



Community Health Improvement Grant Program

Request for Proposals

Summary

- **Purpose** – Community Health Improvement grants are made to community coalitions working together to address major public health concerns
- **Amount** – Grants range from \$250,000 to \$1 million over three years (full awards will be made in one-third increments per each year of the project upon meeting annual performance benchmarks)
- **Matching** –Community Health Improvement grants require a minimum one-to-one match (may come from multiple sources; up to one-half may be in-kind)
- **Applying** – Requests are made through a Letter of Intent, submitted online at BCBSLAFoundation.org (Smart Simple)
- **Deadlines** – March 1 & September 1

Purpose

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana Foundation (Louisiana Blue Foundation) is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of Louisianans. We know that grassroots coalitions are the key to making long-term changes in the trends of Louisiana’s overall health. That’s why we’re challenging communities across Louisiana to build effective teams to tackle their most pressing health problems.

Each community’s top health challenges are different, and Community Health Improvement grant proposals may cover a wide range of issues in healthcare. In some places, addressing obesity, heart disease or diabetes may be the most pressing need in community health. In others, greater challenges may lie in mental health or disparities in access, quality or cost.

Community Health Improvement grants will help Louisiana communities reshape their environments to support healthy living and improve wellbeing for all.

Project Design

The ideal Community Health Improvement grant project will identify a pressing issue in community health and tackle the root causes of that issue. Projects should have and incorporate:

- A **comprehensive plan** outlining the **community health need** (using data from reputable sources—see examples below) and a demonstrated link between that need and the proposed project.
 - Potential Data Sources:
 - [America's Health Rankings | AHR](#)
 - [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#)
 - [Our Story | Louisiana State Health Improvement Plan](#)
- **Multiple collaborators** who make up a coalition capable of achieving the project's aims and sustaining the effort/ programs after the grant period
- A proposal based in research and **best-practice models**
- **Clear & measurable health outcomes** for each year of the initiative (see example Goals/KPIs in additional information section)
- An initial **matching contribution** as well as plans for sustaining the project after the grant period ends

How to Apply

Application Components

- **Online Letter of Intent** - We accept online Letters of Intent submissions twice a year (March/Sept.) Letters of Intent should outline the project, its partners, a brief statement of need, key progress indicators and outcomes for success, evaluation methods and how funds will be used.
- **Full Application** – Based on Letters of Intent, we will invite the most compelling applicants to complete a formal application. This formal application will provide a narrative outline of the project, target audience/geography, need, deliverables, use of funds and partners (if applicable).

Selection and Awards

Submitting a Letter of Intent is only the first step. If a project is selected for consideration, we will ask applicants to submit a formal application online. Submitting a full application is not a guarantee of funding. We cannot guarantee that we will invite every interested organization to submit a full application.

Funding is limited; we cannot fund every project even if it meets our criteria for success.

The maximum amount awarded per grant will be \$1 million over three years (typical grants are in the \$350,000 range). The Louisiana Blue Foundation staff will evaluate full applications based on several criteria with assistance from a panel of experts. This information will be presented to the Foundation's Board of Directors. Funding for Community Health Improvement grants is at the sole discretion of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana Foundation's Board of Directors.

The ideal Community Health Improvement project is:

- Based on a clear challenge to a community's health
- Backed by theory or research
- Comprehensive and systemic, addressing root challenges of public health issues
- Properly staffed by an organization with capacity to complete the project, and backed by a community coalition substantial enough to achieve desired outcomes
- Scalable and, if successful, able to be replicated in other places.

If your organization receives a Community Health Improvement grant award, your grant contract will stipulate an annual report on progress/program with data.

Need Help?

Check out the Additional Information below for more information. If you still have questions, email us at bcbslafoundation@lblue.com.

Please include your name, organization name, your contact information, and interested grant program name.

Additional Information

Below, we've gathered answers to the most common questions we receive. We kindly ask that you review this session before reaching out. As a small team supporting many nonprofit partners, we appreciate your help in keeping our inbox manageable by checking here first!

