



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT
of HEALTH SERVICES

Request for Applications

Wisconsin Immunization Coalition

Application due date: November 5th, 2021 at 4:00 pm CST **(no exceptions)**

Anticipated award notification date: December 15th, 2021

Send questions regarding this request for applications to:
bogdan.popa@dhs.wisconsin.gov

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Summary

This memo outlines a request for funding announcement (RFA) that will award one entity in Wisconsin up to 1.8 million dollars to develop, implement, and maintain a statewide immunization coalition. Broadly, this coalition will help facilitate equitable, evidenced-based, effective immunization practices statewide to prevent serious illness, disability, and death in Wisconsin from vaccine preventable diseases. To this end, the statewide immunization coalition will support the broad range of Wisconsin immunization stakeholders as well as coordinate and encourage immunization-focused education for the public, healthcare professionals, and other stakeholders. Moreover, the funded statewide coalition will use a health equity framework to guide the above listed work. The deadline to apply for this RFA is November 5th, 2021, with contracts estimated to begin January 1st, 2022. The funds are for a one-year period.

Introduction

Effective promotion and education regarding vaccination requires significant coordination of multiple stakeholders across the state. Therefore, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) is funding this RFA to support the establishment of a unifying state-level immunization coalition in Wisconsin to improve vaccine confidence in all populations throughout the state.

Since its emergence in late 2019, COVID-19 has quickly become a pandemic with severe consequences on human life (e.g., illnesses, deaths, and job losses) and healthcare resources (e.g., shortages in hospital equipment and staffing). COVID-19 vaccination efforts are critical to stopping this pandemic. As such, applicants' proposed scope of work must include a focus on COVID-19 vaccines as well as routine child and adult vaccines. This is critical because since the start of the pandemic, there have been disruptions in routine immunization activity. If sustained, such disruptions will have long-lasting impacts on herd immunity against vaccine preventable diseases and create opportunities for potential outbreaks. Therefore, applicants must discuss their proposed coalition work on routine immunizations for children and adults as well.

Successful applicants for this RFA have familiarity or expertise in immunizations and past experience coordinating large-scale coalitions. Broadly, applicants must explain their capacity for and approach to coordinating a statewide immunization coalition that supports local organizations/immunization coalitions and the education of the public, healthcare professionals, and other stakeholders. Applicants must also discuss their health equity experience and expertise, and how they will incorporate health equity into their proposed coalition work.



Eligibility Information

To apply for funding, applicants must be based in Wisconsin and conduct their proposed coalition work in Wisconsin. Also, they must be willing to manage the grant funds and the proposed program in accordance with this RFA's requirements. Furthermore, eligible organizations may not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, age, or national origin in their staffing policies, use of volunteers, or provision of services.

Funding Overview

Award Amount

This opportunity will award one agency with up to 1.8 million dollars, depending on the proposed scope of work. The awarded agency will be selected based on evaluations by a review panel. Funding will be available upon award for a one-year period.

Should additional funding become available at any point during the course of the grant period, the Wisconsin Immunization Program reserves the right to use the results of this competitive application process to increase funding to the selected agency. Wisconsin DHS also reserves the right to award a grant for less than an applicant's proposed amount.

Applicants' budgets must abide by DHS' Allowable Cost Policy Manual (<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/business/allow-cost-manual.htm>) and with CDC's guidance on allowable and unallowable costs (outlined below).

Allowable Costs

- Personnel
 - Salary/wages
 - Fringe benefits
- Travel
 - National/state/local/regional travel for meetings/conferences (excluding meals)
 - Travel for provision of services
 - **Please note that all travel will need to comply with any guidance/restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic**
- Supplies and Equipment



- Office resources (e.g., fax machines, printers, copiers, computers, pens, paper, paper clips, ink cartridges, online meeting/webinar software)
- Materials (e.g., postage, professionally-printed pamphlets/posters)
- Contractual
 - Contractual staff and services (e.g., media campaigns)
- Indirect expenses
 - Overhead or administrative expenses that are not specific to one project or activity (e.g., rent, utilities, cell phones, and internet). Instead, these costs often benefit multiple projects/activities occurring at an agency.
 - **Indirect expenses cannot exceed 10% of an applicant's total proposed budget.**
- Miscellaneous
 - Accounting services
 - Recruitment of staff or trainees
 - Staff trainings
 - Translation services

