



Building Strategic Communications Capacity Among Community-Based Organizations Working to Create Healthier Environments

Request for Applications 2025

Opportunity

The [National Council for Environmental Health and Equity](#) (EH Council), which is convened by the [American Public Health Association](#) (APHA), is currently accepting applications from community-based organizations to participate in a one-time capacity-building mini-grant program. The purpose of the project is to provide strategic communications support to organizations to enhance their organization's profile among their community, partners and donor network as well as provide the tools to effectively communicate with their communities.

The application is open to community-based organizations that are working to improve the health of their communities and their environments, with a specific focus on environmental health hazards. Organizations awarded will receive \$25,000 and capacity building by way of workshop(s), technical assistance, and/or community of practice sessions.

Goals

- Support the applicant's mission in advancing healthier environments and communities through increased visibility and awareness of the applicant's work among various audiences
- Build or enhance strategic communications that elevate community voice and community-centered solutions that advance healthier environments

Program Components

Funding- Each organization will receive \$25,000 to assist with program participation and implementation of strategic planning project goals.

Community of Practice (CoP)- There will be opportunities to engage with peer grantees to share any lessons learned and best practices through the duration of the mini-grant program period.

Access to Strategic Communications and Environmental Health Experts- APHA will host a workshop/training related to strategic communications to help grantees learn about strategic communications and strategies to implement within their own organization. Additionally, members of the EH Council may be available to discuss environmental health hazards and approaches toward creating healthier environments.

Eligibility

This opportunity is open to U.S.-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations with a demonstrated ability to work with community members to support and advance healthier environments and communities.

- Organizations should be reflective of the communities disproportionately affected by environmental health hazards such as pollutants and toxins.
- Some exceptions may apply. If your organization does not have 501(c)(3) status but has an existing relationship with an organization that holds 501(c)(3) status that could serve as a fiscal agent, please indicate in your response and the program administrator will follow up to discuss potential eligibility.
- Funding cannot be used for any federal, state, or local lobbying activities.

Scope of Work/Program Requirements

This project is a three-month grant commitment to strengthen strategic communications within community-based organizations through training, opportunity to engage with environmental health experts, and peer learning. Upon award and executed contract, the grantee will be expected to:

- Attend three community of practice virtual 90-minute convenings with grantee cohort
 - Dates of the CoP sessions: May 27, 3- 4:30 p.m. ET; June 24, 3- 4:30 p.m. ET; and July 24, 3:00-4:30 p.m. ET
- Participate in one (1) training/workshop related to strategic communications with option to engage in individual technical assistance sessions
- Develop one deliverable based upon strategic communications training/workshop that will be used by the applicant and share with APHA
- Respond in a timely manner to communications and requests from APHA
- Complete grant program evaluation activities

Optional activities include:

- Meet with members of the EH Council to further discuss environmental health hazards and approaches toward creating healthier environments
- Meet with APHA program coordinator to discuss work progress or guidance
- Present at a future EH Council virtual meeting or the [American Public Health Association's 2025 Annual Meeting and Expo](#) in Washington D.C.
- Opportunity to amplify work of community-based organization on national level via APHA and partner communications networks

Timeline

The EH Council anticipates awarding ten community-based organizations \$25,000 each, in early May. This one-time grant opportunity will conclude on July 31, 2025.

Program Component	Date
Application Opens	April 7, 2025
Submission Deadline	April 28, 2025, 5 p.m. ET
Application Acceptances and Regrets Disseminated	May 12, 2025
Acceptance Deadline	May 26, 2025
Community of Practice Sessions (virtual)	May 27, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. ET June 24, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. ET July 24, 3:00-4:30 p.m. ET
Strategic Communications Workshop + coaching sessions (virtual)	TBD
Project Deliverable and Evaluation Response Due	July 31, 2025

Incurred Expenses

APHA will not be responsible for any costs incurred by any Offeror in preparing and submitting a proposal or in performing any other activities relative to this solicitation.

Selection Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed and objectively evaluated based on how the community-based organization's application aligns with the overall goals and purpose of this mini-grant program.

Diversity among grantees in terms of types of environmental health hazard concerns, geography, population density and communities served will be considered.

Important Notes

This request for applications will be open until April 28, 2025, 5 p.m. ET. Late submissions will not be accepted.

We will begin notifying applicants of acceptances or regrets by May 12, 2025. All awarded applicants must fully execute the agreement within 10 business days of receiving APHA's agreement, or the award may be forfeited. Please ensure your organization reviews and agrees to this timeline prior to your application submission.

Feedback will not be provided for applications not selected for the grant award.

