

FAQs for
Minority Leaders Development Program
MP-CPI-21-008

A. ELIGIBILITY

1. What applicants are eligible and how will they be defined for this funding opportunity?

- a. Eligible applicants are any public or private nonprofit entity located in a State (which includes one of the 50 United States, District of Columbia, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Guam, Republic of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands). Faith-based organizations and American Indian/Alaska Native/Native American (AI/AN/NA) organizations are eligible to apply. Examples of eligible institutions include:

- State Governments
- County Governments
- City or township governments
- Special district governments
- Independent school districts
- Public and State controlled institutions of higher education
- Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)
- Public Housing authorities/Indian housing authorities
- Native American tribal organizations (other than federally recognized tribal governments)
- Nonprofits having 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- Nonprofits without 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- Private nonprofit institutions of higher education
- U.S. territories

2. Can an individual apply?

- a. No. Eligible applicants are any public or private nonprofit entity located in a State (which includes one of the 50 United States, District of Columbia, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Guam, Republic of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands). Faith-based organizations and American Indian/Alaska Native/Native American (AI/AN/NA) organizations are eligible to apply. Please refer to pages 12 - 13 of the notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for a list of example institutions.

B. PREPARING TO APPLY

1. What is the deadline for submitting an application in response to this funding opportunity?

- a. Applications are due August 17, 2021 by 6 p.m. Eastern Time. To receive consideration, you must submit your application electronically via Grants.gov no later than this due date and time.

2. How can I get more information on this funding opportunity?

- a. We strongly suggest that you register and attend the Technical Assistance webinar scheduled for June 29, 2021 from 4:00-5:00pm **Eastern Time**.
- b. After you enter your information and click "Register," you will get a confirmation email with details on how to join the webinar. There will be an opportunity to submit questions.
- c. The webinar will be recorded for those unable to attend live. The recording will be posted to the OMH YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/OfficeMinorityHealth>).

3. How can I stay up to date on any updates or changes to the NOFO, additional information and resources, and other developments?

- a. The best way to stay up to date is to subscribe to this NOFO on grants.gov. Please go to www.grants.gov and click the "Search Grants" tab in the upper left of the screen.
- b. On the next screen, look for the "BASIC SEARCH CRITERIA" fields under SEARCH GRANTS header in the upper left corner. Enter **MP-CPI-21-008** in the Opportunity Number field and click the SEARCH button.
- c. Click on the link under the Opportunity Number header. You will see a red "Subscribe" icon in the right corner. You will be prompted to either enter your username and password or establish one, after which you will be able to subscribe and get alerts for the funding opportunity.

4. Whom should I contact if I still have questions about the NOFO? Questions about developing my application?

- a. The appropriate contact person will depend on the nature of your question. For programmatic questions, such as developing elements of your application, contact Felix Lorenzo, Felix.Lorenzo@hhs.gov. Please include/CC: Duane Barlow on your email.
- b. Contact Duane Barlow, duane.barlow@hhs.gov, for financial and grants-related questions. Please include/CC: Felix Lorenzo on your email.

5. Whom should I contact if I have issues with the grants.gov portal or the electronic application process?

- a. Please contact Grants.gov Applicant Support:
Email: support@grants.gov
Telephone: 800-518-4726

6. What registrations are needed to apply to this funding announcement?

- a. In addition to your registration at www.grants.gov, you will need a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to apply for a grant through www.grants.gov. You will also need to register your organization with the System for Award Management (SAM); please see page 29 of NOFO for more information.
- b. A step-by-step description of the requirements for registering your organization to be able to apply for this and other funding announcements, along with the expected time for each step, can be found here:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

7. How do we get a DUNS number?

- a. Obtaining a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number is the first step in registering as an organization applicant in Grants.gov. You can request a number through the Dun and Bradstreet website devoted to providing DUNS numbers to applicants for Federal awards, typically within one business day at <https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do>. You may also call toll-free 1-866-705-5711 for a new DUNS number or if you have forgotten an existing one.
- b. The following website has step-by-step instructions:
<https://www.grants.gov/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>

8. If I were collaborating with another organization, would I use that organization's DUNS number?

- a. As the lead agency, the applicant must have their own DUNS number.

