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Franciscan  
Children's

*So every kid can.*

*Boston Children's Collaboration for Community Health*

## Franciscan Children's Community Health Initiative, a part of the Collaboration for Community Health

### FAQs

Updated as of 1/30/2025

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## [Eligibility and General Guidelines](#)

### **What types of organizations are eligible to apply?**

Eligible organizations must be 501(c)3 tax-exempt organizations. If the organization is not a 501(c)3 nonprofit, they can apply with a tax-exempt fiscal sponsor. Refer to the individual RFPs for potential target applicants.

### **Are faith-based organizations eligible?**

Yes.

### **Are government and city agencies eligible to apply?**

Yes. Government and city agencies and schools may apply in partnership with community-based organizations.

### **Can a larger agency with multiple member organizations apply as a lead applicant?**

Large agencies/organizations with multiple member or affiliate organizations are welcome to apply as a lead applicant. Individual members of those large agencies/organizations are also welcome to submit individual applications as a lead applicant.

### **If our organization receives funding from other philanthropic organizations, are we eligible to apply?**

Yes

### **Do these projects need to be new?**

Projects do not need to be new and can expand upon work your organization is already doing.

### **Can organizations that have previously received or currently receive funds from Boston Children's apply for funds from the Franciscan Children's Community Health Initiative?**

Yes. If you are applying with a project that is currently or was previously funded by Boston Children's, please describe how funds from the Franciscan Children's Community Health Initiative would continue to build upon or expand your work.

### **Can organizations apply for more than one request for proposal (RFP)?**

Yes. Applicants are allowed to submit one proposal as the lead applicant per each RFP area (up to 3 total for this round). However, applicants may not submit the same project under different RFP areas. An organization is also allowed to be a partner applicant (not the lead applicant) on additional submissions under the same RFP area and other RFP areas. We encourage your organization to apply for the initiative that is the best fit rather than as many as possible.

## [Review and Selection Process](#)

### **Who will make the funding decisions?**

Selection Committees made up of 10 - 12 members will be convened to review the proposals. Committees will be made up of community stakeholders including residents and organizational leaders, content area experts, and staff from Franciscan Children's and Boston Children's.

**If my organization is not awarded, will Boston Children's Hospital let me know why?**

Yes. After decisions have been made, email [haley.piette@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:haley.piette@childrens.harvard.edu) request feedback.

Geography

**What is the geographic focus for funding?**

Preference will be given to proposals that benefit children and families located in Boston. Proposals that have the potential for statewide impact from areas outside of Greater Boston will be considered.

**Will you focus on or prefer projects in specific Boston neighborhoods?**

We are prioritizing the following neighborhoods which have the highest concentration of children and families of color and highest rates of child poverty:

- Allston
- Brighton
- Dorchester
- East Boston
- Hyde Park
- Jamaica Plain
- Mattapan
- Mission Hill
- Roxbury

**Will you consider projects with geographies outside of these neighborhoods?**

Yes, however we will consider projects impacting our priority neighborhoods first.

**If our organization also serves neighborhoods outside of Boston, should we include them in the application?**

You may note them, however this RFP is focused on the nine priority neighborhoods shared above.

**How will projects with statewide activities or participants be considered?**

Applicants engaged in statewide activities or participants should emphasize how their work will impact the priority Boston neighborhoods listed above.

Partnerships and Resource Sharing

**What constitutes a partnership?**

We define a partnership as having at least two organizational partners committed to working together and sharing resources. We are looking for true collaboration with sharing of resources (whether that is funding, in-kind, etc.) and shared goals to accomplish the project. Sharing of resources ensures partners are committed to the project and have an existing relationship that ideally includes a memorandum of understanding describing how they will work together to achieve shared goals.

**Do all partners on the application need to have their own 501c3 status?**

No, not all partners need to have a 501c3 status. If you are using a fiscal agent, the funding should go through them.

**If my project has partners, do I need to include an organizational budget from each partner?**

No, you only need to submit an organizational budget for the lead applicant as required by your RFP.