This project is supported by CDC-RFA-PW24-0080 Strengthening Public Health Systems and Services through National Partnerships to Improve and Protect the Nation's Health cooperative agreement between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Public Health Association. The contents of this document do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC.

FAQ

I'd like to learn more about strategic communications to determine if my organization is a right fit.

If you'd like to learn more about strategic communications strategies for community-based organizations, review [this guide](#) APHA created in partnership with Resonance Communications.

Can an organization submit more than one application?

Only one application per community-based organization will be accepted.

How many organizations will be awarded?

Ten community-based organizations will be awarded the grant.

What types of activities can be funded?

This funding opportunity will support activities related to strategic communications to help build capacity among community-based organizations working toward environments that foster health. Funding may support new or developing efforts as well as strengthen current efforts in strategic communications.

Funding may not be used for federal, state or local lobbying efforts. The award will be disbursed in two amounts. Upon award and execution of the contract, the grantee will receive \$20,000 and upon completion of the grant program and reporting requirements, the grantee will receive the second disbursement of \$5,000.

Questions

If you have questions about the RFA, please email environment@apha.org by April 21, 2025. We will do our best to respond to questions received in a timely manner. No phone calls or zoom meetings will be hosted to discuss the RFP further.

Proposal Submission

Applications must be submitted online at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EHMiniGrants>. The information requested is outlined and described below. We strongly encourage applicants to prepare their responses in advance and then copy and paste the responses into the form. If you have any questions about the RFA, please email environment@apha.org.

Applicant Information

1. Point of Contact (Name)
2. Point of Contact (Email)
3. Point of Contact (Phone)- *optional*
4. List additional team members who will be involved in the mini-grants program
5. Organization name
6. Organization address
7. Organization website (if applicable)
8. Brief description of organization's mission and values

Eligibility

This opportunity is open to U.S.-based 501(c)(3)* nonprofit organizations with a demonstrated ability to work with community members to support and advance healthier environments and communities.

- Organizations should be reflective of the communities disproportionately affected by environmental health hazards such as pollutants and toxins.
- **Some exceptions may apply. If your organization does not have 501(c)(3) status but has an existing relationship with an organization that holds 501(c)(3) status that could serve as a fiscal agent, please indicate in your response and the program administrator will follow up to discuss potential eligibility.*

Funding cannot be used for any federal, state, or local lobbying activities.

Application Questions

- Describe your organization and the community you serve. Share more information about the environmental health hazards your community has experienced and some ways your community-based organization has worked with communities to create healthier environments so people can thrive. (1,500 characters max)

- Discuss how you will engage or already partner with your community to integrate community-led solutions to environmental health hazards and health impacts experienced in your community. (800 characters max)

- Describe how your organization would benefit from creating a communications strategy to strengthen the organization's visibility and impact. (800 characters max)

- List up to three project indicators you will use to measure your communications work. (600 characters max)
 - a. Some examples could be: Identify communications goals, conduct audience profiling, identify messages and stories connecting to audience, strategies to reach goals and audience.

- Please confirm that you are able to adhere to the program requirements:

This project is a three-month grant commitment to strengthen strategic communications within community-based organizations through training, opportunity to engage with environmental health experts, and peer learning. Upon award and executed contract, the grantee will be expected to:

- a. Attend three community of practice virtual 90-minute convenings with grantee cohort.
 - i. Dates of the CoP sessions: May 27, 3- 4:30 p.m. ET; June 24, 3- 4:30 p.m. ET; and July 24, 3:00-4:30 p.m. ET
 - ii. Note- We prefer to have a consistent presence of the primary point of contact attending the CoP sessions.
- b. Participate in 1 training/ workshop related to strategic communications with option to engage in individual technical assistance sessions
- c. Develop one deliverable based upon strategic communications training/ workshop that will be used by the applicant and share with APHA
- d. Respond to grant program evaluation activities

Proposed Budget

A \$25,000 grant award will be provided to support grant activities. An itemized budget is not necessary; rather summarize the cost of the activity(ies) used for the grant. Budget categories such as total salaries and fringe, indirect and direct costs are allowed. You can use the below table if helpful in creating the budget.

Activity/ Category	Brief Description/Justification	Cost/ Rate

Additional Questions

- Please rank your preferred way to communicate:
 - text, email, phone call
- How would you like to receive communications from a peer learning and resource sharing group?
 - Listserv,
 - LinkedIn group,
 - Email
- If you would like to receive emails about upcoming grant opportunities, new resources, events, and more, please click 'opt-in' here.
- Would your organization like this grant application to be shared with other potential funders and partners if unfunded?
- Would your organization be interested in having your work be amplified/ shared on a national level by members of the EH Council?