Unallowable Costs

- Land purchases, construction, capital improvements, or renovations
- Lease or purchase of vehicles
- Loan interest for the acquisition and/or modernization of an existing building
- Bonding
- Depreciation on use charges
- Payment of bad debt
- Fundraising
- Lobbying¹

¹ For more guidance on what constitutes lobbying, see CDC's restrictions on lobbying (<https://www.cdc.gov/grants/documents/Anti-Lobbying-Restrictions.pdf>)



- Research
- Reimbursement of pre-award costs
- Supplanting existing federal funds awarded by other federal sources
- Clinical care to the public
- Purchase of vaccines
- Development of major software applications
- Honoraria
- Monetary (e.g., cash or gift cards) or non-monetary incentives (e.g. trinkets like magnets and hand sanitizer) for public participation
- Advertisements specific to the agency as a brand (e.g., memorabilia, gifts)
- Dry cleaning
- Alcohol and food
- Entertainment

Application Process

Step 1: Review Application Timeline

Table 1 contains key dates about the application process.

Table 1. Application Timeline

Event	Date
RFA Release Date	October 4 th 2021
Emailed Questions Deadline	October 18 th 2021
Frequently Asked Questions Posted Online	October 25 th 2021
Application Deadline	November 5 th 2021
Estimated Date for Notice of Award	December 15 th 2021



Step 2: Ask Any Questions

For questions about this RFA, email Dan Popa (bogdan.popa@dhs.wisconsin.gov) by October 18th 2021. Please provide a specific email subject line (i.e., Question about Wisconsin Immunization Coalition RFA–Applicant Agency Name). Answers will be emailed back as soon as possible and will be posted in a frequently asked questions (FAQ) document. The FAQ document will be posted online shortly after the deadline for emailed questions on the same website where applicants initially accessed this RFA (i.e., [DHS' List of Current Grant Funding Opportunities](#)). If applicants have difficulty finding the FAQ document, please email Dan Popa (bogdan.popa@dhs.wisconsin.gov). No identifying information about the individuals/organizations that asked the questions will be posted in the FAQ document.

If an applicant needs reasonable accommodations for a disability (e.g., provision of this RFA's information in an alternative format), please email Dan Popa (bogdan.popa@dhs.wisconsin.gov). Upon request, the Wisconsin Immunization Program will provide reasonable accommodations.

Step 3: Complete an Application Form

Before applying, interested agencies can review a copy of the application form in Appendix A. When ready to apply, applicants should type up their answers to the application's questions in a Microsoft Word document.

To do so, applicants should return to the website where they initially accessed this RFA PDF file (i.e., [DHS' List of Current Grant Funding Opportunities](#)). Then applicants should click on the posting for this specific RFA, "Wisconsin Immunization Coalition," and then click on its associated "Solicitation Link." Doing so, will direct the applicant to this RFA's posting on the Wisconsin's Public Notices website, where applicants will find a downloadable, Microsoft Word copy of this RFA's application form.

Alternatively, applicants can copy and paste Appendix A from this RFA PDF file into a Microsoft Word document. If applicants opt to copy and paste, they should verify their work plan and budget table are formatted appropriately (e.g., fit the margins of the Word document). If applicants have any questions about the application form or how to access it, please email Dan Popa (bogdan.popa@dhs.wisconsin.gov).

Step 4: Review your Agency's Application

After applicants answer all of the application form's questions in a Microsoft Word document, applicants should verify they have completed all necessary components by reviewing Table 2 below.