Budget

**Can funds be used for reimbursable services?**

No, funds may not be used for reimbursable services.

**Can funds be used for planning?**

A certain amount of funds may be allocated for planning in the first year. If you have questions, please sign up for office hours.

**Will funds be disbursed in a lump sum or as installments?**

Installments. We anticipate disbursing funds on an annual basis.

**Can funds be used for staff salaries?**

Yes. They may also be used for community resident or youth stipends. The review committee reserves the right to ask questions about budget line items.

**Can funds be used for training programs, or to pay residents or participants for their time?**

Yes, funds may be used for training and stipends.

**The RFP says indirect expenses can't exceed 10% of the total. Could you provide a clear definition of what is included in indirect expenses and what is not?**

We consider indirect expenses and overhead expenses to be synonymous. Indirect costs include costs which are frequently referred to as overhead expenses (e.g. lights, space, physical costs, expenses related to general operations). Up to 10% of the total funding request may be directed as indirect expense. Please contact the initiative lead directly if you have questions or concerns about this rate or definition.

**Are there limitations on the use of funds?**

Yes, there are limitations in administration costs (please see the question above).

**Should we include plans to leverage resources, including in-kind resources, in the application?**

Yes, especially if leveraging resources is part of your project or sustainability plan.

**In terms of other funding to support the proposal, do they need to be secured prior to application submission?**

It would be ideal to have it secured prior to application submission so that reviewers know the project has support.

**Can we scale up funding?**

Yes, you may scale up (amount requested per year increases) or down (amount requested per year decreases). If you do choose to scale down, please be clear on how your project will be maintained and be sustainable.

**Is funding for these project able to be used for capital expenditures?**

Yes, but it can't be the main use of funds.

**Can an applicant use the funding to pay an outside organization as a subcontractor for ongoing programming?**

Yes.

**How detailed should the budget be?**

Please use the provided template that is included in the application for each RFP.

Required Documents

**Can the Partner Letter be from the same organization submitting a Letter of Support?**

No, letters of support should not be from partners on the project. Letters of Support may come from a partner you worked with on other projects, a community resident who has benefitted from your services, a previous or current funder, a local policy-maker, etc.

**Can the letter of support come from a current program participant?**

Yes.

**If youth in the program are getting stipends, can they still write a letter of support?**

Yes.

**Who should the letter of support be addressed to?**

You can address the letter of support to both Franciscan Children's and Boston Children's.

**If we have multiple partners, do they have to write individual partnership letters?**

You can have one Partner Letter that is signed by each of your partners. Just make sure to outline each partner's role on the project. If necessary, you can write a paragraph on each partner about their work on the proposed project.

**If our letter of support is just over one page long, will that negatively impact our application?**

We ask that you try to limit your letters to 1 page in length. If it is a little over one page, it will not negatively impact your application.

Evaluation

**How will Boston Children's assess the impact of this investment?**

Boston Children's has hired Health Resources in Action (HRiA) to evaluate the impact of this investment. Boston Children's is committed to sharing lessons learned and the results about how these investments have made a difference in the lives of children and families in the years ahead.

**What levels of evaluation are there and what will grantees be expected to do?**

There will be two levels of evaluation – the initiative level and the grantee-level. For the initiative level, HRiA and Boston Children's staff will periodically ask grantees to provide information on their experience with the initiative and resources provided. At the grantee-level, grantees are expected to identify and design ways to collect, track, and report on information for their individual projects, submit semiannual reports, and periodically check in with Boston Children's staff on project progress. HRiA will work with grantees on finalizing their project-specific evaluation plans including indicators for reporting during the first quarter of the grant period. Throughout the funding period, HRiA will work with grantees on semiannual reporting and other areas grantees identify as needing support.

**Are you asking that grantees put in funds towards evaluation?**

While not required, proposed projects may budget for evaluation resources.

**If we have an in-house evaluation, will HRiA take the place of our internal evaluator?**

You may continue to use your in-house evaluator and budget for it in your project budget. If awarded, HRiA will work with your evaluator to develop reporting metrics and an evaluation plan.

