Cover Sheet and Signature Page

2. Attachment B: [Budget Template Cultural Navigation RFA](#)

Project Budget and Narrative. Please note, the budget form must explain all expenses included. Applicants are responsible for ensuring the calculations in the budget are accurate. There will be no reimbursement of pre-award costs. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment reserves the right

to deny requests for any item listed in the budget that is deemed to be unnecessary for the implementation of the project. Please title document: Organization Name_Budget

3. Attachment C

The [Financial Risk Assessment Questionnaire](#) which can also be completed through [Google Forms](#). A financial risk rating will be assigned for all applicants. Local public health agencies are not required to complete Attachment C: Financial Risk Assessment Questionnaire because they already have a risk rating assigned by the CDPHE Financial Risk Management System (FRMS). Colorado State Agencies and Colorado State Institutions of Higher Education are not required to complete the Attachment C: Financial Risk Assessment Questionnaire. This form must be completed and submitted by all other applicants, including nonprofits, for-profit businesses or governmental agencies. Applicants must retain a copy of their completed Financial Risk Assessment Questionnaire for any additional funding applications within a 12 month period, the same budget period. Any changes will require a new form to be submitted. The application may not be reviewed if the completed form is not included. The Financial Risk Assessment rating does not determine whether or not CDPHE will fund an applicant, rather, it determines an applicant's financial and management strength, and the level of technical assistance and contract monitoring necessary to help the applicant succeed with the project if awarded. In order to incorporate all relevant information, programs must include the financial risk rating in their initial discussions about which applications should be provided to the review committees and during the review committee evaluations for funding decisions. The final application score may be impacted by risk determinations made by CDPHE based on information contained in the form. Scores will be communicated to the grant review committee and may be considered in the overall score. Technically, the score could be impacted when the review committee members see the financial risk assessment score. The form and guidance are part of this announcement. For more information, please see Attachment C: Financial Risk Assessment FAQs.

Instructions: If your entity is a nonprofit, for-profit business or governmental agency, you are required to complete the financial risk assessment questionnaire (Attachment C). Local public health agencies are not required to complete the form, because they already have a risk rating assigned via the CDPHE Financial Risk Management Survey (FRMS). Any questions regarding the Risk Assessment Questionnaire must be submitted through the inquiry process.

Documents for Applicant Review Only

- [RFA business documents](#) detail the rules and expectations for the RFA process and outlines the terms and conditions that typically appear in State of Colorado contracts.

Submission Instructions

This Request for Applications (RFA) is issued by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), also referred to as the "State". The CDPHE contact listed in these instructions is the sole point of contact concerning this RFA.

1. During the solicitation process for this RFA, all official communication with applicants will be via notices on the [Colorado Center of Excellence in Newcomer Health Colorado Resources](#) website listed in the schedule of activities. Notices may include any modifications to administrative or performance requirements, answers to inquiries received, clarifications to requirements, and the announcement of the apparent winning applicants. Applicants are responsible for monitoring for publication of modifications to this solicitation. It is incumbent upon applicants to carefully and regularly monitor for any such notices. Applicants are not to contact any other state office or individual regarding this RFA or this project. Applicants are not to rely on any other statements that alter any specification or other term or condition of the solicitation.
2. One completed copy of the Request for Application Cover Sheet & Signature Page must be signed digitally or in ink, preferably blue ink, by a person who is legally authorized to bind the applicant to the application. Submissions that

are determined to be at a variance with this requirement may be deemed non-responsive and may not be accepted.

All materials submitted shall become the property of the CDPHE.

Instructions for Electronic Applications

- Applications must be received electronically via the Google Form Cultural Navigation Immunizations RFA application by no later than by the due date and time indicated on the cover page of this document. Faxed applications will not be accepted.

Questions and Inquiries

Applicants may make written inquiries via email to obtain clarification of requirements concerning this RFA. No inquiries will be accepted after the date and time indicated in the Schedule of Activities. Send all inquiries to:

Cultural Navigation Team
cdphe_cultural_navigator@state.co.us

Clearly identify your inquiries with:

1. RFA Number
2. RFA Title
3. The section number and paragraph number the inquiry applies to.

Responses to applicant inquiries will be published as an outline in the Schedule of Activities by the close of business on the date indicated. Applicants are not to rely on any other statements that alter any specification or other term or condition of the RFA.

Schedule of Activities

Schedule of Activities Timeline	Time	Date
RFA published on the Colorado Center of Excellence in Newcomer Health website	Not applicable	8/26/24

Schedule of Activities Timeline	Time	Date
Deadline for applicants to submit written inquiries • Submit all Inquiries by email to the cultural navigation team at cdphe_cultural_navigator@state.co.us by 5:00pm on Thursday, 9/26/24 • No questions will be accepted after this date and time	5:00pm	9/26/24
Answers to written inquiries and any changes to the RFA published on the Colorado Center of Excellence in Newcomer Health website	10:00am	9/27/24
Application submission deadline	5:00pm	9/27/24
Evaluation approximately 10/11/24	Not applicable	10/11/24
Estimated contracted effective date	Not applicable	12/1/24