Example Goals with Key Progress Indicators for Health Issues:

Health Issue	Key Progress Indicators for Goals
Food Insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ # of households receiving additional food resources ■ % increase in access to healthy food
Access: Primary Care Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ # and % increase of primary care providers/future providers
Childhood Immunizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ # of children served who receive all recommended vaccines by age 35 months
Chronic Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ # of people with fewer chronic conditions (arthritis, asthma, chronic kidney disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cardiovascular disease, cancer, depression and diabetes)

2025 Grant-Making Priorities & Projects

<p>Healthcare Workforce & People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Innovative approaches to shorten time to graduation, increase efficiency of programs etc. ■ Currently underdeveloped sectors of work – primary care & mental health 	<p>Maternal & Infant Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Expanding doula numbers, access and usage ■ Engaging expecting mothers to programs/ supports/ care, particularly around healthy food access and nutrition ■ Expanding high-quality home visiting and maternal mental health access efforts for those in need 	<p>Mental Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increasing/ expanding provider training ■ Increasing rates of accessing care at appropriate times, particularly as measured by HEDIS/ local health data. ■ Decreasing rates of opioid and related substance abuse addiction
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2025 Priorities and Projects, continued:

Health Outcomes

- Improving Childhood Vaccination Rates, particularly as measured by HEDIS/local health data.
- Improving Hypertension and Diabetes outcomes generally and via medication adherence, particularly as measured by HEDIS and local health data.
- Efforts that will measurably improve Louisiana's results on America's Health Rankings/ HEDIS Measures or other national/ regional/ state measures.

Collaboration

- Opportunities to back strong local leadership/plans, such as Community Health Plans, that are likely to improve health outcomes in measurable ways
- Opportunities to leverage your grant funds to attract other philanthropic partners, national, or regional investments to Louisiana that otherwise would not be possible

Projects: Nevers and Maybes

Generally "No" Topics: Details

Education

- **Health & Mentoring:** Maybe
- **Direct Education Services:** No
- We generally do not fund Pre-K, K-12 or Higher Education Efforts and specifically do not fund in places where public funds are already available to pay for programs, for example the primary operations of schools or universities.
- Where we do invest in education it tends to be in places where there is:
 - **A direct health outcome as a primary output**, such as a school-based health pilot focused on health screenings, or efforts to expand the number of nursing graduates from a university.
 - **Leveraged or catalyzed funding**, where our funds fill a gap and bring others to support, such helping schools access to Medicaid Funds, or regional healthcare workforce investments where your grant is matched by another funder.

Government Partnerships

- We generally do not fund government led and administered programs and specifically will not have our funds allocated to general government budgets.
- We have invested in some instances where government has already invested heavily and has real “skin in the game” in success of the project, such as cities raising other funds or tax revenue to improve walkability, safety and health.

Infrastructure

- We generally do not fund infrastructure projects and specifically will not fund healthcare facilities or other items that should be covered by medical/ insurance reimbursement or community development items that should otherwise be covered by public tax dollars
- Where we have invested is under unique circumstances which involve:
 - Where there is a clear and measurable health outcome in the reasonably short-term from the investment
 - Where others are also substantively investing and/ or where our funds can be used to help leverage others
 - Where there is a unique and compelling case of why this investment needs to be made at this time and can’t otherwise be covered by existing means

Healthcare Services

- We generally do not fund items that would be considered direct health care and will not fund healthcare providers, services or other items that would otherwise be covered by medical/ insurance reimbursement
- Where we do invest in this arena it tends to be in place where:
 - There is a safety-net need that isn’t being met and where non-profit providers are filling the gap
 - Where there are systemic or multi-partner issues that are being addressed in compressive ways and where we can be a partner to addressing these issues

Eligibility

Per our Board of Directors, we do not fund the following in any circumstances:

- Organizations that discriminate in their provision of goods and services based on race, color, religion, national origin, disability, sex, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, veteran status, or marital status
- Organizations that do not have a 501(c)3 or appropriate non-profit designation and/ or are not in good standing with the Louisiana Secretary of State
- Research and development of medicines and medical devices, including trials and therapeutic related efforts
- Individual or individual fundraisers, athletic teams, pageants, profit making enterprises or other efforts where the aim is not specifically and explicitly working to improve the health and lives of the people of Louisiana
- General operating/programmatic requests from existing non-profits, recognizing that our grants are designed to be short-term in nature.