**Will HRiA be setting the specific project monitoring and outcome indicators such that all grantees will be measured against the same criteria using the same methods? Or will HRiA be working with each grantee to create a more bespoke plan depending upon the unique objectives of each organization/program?**

As part of the onboarding process, HRiA will be working with each grantee to develop appropriate reporting metrics that are realistic to collect and report on, and meaningful to both the grantee and the overall evaluation of the Franciscan Children's Community Health Initiative.

Application Submission and Assistance**Could I ask if my idea for a project is appropriate?**

Yes, please sign up for office hours with Boston Children's staff at the appropriate links below.

- [Expanding and Diversifying the Children's Mental and Behavioral Health Workforce](#)
- [Promoting Mental Health Through Intentional Youth Engagement](#)
- [Community Food Access](#)

**Are there in person office hours?**

No, they will be virtual.

**How do I submit an application?**

Complete and submit the application on the [SurveyMonkeyApply](#) portal. If you need technical assistance, please email [haley.piette@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:haley.piette@childrens.harvard.edu).

**I am unable to access the Survey Monkey Apply platform. What should I do?**

Please contact your IT specialist. Some servers may have a firewall that prevents access to Survey Monkey Apply. If you receive an error message, please contact your IT specialist as they may need to make sure the website is not blocked (<https://bostonchildrens.smapply.io>). You may also check your web browser as Survey Monkey Apply works best in Chrome. If you continue to have issues, email [haley.piette@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:haley.piette@childrens.harvard.edu).



# Expanding and Diversifying the Children's Mental and Behavioral Health Workforce RFP

## Resources:

View the RFP [here](#)

View the virtual December 18<sup>th</sup> Information Session [here](#) and slides [here](#)

Register for Office Hours [here](#)

## Could you share more details about the shared financial commitment?

Per the RFP, "public or private academic institutions must demonstrate a shared financial commitment to the project in the proposed budget." These should be indicated in Columns F-G in the budget. There is no required amount or percentage for this shared financial commitment as we understand that each institution is different. Applicants should provide a justification for their financial commitment. If you have specific questions regarding your institution, please sign up for office hours [here](#).

## Would institutional support for student financial aid meet the criteria for cost share?

Yes.

## Would use of funds to provide training in clinical services be eligible?

Yes, funds to provide training in clinical services related to mental and behavioral health care would be eligible. Funds to deliver clinical services would not be eligible.

## May funding be used to provide language support or training for our staff?

Rather than training English-speaking staff, we would prefer to see efforts go towards the hiring of native speakers.

## May funding be used to provide stipends for direct care paraprofessionals to attend trainings?

Yes.

## We have a variety of programs led by paraprofessionals that offer very different career trajectories and goals. How can we best select the program to apply for this RFP?

Consider the priority population and geographies of this RFP, and which of your programs are more community-oriented or community-driven.

## We are based in Springfield, MA - are we eligible to apply? We do have students (online MSW) based in Boston.

Yes. We recognize that training programs exist across the state. We are looking for engagement of students and paraprofessionals from underrepresented backgrounds that will serve children, youth, and/or families in our Boston priority neighborhoods.

## Do paraprofessionals need to be based in public schools?

No. Paraprofessionals may serve in schools or other environments or organizations that are working to meet children's mental and behavioral health needs.



**Would nursing students be eligible as trainees or graduate students?**

Yes, nursing students would be eligible trainees or graduate students if they are concentrating in children's mental and behavioral health and plan to seek employment in this field in Massachusetts upon graduation.

**Our program offers training in non-traditional forms of mental and behavioral health care. Would that be considered eligible?**

We are open to non-traditional forms of mental and behavioral health care (music or art therapy, etc.) if there is a demonstrated need. We recommend you sign up for office hours to provide more information.

**In the application, is there a preference for us to include data on the number of trainees/students, or on the number of children/families who will be served by the proposal?**

There is no preference. If you have both types of data, we recommend you include both.