Table 2. Application Checklist

- Section 1: Agency Profile
- Section 2: Agency's Purpose and Experience
 - 1. Agency's mission
 - 2. Experience working in the field of immunizations
 - 3. Experience with coalition leadership
 - 4. Experience managing grants and contracts
 - 5. Experience with implementing trainings, technical assistance, and or conferences.
 - 6. Experience with health education and communication to the public, healthcare professionals, and other stakeholders.
 - 7. Experience with program evaluation
 - 8. Experience with health equity
- Section 3: Proposed Coalition Structure
 - 1. Description of the coalition's intended staffing
 - 2. Description of additional structural considerations for the coalition
 - 3. Description of the coalition's funding sustainability plan
- Section 4: Proposed Scope of Work
 - 1. Description of the coalition's initial work plan
 - 2. Description of the coalition's initial evaluation plan
 - 3. Description of how health equity will be incorporated into the initial work plan
- Section 5: Budget
 - Budget table
 - Budget narrative
 - 1. Personnel costs
 - 2. Travel costs
 - 3. Supplies and equipment costs
 - 4. Subcontract/consulting costs
 - 5. Indirect costs
 - 6. Miscellaneous costs

Step 5: Submit Application

When it is completed, applicants should save their document as a PDF file and email it to Dan Popa (bogdan.popa@dhs.wisconsin.gov) at the Wisconsin Immunization Program **no later than 4:00 PM CST on November 5th 2021 (no exceptions)**. Please refer to the application in the email subject line (i.e., Application for the Wisconsin Immunization Coalition RFA–Applicant Agency Name). The Wisconsin Immunization Program will email back to confirm receipt of applications.



Review Process

Technical Review of Applications

All applications will be subject to an initial technical review for completeness and adherence to the RFA's specifications and requirements. Applications that pass the initial technical review will be forwarded to the review panel for scoring. Applications that fail the initial review will receive no further consideration.

Review Panel and Funding Recommendations

Applications that pass the initial technical review will be evaluated and scored by a panel of reviewers with knowledge of: public health, health care, and/or immunizations. This panel of reviewers will consist of staff from DHS. Reviewers will independently evaluate and score applications. Then all scored applications will be compared with each other.

Based on the review panel's scoring and evaluation, the Wisconsin Immunization Program will make funding recommendations to the Wisconsin Division of Public Health Administrator for final consideration.

DHS will award the applicant that best demonstrates their ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of this RFA. As part of this review process, consideration will be given to such matters as: agency integrity, record of past performance, financial and technical resources, funding availability, organizational capacity, program efficiency, cost effectiveness, and the ability to provide high-quality services.

DHS reserves the right to reject any and all submissions. Also, DHS reserves the option to conduct discussions with agencies about their applications for clarification purposes. If discussions are conducted, applicants will be invited to modify their applications as needed. DHS may negotiate the terms of the contract, including the award amount, with the selected applicant prior to entering into a contract. If contract negotiations cannot be concluded successfully with a recommended applicant, DHS may terminate contract negotiations with that applicant.



Scoring Overview

Presented below is the scoring criteria that will be used to evaluate the merit of applications submitted for this RFA. The maximum score possible for an application is 100 points. Individual sections of the application form will be scored as follows:

- Section 1: Agency Profile (0 points)
- Section 2: Agency Purpose and Experience (35 points)
- Section 3: Proposed Coalition Structure (25 points)
- Section 4: Proposed Scope of Work (25 points)
- Section 5: Budget (15 points)

Award Notices

After the review and selection process has ended, the Wisconsin Immunization Program will email all applicants about whether or not funding is being awarded to them. The estimated date for this notice is December 15th 2021.

Expectations of the Awardee

Expenditure Reports

The awardee will be expected to regularly submit invoices in expense reports (typically monthly) to the Wisconsin Immunization Program for reimbursement. More details will be provided after the award decision is made.

Progress Reports

The awardee will submit quarterly written progress reports to the Wisconsin Immunization Program. Using a template provided by the program, the awardee will describe progress towards the coalition's goal(s) and SMART (i.e., specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-phased) objective(s). Also, at the end of the grant, the awardee will be expected to submit a final report using a template provided by the Wisconsin Immunization Program. Additionally, the awardee will be expected to participate in regular check-in calls with the project officer for this grant.



