

Request for Proposals

2012 Special Projects Fund

Applicants must submit an online inquiry form to determine whether a proposed project fits the funding criteria. There are two deadlines for the online inquiry form: October 28, 2011, and April 27, 2012. Full applications are accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis with two deadlines: December 9, 2011, and June 15, 2012. Applications must be received on or before each deadline. If submitting on the deadline date, the application must be submitted by 1 p.m. Earlier applicants have a higher probability of receiving funding than those who apply later in the calendar year.

Deadlines:

Online Inquiry Form: October 28, 2011
Application: December 9, 2011

Online Inquiry Form: April 27, 2012
Application: June 15, 2012

I. About the Foundation

The New York State Health Foundation (NYSHealth) has a broad mission to improve the health of New York State residents. In order to have a tangible impact, most of the Foundation's grantmaking is focused on three priority areas: expanding health insurance coverage, improving the management and prevention of diabetes, and encouraging the integration of substance use and mental health services.

II. Background

NYSHealth also recognizes that it can be an important resource if it is responsive to opportunities that fit our mission, but are outside our three priority areas. For this purpose, NYSHealth expects to award grants as part of the 2012 Special Projects Fund. Special Projects Fund awards should be considered one-time, non-renewable funding opportunities. Only in exceptional circumstances would NYSHealth consider making an additional grant for a project that has been previously funded.

Organizations can apply for a 2012 Special Projects Fund grant at any time from the release of this request for proposals (RFP) through June 15, 2012. Grant applications are considered on a rolling basis with two deadlines. Earlier applicants have a higher probability of receiving funding than those who apply later in the calendar year. Special Projects Fund grants are highly competitive. In past years, our resources have allowed us to support just one in 20 proposals that we receive.

III. Competitive Applications

Projects are coordinated interventions over a specified period of time to achieve measurable results. While projects that have impact within one organization or community are eligible, this RFP places emphasis on initiatives that have a large-scale statewide or region-wide impact on New York State's health care system.

After NYSHealth staff review submitted online inquiry forms, they will advise applicants on whether to submit full applications. For detailed guidelines, see the “2012 Special Projects Fund Application Instructions,” which is posted in the “Funding Opportunities” section of the NYSHealth website at www.NYSHealth.org.

Although many projects will be eligible, competitive applications will also:

- Be immediate or time-sensitive opportunities for Foundation funds to make a difference.
- Demonstrate that the project will be sustainable after the one-time grant support from NYSHealth (this is particularly relevant for projects that start new services). It is important to explain the business plan for sustaining the project.
- Include clearly stated evidence of need or opportunity, goals, timelines, objectives and measurable outcomes.
- Have an effective plan for evaluating the measurable impact of the project and the funding received.
- Have strong potential for replication elsewhere in New York State.

IV. Projects Not Eligible for Funding

Requests not eligible for funding include:

- Projects that could be funded in our priority areas of insurance coverage expansion, diabetes, or the integration of mental health and substance use services.
- Projects that involve funding of ongoing services or activities similar to the normal activities undertaken by an organization.
- Core support/organizational infrastructure. Core support includes baseline operating and administrative costs, board development, staff development unrelated to the project, and fundraising activities.
- Projects that involve the purchase, installation, or upgrade of health information technology systems, including electronic medical records.
- Projects that are biomedical research-oriented.
- Projects that focus on lobbying or political activities.
- Capital expenses.

IV. Eligible Applicants

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 proposed projects further the charitable mission of the New York State Health Foundation.

V. Review Criteria

NYSHealth is committed to a fair and transparent proposal review process. Project applications are assessed by a panel comprising reviewers from across the State who possess a diverse set of expertise. NYSHealth's review panel will consider the following factors:

1. Clear articulation of need and a focus on vulnerable populations.
2. Likelihood that a project will accomplish its goals and have a measurable impact.
3. The experience, potential and readiness of the applicant organization to complete the project successfully.
4. Sustainability of the project activities after NYSHealth funds expire (when appropriate), and ability of the applicant to use a grant to leverage other potential funds.
5. Potential for replication.
6. Degree of creativity or innovation exhibited by the project.
7. Clarity of the proposal in making the case that the initiative represents a special opportunity for NYSHealth funding.

VI. Budget

Projects will be assessed for the appropriateness of budget to the proposed scope of work and timeline. Funding requests can range from \$50,000 to \$1,000,000. Special Projects Fund grants are typically in the \$250,000 range. Funds requested must be commensurate to the work proposed.

VII. Application Process

Initial Inquiry: Special Projects Fund applicants are required to complete an online inquiry form to determine whether their projects fit the funding criteria prior to submitting a full application. The inquiry form is available in the "Funding Opportunities" section of the NYSHealth website at www.NYSHealth.org.

Programmatic questions regarding the application process should be e-mailed to specialprojectsfund@nyshealth.org. Questions regarding the online application system should be e-mailed to grantsmanagement@nyshealth.org.

For detailed instructions on the RFP application process, please consult the "2012 Special Projects Fund Application Instructions," and for more information about the Special Projects Fund, consult our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), which is located in the "Funding Opportunities" section of the NYS-Health website at www.NYSHealth.org. We also encourage you to read about the projects funded under the 2010 and 2011 Special Projects Fund RFPs in the "Our Grantees" section of the NYSHealth website.