

**Health Sciences & Services Authority
Request for Proposals
2009 Health Services Grant Competition**

Increase Access to Health Services in Spokane County

Executive Summary

The Health Sciences and Services Authority (HSSA) of Spokane County, a Washington State grant making authority, was established to promote bioscience-based economic development and to advance new therapies and procedures to combat disease and to promote public health. The HSSA invests funds to create and support a nationally competitive health care cluster in Spokane County catalyzing connections between higher education and health care that lead to high wage jobs, long-term sustainability, and economic diversification. HSSA will fund the very best projects through a competitive, well-monitored and accountable process.

Funding

In this 2009 grant competition, the HSSA will award a total of \$225,000 **that increases access to health services in Spokane County**. Grants may be one or two years in duration. Proposals should request the budget amount and duration that are appropriate for the work. The lead applicant must apply by the required date to HSSA, The University District, 665 N. Riverpoint Boulevard, Suite 124, Spokane, WA 99202. Administrative questions should be directed to the HSSA at grantadmin@hssaspokane.org or by calling (509) 358-2113.

Background

The Health Sciences and Services Authority (HSSA) was created by the Washington State Legislature in 2007 (RCW 35.104) to promote bioscience-based economic development and to advance new therapies and procedures to combat disease and promote public health. Based on these facts, the HSSA was established by resolution of Spokane County in 2007 and a subsequent Memorandum of Understanding with the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board in mid-2008. The Authority has the same boundaries of Spokane County. Under the legislation, the HSSA is empowered to:

- Leverage public monies with amounts received from other public and private sources in accordance with contribution agreements, to promote bioscience-based economic development, and to advance new therapies and procedures to combat disease and promote public health;
- Solicit and receive gifts, grants, and bequests to promote bioscience-based economic development, and to advance new therapies and procedures to combat disease and promote public health;
- Hold funds received by the Authority in trust to promote same; and
- Make grants to entities pursuant to contract to promote bioscience-based economic development, and to advance new therapies and procedures to combat disease and promote public health. Grants are to specify deliverables.

Applicant Organizations and Eligibility

Applications for HSSA 2009 health services grant funding are invited from Spokane County public and nonprofit organizations, singly or in collaboration with other public and nonprofit organizations or with for-profit companies.

The applicant organization is responsible for submitting the application and for leading and/or facilitating the health services project or program, administering the grant and disbursing HSSA funding. Throughout this request for proposals (RFP), the terms “applicant” or “applicant organization” refer to the organization sponsoring the health services grant proposal.

Within this RFP, the terms “collaborating organization” or “collaborator” refer to an entity that will contribute to the health services project or program, but will not share in HSSA grant funds.

Eligible organizations are those that innovate new procedures, processes, or systems to deliver better solutions for promoting public health in Spokane County. Eligible applicants are limited to the following:

- Networks of voluntary health providers delivering free services to under-served people in Spokane County.

For-profit entities and organizations outside of Spokane County are not eligible to apply individually for funding, but as justified are encouraged to join an eligible applicant as a co-applicant or collaborating organization.

Applicants are responsible for consulting amendments to be sure they have the latest information. Amendments may be viewed at www.hssaspokane.org.

Questions to Consider Before Applying for HSSA 2009 Funds

Competition in this grant cycle will be rigorous given the anticipated demand by those organizations who serve the health care needs of the under-served persons of Spokane County. Preparation of a proposal can be time consuming, so applicants are advised to read this RFP carefully and review the questions below before deciding to apply. If an applicant cannot make a strong case with regard to each of the following questions, it is unlikely that his or her applications will be successful.

- What are the compelling reasons why this project won't be accomplished without HSSA's investment?
- What will be the benefit to Spokane County (and the State of Washington) from HSSA's investment in this proposal:
 - In terms of improving access to health services for the persons of Spokane County?
 - In terms of improving mental or physical health or health care?
 - In terms of contributing to the growth of the economy?

Applicants' answers to these questions will be evaluated as part of the proposal review process.

Submitting an RFP does not commit HSSA to award a grant or to pay any costs incurred in preparing a submittal. HSSA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all submittals, or to cancel, at its discretion, this request for qualifications at any time.

Application Process

Compliance with this RFP and assurance that application materials are accurate, complete, and timely is the sole responsibility of the applicant. Applications that do not adhere to content requirements, are incomplete or incorrect, or are late will not be reviewed.

Applicants must complete two steps: a mandatory Letter of Intent (LOI) followed by a proposal. LOIs and proposals are submitted by e-mail to grantadmin@hssaspokane.org.

No application should include information that might compromise the applicant's subsequent ability to secure patent or other intellectual property protection.

Key Dates

RFP Release	July 15, 2009
Letter of Intent Due by 12 Noon	July 31, 2009
Proposal Due by 4 PM	Aug. 31, 2009
Review of proposals/Interviews	Sept. 1-30, 2009
HSSA Board Review	Oct. 7 (Board Meeting)
Awards Announcement	Oct. 16, 2009 (or sooner)
Funding Start Date	Upon completion of the grant agreement

Letter of Intent (LOI)

All applicants must submit a mandatory LOI stating their intent to submit a proposal by noon on July 31, 2009. Submitting an LOI does not require the prospective applicant to submit a proposal. However, no proposal will be reviewed unless an LOI as been received.