9. How do I register my organization on SAM.gov? What if my registration is expired?

- a. Please refer to pages 29 - 30 of the NOFO. Your organization must register online in SAM (<https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>). Grants.gov may reject submissions from applicants with nonexistent or expired SAM Registrations. A completed registration in SAM may be required prior to receiving any award based on your application.
- b. Further helpful information and helpful tips are also available through the following quick start guide:
https://www.sam.gov/SAM/transcript/Quick_Guide_for_Grants_Registrations.pdf (PDF, 111 KB).
- c. We recommend beginning your registration process immediately as delays in processing have been reported. Under normal operating conditions, we recommend allowing *at least* up to 10 business days after you submit your registration for it to become active in SAM. This timeframe may be longer if SAM flags the information you provide for manual validation or there are delays in the required submission of a notarized letter by mail. You will receive an email alerting you when your registration is active.

10. Can you explain the page limits? What does or does not count for which limits?

- a. Your project narrative is limited to 50 pages and does not include your Project Abstract Summary. Since your project narrative plus appendices cannot exceed 75 pages, that

leaves 25 pages for your appendices. The appendices should include the items described on pages 27 – 28 of the NOFO and listed here:

- i. Supplemental Information/Supporting Documentation for Work Plan
 - ii. Project Population(s) of Focus
 - iii. Organizational Chart
 - iv. Memorandums of Agreement and/or Letters of Commitment from Partners, Subrecipient Organizations, and Agencies
 - v. Curriculum Vitae/Résumé for Key Project Personnel
 - vi. Logic Model
- b. You must submit these appendices as a single electronic file uploaded to the Attachments section of your Grants.gov application.
 - c. The SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B, SF-LLL, Project Abstract Summary, and Budget Narrative (including budget tables) *do not* count towards your 50 or 75 page limit.

C. APPLICATION REVIEW

1. How will my application be reviewed?

- a. An independent, objective review panel will assess all eligible applications according to criteria outlined in the NOFO. In addition to the independent review, Federal staff will review each application for programmatic, budgetary, and grants management compliance. The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health provides recommendations for funding to the Grants Management Officer to conduct risk analysis. Upon completion of the risk analysis and concurrence of the Grants Management Officer, HHS/OASH issues Notices of Award.

2. Are budgets scored as part of the review process?

- a. Budgets will not be scored by objective review committees, but they may comment on the appropriateness of the budget, like for example, if too much or too little is budgeted for a corresponding activity. Federal staff will review budgets for compliance with regulatory requirements.

3. Who makes the final funding decisions? Can we appeal if we are not selected?

- a. The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health makes the final funding recommendations, based on the results of objective reviews and taking into account the criteria specified in the NOFO on pages 35 - 38. The funding decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

D. PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

1. What is the Disparity Impact Statement (DIS) expectation? What is the purpose of the DIS?

- a. The DIS is an expectation of the recipient for the OMH program. The DIS should use data to identify underrepresented racial and ethnic minority populations in the public health workforce. The DIS will provide the contextual and measurement framework

for ongoing monitoring and determining the impact of the project activities on outcomes and the overarching goal of advancing health equity.

The disparity impact statement should also include a description of how recipients will use program implementation data and apply the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health and Health Care (National CLAS Standards) to support quality improvement and ensure the project is implemented in a culturally appropriate manner (<http://thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov>). Disparity impact statements will be required within 30 days following the issuance of any award made under this announcement.

2. Are there required partnerships for this program?

- a. No. OMH encourages recipients to partner with Minority Serving Institutions, or similar institutions, for outreach and recruitment activities.

3. Can the fellowship program be developed for an individual institution/organization or specific racial/ethnic minority group?

- a. No. OMH expects recipients to develop and implement a plan for a Minority Leadership Fellowship Program within HHS. Elements of the program plan are in the NOFO on pages 7 – 8.
- b. No. Eligible participants in the Minority Leaders Development Program will not be selected based on race/ethnicity. The Minority Leadership Fellowship Program will fill a gap in federal fellowship opportunities for individuals interested in working at HHS to advance health equity and address the social determinants of health through health policies, programs and practices. In addition, the Minority Leaders Development Program is expected to support efforts to promote diversity, including racial and ethnic minorities, in senior positions within HHS agencies by providing professional development and career pathway opportunities.

4. Who is eligible for the fellowship?

- a. Eligible participants are graduate-level students and recent graduates who have completed, within the previous two years, their graduate degree. This includes prospective fellow applicants who are within 2 years of completing their medical degree or other health professional degree.

5. Is an evaluation plan required?

- a. No. However, OMH expects recipients to participate in the process and outcomes evaluation to be led by the OMH contractor. Recipients are expected to work with the contractor to evaluate the implementation and impact of the program.