Appendix A: Application Form

Instructions:

This application form has five broad sections to complete (i.e., agency profile, the agency's purpose and experience, proposed coalition structure, proposed scope of work, and budget).

The questions requiring open-ended, written responses have an assigned word or page count limit. Responses should not exceed the assigned word or page count limits. There may be instances where your responses are shorter than the word or page count limits. That is not problematic so long as your responses answer the questions (i.e., quality is more important than quantity).

Your responses must be single-spaced with size 12, Arial or Times New Roman font.

When ready to apply, applicants should type up their answers to the application's questions in a Microsoft Word document. To do so, applicants should return to the website where they initially accessed this RFA PDF file (i.e., [DHS' List of Current Grant Funding Opportunities](#)). Then applicants should click on this RFA, "Wisconsin Immunization Coalition," and then click on its associated "Solicitation Link." Doing so will direct the applicant to this RFA's posting on the Wisconsin's Public Notices website, where applicants will find a downloadable, Microsoft Word copy of this RFA's application form.

Alternatively, applicants can copy and paste Appendix A from this RFA PDF file into a Microsoft Word document. If applicants opt to copy and paste, they should verify their work plan and budget table are formatted appropriately (e.g., fit the margins of the Word document). If applicants have any questions about the application form or how to access it, please email Dan Popa (bogdan.popa@dhs.wisconsin.gov).



Section 1: Agency Profile

1) Your agency's legal name:		
2) Address:		
3) Please provide a brief summary of your application (300 words or less).		
4) Total budget requested:		
In the table below, provide the name, title, and signature of the individual who is authorized to sign contracts for your agency. This can be an electronic signature, or you can print, sign by hand, and scan this document.		
Printed Name		Signature
Title		
Email		
Phone Number		



Section 2: Agency's Purpose and Experience

- 1) What is your agency's mission? What does it do? What population(s) and location(s) does it serve? **(250 words max)**
- 2) What work experience does your agency have in the field of immunizations? **(400 words max)**
- 3) What experience does your agency have with leading coalitions (i.e., strategic planning, group facilitation, decision-making, fostering partnerships/collaborations)? **(600 words max)**
- 4) What experience does your agency have in effectively managing grants and contracts? **(300 words max)**
- 5) What experience does your agency have with implementing trainings, technical assistance, and or conferences? **(300 words max)**
- 6) What experience does your agency have with health education of and communication to audiences such as the general public, health care professionals, or other stakeholders? **(400 words max)**
- 7) What experience does your agency have evaluating and reporting on the processes and outcomes associated with its services? **(300 words max)**
- 8) What experience does your agency have with incorporating health equity into its work? **(300 words max)**

Section 3: Proposed Coalition Structure

- 1) Please describe the intended staffing structure of your proposed coalition **(800 words max)**. Include details about why these staffing decisions were made (e.g., what resources/strengths does the lead agency have to overcome any potential barriers? What knowledge, experience, and credibility does each proposed organization or representative bring to the coalition?). DHS acknowledges the coalition has not been formalized and is subject to change. Still it is important that as the lead agency, you have a strong initial plan around staffing of the coalition. To the best of your knowledge, describe your initial plan for staffing factors such as:
 - Lead agency
 - Convenes the coalition and is responsible for its operation including fiscal needs.



- Member organizations
 - Participating agencies that send representatives to coalition meetings. Provide a list of specific agencies or types of agencies/sectors you intend to invite to the coalition.
- Coalition staff (i.e., chairperson, facilitator, and other support staff)
 - Discuss your staffing decisions about leading the coalition, facilitating meetings, and supporting other logistics (e.g., planning meetings/conferences, sending emails, recruiting members, managing fundraising).
- Subcommittees
 - Committees within the coalition focused on specific topics. These groups meet separate from the rest of the coalition and report regularly to the coalition. Discuss your initial plans for subcommittees (if any).
- Steering committee
 - A subset of the coalition membership responsible for key decisions and planning, especially between meetings. Typically, this includes the chairperson and leaders of various subcommittees. Discuss your initial steering committee plans.
- Any individual members
 - Individuals that join the coalition but do not represent any participating agencies. Provide a list of individuals you intend to invite to the coalition (if any).
- Other roles
 - Describe other roles (if any).