**Is there a suggested target number of individuals trained or graduated that we should aim for?**

No. We expect targets to vary by projects and encourage each applicant to set a target that is realistic and aligns with the requested funding amount.

**If our proposal includes working with individual schools as partners and we have letters of support from the principals of each school, do we still need to have a letter of support from the district superintendent?**

Yes. The purpose of the letter of support from the superintendent is to raise awareness of the work you and your partners are doing, and ensure there is district-level buy-in.

**How does this RFP consider employment of students/trainees after they have completed their training or graduated?**

Workforce retention falls under this RFP; employment and continued support post-training would be relevant. We are interested in proposals that think about the entire workforce pipeline, from recruitment to training to graduation to employment, professional development, and career longevity.

**Our project would support the paraprofessional workforce. Would incorporating accreditation or certification be appropriate?**

Yes. We encourage applicants to identify and incorporate formal accreditation or certification opportunities if it makes sense for your project.

**By data sharing, do mean sharing of data with Boston Children's or with our partners?**

With your partners. In regards to sharing data with Boston Children's, Boston Children's and its evaluation partner Health Resources in Action will work with awardees to identify reporting metrics.

**We are a community-based organization interested in the second focus area, to help educational institutions attract and prepare diverse underrepresented graduate students. Even if we have an academic institution as a partner, may we apply as the lead applicant?**

The second focus area is really intended for educational institutions. We would encourage the educational institution serve as the lead applicant and earmark money in the budget for a partnership with your organization.

**Is there an expectation that we should be working with Health Resources in Action (HRiA) right now?**

During the application phase, there is no expectation that applicants be working with HRiA. HRiA is available to support applicants with completing the scope of services document or with any questions related to data collection and evaluation.

Applicants who are selected for funding will work more closely with HRiA to develop reporting metrics as part of the onboarding process.

## Community Food Access RFP

### Resources:

View the RFP [here](#)

View the virtual December 18<sup>th</sup> Information session [here](#) and slides [here](#)

Register for Office Hours [here](#)

### **May we apply for less than \$25,000 per year?**

No. Projects that fit the scope of this RFP should be in the range of \$25,000 to 50,000 per year.

### **Will priority be given to new programs? Or is expanding existing programs equally prioritized?**

There is no priority for new vs. expanding or existing.

### **Could you define what a "community setting" is - for example, our organization was considering applying for funding to support classes in a recovery high school. Would that be appropriate?**

Yes as long as it is in a Boston neighborhood.

### **Could you expand a little on what "family centered" looks like to you?**

Consider opportunities not just for children/youth but also for caregivers/parents. Think of the caregivers for child/young person and how they would be a part of your project. The child is driving the process so need engagement. Family can be defined however you define it.

### **If we are putting forth an application that facilitates collaboration across many organizations is there a possibility to apply for additional funding?**

No additional funding at this time. Requests should fit the \$25-50k request.

### **Do you see this as capacity building funding over the four years?**

Yes: Boston Children's likes to bring funded partners (FPs) together to host learning communities, have FPs share what they are working on, share opportunities to coordinate/collaborate or share issues, share with BCH how we can meet needs or do better and support FPs in their work. BCH helps create an open line of communication with city partners, etc. and may invite relevant agency leaders to hear and learn from FPs to hear about food access priorities. There are many opportunities for FPs to learn and share best practices.

### **Is there any issue with the project budget being greater than \$50k and using this grant to only cover a portion of total cost?**

Depends on the project. Please sign up for Office Hours.

### **Do you want the proposal to include what the project will look like over the four years, or focus only on year 1?**

We do want applicants to forecast some goals at the end of 4 years, but understand that you may have the most details only for the first year. If selected for funding, funded partners will work with the evaluation partner to discuss outcomes over the 4 years including impact over time. You can focus on high level outcomes/impact for the proposal.

**Can funding be used towards infrastructure costs (such as to purchase equipment, food, etc.)?**

Yes, but it can't be the only use of funds. Detail in your proposal how these funds will help support the proposed project.

