

2008 Special Opportunities Grants
Capacity Building Initiative
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Application Submission: January 25, 2008 – June 12, 2008
Applications are accepted on a rolling basis during this time period.

I. Background

The New York State Health Foundation (NYSHealth) has a mission of expanding insurance coverage in New York State, improving access to health care and public health services, and educating New Yorkers about health issues and empowering communities to address them.

In order to have a tangible impact, most of the Foundation's grantmaking is focused on three specific health challenges: expanding coverage, improving the management and prevention of diabetes, and encouraging the integration of substance abuse and mental health services. The Foundation also recognizes it can be an important resource to New York State if it is responsive to opportunities throughout the State to either improve the operations of the health care and public health system, or to take advantage of opportunities to build capacity that can improve access to services.

Organizations can apply for a 2008 Special Opportunities Capacity Building grant between January 25 and June 12, 2008 before 5 p.m. Grant applications are considered on a rolling basis. Projects are assessed by a panel of reviewers from throughout New York State who have a diverse set of expertise.

NYSHealth expects to award \$6 million in grants as part of the 2008 Special Opportunities Grants initiative. Individual grants can vary from \$50,000 to \$1 million. The average Special Opportunities grant is approximately \$200,000. Over the past two years, we have funded 45 of the 900 proposals we received for our Special Opportunities grants program. We regret that our resources allow us to support just one in 20 of the proposals we receive. If you have questions about the application process or the eligibility of your proposed idea for funding, please contact us at specialoppsgrants@nyshealth.org.

II. Projects Eligible for Funding

Projects eligible for Capacity Building Special Opportunities grants represent a one-time opportunity to significantly build capacity for an organization, a network of organizations, or for a community to expand access to services or improve the delivery of services.

Any proposal for a Capacity Building grant should demonstrate that the new capacity is sustainable after the one-time grant support from NYSHealth. It is important to explain the "business plan" for sustaining the new capacity proposed. Highest priority in the review process will be given to projects that:

- expand capacity in service areas that have acute shortages;
- provide services that are needed but are not currently existent; or
- provide services for the State’s most vulnerable populations.

III. Projects Not Eligible for Funding

A range of support requests not eligible for funding under the Capacity Building Special Opportunities initiative are as follows:

- projects that involve marginal expansions of capacity at an organization involved with delivering health care or public health services;
- projects that involve funding of ongoing services or activities that are similar to the normal activities undertaken by an organization;
- projects that involve the development of health information technology including electronic medical records;
- research projects that explore how to improve health care or public health;
- projects that focus on lobbying , political, or fundraising activities; and
- capital purchase or projects.

Past Special Opportunities proposals were most frequently turned down because they requested support for marginal expansions of applicant organizations’ ongoing activities.

IV. Applicant Eligibility

NYSHealth will consider proposals from existing nonprofit (501[c][3]) and for-profit organizations with a significant presence in New York State. Applicant organizations must show that their proposed projects further the charitable mission of the New York State Health Foundation.

V. Review Criteria

NYSHealth’s review panel will consider the following factors as selection criteria:

1. The number of people your expanded capacity expects to reach. Included in these criteria is an assessment of whether the service will actually improve the health of the people reached.

(A proposal’s impact on health is always judged relative to the expected impact of other proposals the Foundation receives. However, in a small community or in the case of organizations that address the needs of a small subset of the population, it is understood that fewer people may be affected by a specific project.)

2. The likelihood that the project will accomplish its goals. When relevant, this would include the likelihood that the activities supported could be sustained after the grant period ends.
3. The applicant organization’s experience, potential, and readiness to successfully undertake the initiative.

4. The inclusion of vulnerable populations in the set of people to be affected by the initiative.
5. The proposal's clarity in making the case that the initiative represents a special opportunity for Foundation funding.
6. The grantee's ability to use this grant to leverage other potential funds to increase the scale of the initiative.

VI. Application Process

Proposals should be submitted using NYSHealth's online application system, which is located on our Web site (www.NYSHealth.org) under the Funding Opportunities heading.

Projects are competitively reviewed on a periodic basis.

While most grants will not exceed \$200,000, funding requests can range from \$50,000 to \$1,000,000. Applicants may request funding for a one- or two-year period.

VI. Timeline & Notification

1. The Foundation will accept proposals for the 2008 Capacity Building Special Opportunities Grant initiative between January 25, 2008 and June 12, 2008 before 5 p.m.
2. Projects are considered and reviewed by a distinguished and diverse review panel on a rolling basis.
3. An NYSHealth staff person will contact you if your project is selected for a grant.

We encourage you to contact us at specialoppsgrants@nyshealth.org with general questions about the Capacity Building Special Opportunities grant initiative, or to determine whether your project fits the funding criteria. In addition, please contact us if you have difficulty using our online application systems

VI. Project Management

The NYSHealth staff members coordinating this grant initiative are George Suttles, Grants and Outreach Coordinator, and Nurys Camargo, National Urban Fellow.