2) Please describe your initial plans for the following structural considerations (800 words max):

- How will you recruit members?
- How will the decision-making process work and to what degree will power be shared?
- How will you keep your membership informed (especially between meetings)?
- What will your record-keeping system look like (e.g., how will you create and store documents and meeting minutes in case of auditing)?
- What will the coalition's fiscal structure/accounting process look like?



- Will you have the resources needed to implement your work plan?
 - This is not an exhaustive list of considerations. So, please share any other pertinent details about your coalition’s structure, if any.
- 3) This RFA will fund the awarded coalition for one year. As such, how do you plan to sustain your coalition’s funding beyond the first year? **(400 words max)**

Section 4: Proposed Scope of Work

1) Please provide a detailed draft work plan for your coalition’s proposed work **(max of 5 single-spaced pages with size 12 font)**. DHS recognizes the plan will likely change some based on future input from the coalition’s full membership after the coalition’s inception. Still, as the lead agency, it is important that you have a strong initial vision for the coalition’s proposed work. For example, what is your plan to improve vaccination rates in Wisconsin through improving immunization organizations’ practices and educating providers and the broader public about immunizations? Applicants’ work plan should discuss the following factors:

- Goal(s)
 - Describe the broad outcomes your coalition hopes to achieve.
- Objective(s)
 - Create specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-phased (SMART) objective(s) that describe what actions you are going to take to achieve your coalition’s goal(s).² The objective(s) should target multiple levels of the social ecological model (e.g., individual and community-level effects).³
- Rationale(s)
 - Identify why accomplishing the objective(s) will meet your goal(s).
- Measure(s)
 - Identify the data sources (e.g., surveys, surveillance data, focus groups) and variables (e.g., number of activities conducted, number of people reached, changes in immunization knowledge) to measure progress on your objective(s).

² For assistance on how to write a SMART objective, refer to this source from CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/evaluation/pdf/brief3b.pdf>)

³ For more information on the social-ecological model, please see <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/about/social-ecologicalmodel.html>.



- Person/Agency Responsible
 - Indicate who is conducting each activity.

There is a template of a work plan table on page 15. It illustrates some example SMART objectives. Applicants can modify this work plan table template by adding their own goals and objectives. Also, rows can be added to the table to accommodate multiple goals and objectives. Applicants can also create their own work plan format as long as it still contains the required content listed above [i.e., goal(s), SMART objective(s), rationale(s), measure(s), and person/agency responsible]. For example, if applicants prefer to create their work plan as a narrative instead of as a table that is acceptable. Also, applicants could technically do both. For example, applicants could submit a detailed narrative version of their work plan in addition to a brief, succinct table version of their work plan. Applicants should present their work plan in the format they feel will best inform reviewers about their coalition’s proposed work. Regardless of the format selected, applicants’ work plan should be placed under question 1 of section 4. Again, the work plan description is limited to five single-spaced pages with size 12 font. Work plan descriptions shorter than the page limit are not problematic so long as your work plan sufficiently addresses the requested details (i.e., quality is more important than quantity).

- 2) How will your coalition evaluate progress on its work plan (e.g., indicators to be assessed, data collection plan, planned analyses)? What does short-, intermediate-, and long-term success look like for your coalition? How will your coalition use its evaluation findings? **(600 words max)**
- 3) How will your coalition incorporate health equity into its work plan? **(500 words max)**