6. Am I responsible for the curriculum and training modules?

- a. No, OMH and/or OMH contractors will provide the curriculum and training modules. However, your program plan should include how you will incorporate and utilize these learning materials. Additionally, applicants are expected to provide facilitation of work

experiences and supplemental learning opportunities (e.g., webinars, seminars, and training sessions) focused on areas such as leadership and technical skills development.

7. What is the stipend? How much should the stipend cover? Does this support housing and travel?

- a. Payments for educational assistance (e.g., scholarships, fellowships, and student aid costs) are allowable only when the purpose of the grant is to provide training to selected participants. The specific amounts may be established by the applicant and should be reflected within the proposed budget. A stipend is not a fee-for-service payment and is not subject to the cost accounting requirements of the cost principles.

8. What is the expected tour of duty for the participants? How many hours will they be involved in the fellowship once placed in their host site? When will they start? Will the participants receive federal appointments at the conclusion of their participation?

- a. While individual and daily start/end times may be discussed between the participant and the host site, this program is expected to be ONLY for a federal fellowship for the duration of one-year with fellowship experiences for each participant that may include rotations within HHS agencies, and work on efforts specifically focused on one or more of the following: health equity, health disparities, and the social determinants of health.

9. The application says one-year fellowship but two year grant period, is it expected that there will be more than one cohort of fellows?

- a. While funding for all approved budget periods beyond the first is generally level with the initial award amount and is contingent upon the availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the project, adequate stewardship of Federal funds, and the best interests of the Government, a different cohort of fellows would be appropriate for Year 2.

E. OTHER-ADMINISTRATIVE

1. I noticed this announcement is for a cooperative agreement. Why? What is the difference between cooperative agreements and grants?

- a. Cooperative agreements are a form of assistance that allows for substantial involvement between OMH and the recipient during the period of performance. In addition to the usual monitoring and technical assistance provided under the cooperative agreement (e.g., assistance from assigned Federal project officer, monthly conference calls, occasional site visits, ongoing review of plans and progress, participation in relevant meetings, provision of training and technical assistance), OMH substantial programmatic involvement will include:

- i. Review and approval of implementation plans prior to implementation. Coordination of the implementation of the Minority Leaders Development Program across recipients.
- ii. Review and approval of fellow placements.
- iii. Identification and final selection of fellowship host sites.
- iv. Identification of other awardees and organizations with whom the awardee may be asked to develop cooperative and collaborative relationships and partnerships.
- v. Consulting with the awardee throughout the preparation and dissemination of materials related to the award.
- vi. Review and approval of fellow housing options.
- vii. Review and approval of the amount, management, and oversight of stipend payments to fellows.

2. How many awards are anticipated? How much will each award cover? What is the period of performance?

- a. OMH anticipates a total of 2-3 awards ranging between \$500,000 -\$750,000 per budget period. Awards are not to exceed 2 years.

3. How many fellowships should my proposal include? How many participants should I account for?

- a. While the Notice of Funding Opportunity indicates that the Fellows must be graduate-level students and recent graduates who have completed, within the previous two years, their graduate degree, the number of Fellows to be included is open to each applicant and should be reflected within the application as part of the expected project activities outlined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

4. Will applicants have access to potential position descriptions/competencies/staffing plans or host sites?

- a. This information is not available. It is expected that fellowship experiences lasting for up to one year for each participant may include rotations within HHS agencies, and work on efforts specifically focused on one or more of the following: health equity, health disparities, and the social determinants of health.

5. What is the start date?

- a. The anticipated start date is September 30, 2021.

F. OTHER-PROGRAMATIC

1. What do you consider HHS agencies? Will all host sites be in DC? Who selects the host sites?

- a. HHS has 11 operating divisions, including eight agencies in the U.S. Public Health Service and three human services agencies. These divisions administer a wide variety of health and human services and conduct life-saving research for the nation, protecting and

serving all Americans. Host sites could vary between these (e.g., OMH, CDC, HRSA) and would not be limited to the DC area geographically.

- b. Host sites will be identified by OMH.

2. Do I have to publish and disseminate my findings?

- a. OMH expects recipients to communicate and disseminate project knowledge and findings, to include dissemination to federal, state, territorial and tribal public health agencies; policymakers; community organizations; community members; and other stakeholders. Findings may be disseminated in a wide array of mediums including but not limited peer-reviewed publications, poster presentations, social media distribution, etc.