# Promoting Mental Health Through Intentional Youth Engagement RFP

## **Resources:**

View the RFP [here](#)

View the virtual December 19<sup>th</sup> Information session [here](#) and slides [here](#)

Register for Office Hours [here](#)

## **Are there age restrictions on children's ages?**

Youth are defined as being 11 – 24 years old.

## **More information/definition of "non-engaged youth"?**

We are looking to support youth who are not currently involved in (or have very minimal involvement with) any out-of-school time resources and community activities to support their development and well-being. Examples of typical channels that youth are plugged into include belonging to an afterschool program/youth organization, church group, or sports team. In short, lacking positive social connections and trusted adults in their life to support them with whatever they need and foster a sense of belonging.

## **How do you measure the engagement of youth in the program?**

That is up to the each applicant. This could look like how youth are showing up through attendance, engaging with peers in the group, etc. Funded applicants will meet with our evaluation partner, Health Resources in Action, to create a formal evaluation plan.

## **Can the partnership be an existing relationship?**

Yes, the organizations applying together can already have an existing working relationship. It does not need to be a new partnership. We just need to understand how this partnership uniquely positions you to serve new youth who are not engaged in your program/services.

## **Can partnership consist of two community youth organizations, or does one need to be a government type organization.**

Yes, partnership may consist of 2 community youth organizations. You may decide who you should partner with in your proposal. If you do partner with a government or public agency, they should not be the lead applicant.

## **Do both partners need to be established 501c3 organizations?**

No, just the lead applicant who would receive funds.

## **Can the lead applicant apply with multiple partners, like a collaborative? How would the funding work for that?**

Yes, a proposal can have multiple partners. The lead applicant and partners should decide how they want to share resources (i.e., grant funding).

## **We currently work with the priority population. Can we apply on our own without a partner?**

No, an organization cannot apply without a partner. You may be better suited as the partner applicant instead of the lead applicant. Or if you'd like to be the lead applicant, consider whether there is a new partnership that would help you reach a particular population of youth who are not currently coming through your door. These grant funds are meant to encourage organizations to build (or strengthen) connective tissue in the community to serve youth who aren't already being served. It is wonderful if your organization is already doing important work to serve the population, but that is not exactly the point of these funds. If you would like help thinking about a partner or would like to discuss further, please feel free to schedule office hours.

**Both youth in foster care and court-involved youth are listed as priority populations. Would youth who have aged out of foster care or transitioned from DYS be considered a priority population?**

Yes, this would still count as a priority population as the youth fall within the 11-24 age range. We recognize how vulnerable these transition periods are for young people.

**The RFP states that neurodivergent youth are a priority population for this funding opportunity, does that include highly functioning youth within the Autism Spectrum Disorder?**

Yes, this group of youth would count as a priority population as long as they fall within the 11-24 age range.

**If a youth-serving non-profit is looking to partner with another organization, say a housing development, can expenses from the grant be used to pay the housing development as a consultant to support the recruitment of hard-to-reach youth?**

Yes, this is an acceptable use of funds.

**For youth getting engaged in activities, can this include counseling or therapy?**

Funds may not be used for clinical services like counseling or therapy. These services may be included as a referral component of your project's activities.

**Would classroom-based programming be considered since it is different than an after school program that requires kids to "sign-up"? We reach hard to reach kids because we are meeting them where they are — the classroom.**

If the priority youth populations are already attending school and attending the school's program, we would not see that as a new partnership or opportunity to reach hard to engage youth. If you have further questions, please sign up for office hours.

**Would a Community Health Center that also runs several youth serving programs be able to apply as a lead applicant OR do we have to partner with an organization that is exclusively youth-serving?**

If your Community Health Center runs youth programs on site, it would be considered a youth-serving organization and can serve as a lead applicant and select the appropriate community based partner.

**Can a private, non-profit school apply as the lead applicant?**

No, schools (whether private or public) cannot be the lead applicant, but they can be the partner applicant. In the case, the school would have to partner with a community-based organization who is applying as the lead applicant.