Work Plan Template

<p>Example Goal: Our coalition will help facilitate equitable, evidenced-based, effective immunization practices statewide to prevent serious illness, disability, and death in Wisconsin from vaccine preventable diseases.</p>			
Objectives	Rationales	Measures of Accomplishment	Person/Agency Responsible
<p>Example SMART Objective 1: Within three months of its inception date, the coalition membership will create bylaws that describe the coalition's vision, mission, goals, membership, committees, funding, decision-making processes, and meetings.</p>	<p>Bylaws will formalize the coalition's purpose, structure, and processes. As such, the coalition will be more effective at achieving the above stated goal.</p>	<p>The measure will be the finalized bylaws document.</p>	<p>The chairperson will be responsible for ensuring the bylaws are created with input from the coalition's membership.</p>
<p>Example SMART Objective 2: At the end of year 1, the coalition membership will host a conference for at least 100 vaccinators in Wisconsin about evidenced-based strategies to increase vaccination rates and reduce disparities in the rates.</p>	<p>Sharing these strategies with vaccinators at a conference will help educate vaccinators and achieve the above stated goal.</p>	<p>The measure will be attendance at the conference.</p>	<p>The chairperson and support staff will be responsible for organizing and hosting the conference.</p>



Section 5: Budget

Applicants should complete a budget table and a budget narrative.

Budget Table Instructions:

An example budget table is presented on page 17. Applicants can modify this template or use one of their own design.

Applicants' budget table should show the itemized costs that will be charged to this grant for the following cost categories: personnel, travel, equipment/supplies, contractual, indirect costs, and miscellaneous costs. Applicants' budget table should also show subtotals for each of these cost categories (i.e., grey rows in the budget template) as well as an overall budget total (i.e., last blue row in the budget template).

The budget table is limited to four single-spaced pages with size 12 font. A budget table shorter than this page limit is not problematic so long as the table addresses the requested details (i.e., quality is more important than quantity).

Budget Narrative Instructions:

The budget narrative consists of six questions/prompts. Please provide your written responses to those questions/prompts to provide more details that substantiate the costs listed in your budget table. This allows reviewers to better understand how you arrived at the costs listed and to make sure your spending is appropriate.



Budget Table Template

	Amount Requested
Personnel	
Personnel Item 1	\$
Personnel Item 2	\$
Personnel Item 3	\$
Personnel Item 4	\$
Personnel Subtotal	\$
Travel	
Travel Item 1	\$
Travel Item 2	\$
Travel Item 3	\$
Travel Item 4	\$
Travel Subtotal	\$
Supplies and Equipment	
Supplies and Equipment Item 1	\$
Supplies and Equipment Item 2	\$
Supplies and Equipment Item 3	\$
Supplies and Equipment Item 4	\$
Supplies and Equipment Subtotal	\$
Contractual	
Contractual Item 1	\$
Contractual Item 2	\$
Contractual Item 3	\$
Contractual Item 4	\$
Contractual Subtotal	\$
Indirect Costs	
Indirect Cost 1	\$
Indirect Cost 2	\$
Indirect Cost 3	\$
Indirect Cost 4	\$
Indirect Costs Subtotal	\$
Miscellaneous Costs	
Miscellaneous Cost 1	\$
Miscellaneous Cost 2	\$
Miscellaneous Cost 3	\$
Miscellaneous Cost 4	\$
Miscellaneous Costs Subtotal	\$
Overall Total	\$



Budget Narrative

- 1) Please describe your personnel costs. In doing so, provide the following information for each job/position (e.g., facilitator, communications specialist, health educator, administrative assistant) budgeted for the coalition **(800 words max)**:
 - The position's scope of responsibility (i.e., short job description).
 - Annual salary.
 - Total months of salary budgeted.
 - Percentage of time budgeted.
 - Total salary requested.
 - The rate at which fringe benefits are calculated and the total amount charged to the grant.
- 2) Please describe your costs related to national/state/local/regional travel for meetings, conferences and other activities. Why is this travel needed? **(300 words max)**
- 3) Please describe your costs related to supplies and equipment (e.g., computers, teleconferencing software). Why are these supplies and equipment needed? **(400 words max)**
- 4) Please describe your subcontract/consulting costs. What services will be provided for those costs? What will the agreements look like? How long will the agreements last? **(400 words max)**
- 5) Please describe the details related to your indirect costs (e.g., overhead and administrative costs such as rent, utilities, cell phones, and internet). Why are these costs needed? **(300 words max)**
- 6) Please describe your miscellaneous costs (e.g., accounting services, recruitment of staff or trainees, procurement of goods and services, staff trainings, translation services, printing communications). Why are these costs needed? **(400 words max)**