The LOI is not a pre-proposal. The LOI helps HSSA prepare for review of the proposal and to understand the volume of proposals it may receive. If an LOI describes a project or program that is clearly not suited for HSSA 2009 funding, the applicant will be notified of that determination.

In addition to other information, LOIs include the following:

- a descriptive, non-confidential title for the project;
- contact information for the lead applicant organization;
- a list of co-applicant organizations;
- an abstract of 500 words or less, stating the objectives of the project, its key components, and how it specifically responds to this grant competition goal; and
- up to five key words descriptive of the project. A single "key word" may be a short phrase.

The LOI should be e-mailed to grantadmin@hssaspokane.org. Upon receipt of the LOI by HSSA, an e-mail acknowledgement will be sent confirming receipt.

Proposal Requirements

The proposal is expected to consist of the same subject matter as that is within the LOI.

The proposal requires the applicant to input under the following headings:

- Face Page
- Lead Applicant Organization Information
- Co-applicant Organization Information
- Proposal Overview
- Proposal Format
- Proposal Outline
- Required Attachments

Face Page

The face page contains essential information for identifying, processing, and tracking the proposal. The face page also contains the signature of the authorizing individual, the person with authority to commit the applicant organization to implementation of the proposed project. Project directors may not authorize proposals from their own organizations.

The face page includes the following elements:

- the name of the applicant organization;
- the project/program title;
- the project director name and contact information;
- the names of co-applicant organizations;
- the dates of requested project/program support;
- the budget amount being requested;
- the name and contact information of the authorizing individual; and
- an authorizing signature.

Proposal Overview

The following information is to be provided:

Abstract. Applicants must provide an abstract of 500 words or less, in prose understandable to a lay audience, stating the objectives of the proposed project, its distinctive methods, and its most important scientific, economic, and health benefits. The text of the proposal abstract may be different than the text of the LOI abstract.

Keywords. Applicants must provide up to five key words that are descriptive of the Project. A single “key word” may be a short phrase.

Patents and Inventions. Applicants must describe any invention disclosures they have made and any patent applications filed or license agreements executed or pending related to the subject matter of their proposal.

Proposal Format

The narrative must be no longer than 10 pages and conform to the following format requirements:

- 8-1/2” by 11” portrait-oriented page dimensions;
- single spaced with all margins measuring at least 1”;
- at least 12 point font in Times New Roman or Arial (not proportionally reduced);
- 3-ring binders are preferred (for ease of copying for evaluators); and
- in the upper right-hand corner of each page, inclusion of a header with the name of the project director, the grant competition number (i.e. HSSA 2009 Health Services Grant), and the page number, using the form: ‘Page x of xx.’”

All tables, charts, or graphs are in addition to the 10-page narrative. References and other required attachments are to be included at the end of the narrative, and are not counted as part of the 10 pages. A maximum of two pages of references will be accepted. The proposal narrative should include sufficient information needed to evaluate the beneficial returns of this project, independent of any other document. Website references and other attachments are acceptable but may not be reviewed.

Proposals that do not comply with these length and format requirements will not be reviewed.

Proposal Outline

A. Background, Significance and Relevance to HSSA Goals

- Provide the experience and expertise of project director and/or staff, board members expertise and affiliation;
- Address how the program meets the HSSA goal to increase access to health care.
- Describe the significance of this problem and explain how the project will alleviate and/or minimize the problem.
- List the projected goals and measurable outcomes.
- Describe any collaboration with other organizations.
- Describe how the project will leverage other funds and resources.

B. Challenges

Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed project and alternative approaches to achieving the project’s aims.

C. Timeline and Milestones

Provide a timeline for the proposal keyed to the project’s objectives. Identify major milestones, propose target dates for their accomplishment, and define the criteria by which achievement of each of the milestones will be assessed.

D. Personnel

Identify key project personnel: project director, co-directors, and other individuals who will be responsible for key aspects of the project. Define their roles, and explain how their work will be coordinated.

E. Outcomes and Sustainability Plans

Describe how the project will contribute to the broad, long-term strategic goal of HSSA to increase access to health services for under-served persons in Spokane County. Ensure that the following questions are answered:

- How will the project increase access to health services for under-served persons of Spokane County?

Describe the next steps in capitalizing on the project's success, including both the near-term and long-term outcomes the project is designed to achieve. Describe the following:

- the potential for economic impact and growth;
- the potential for follow-on funding;
- commitments from collaborators.

Required Attachments

The following information is to be provided under a Required Attachments heading:

Budget. The budget must be appropriate for the scope and goals of the proposed project. Costs must be reasonable. All should be listed as direct costs, including costs typically associated with general facilities and administration.

The following budget categories are provided:

- **salaries**, to include wages, benefits and stipends. Provide the compensation requested for research staff associated with the project. Salaries should be calculated on the basis of individuals' percent effort in the project.
- **equipment**, to include equipment with a unit cost greater than \$5,000 that is specifically required for the project research. Include only items of property with an expected service life of more than one year.
- **administrative costs** are not allowed.
- **supplies**, to include consumable materials and supplies required for the project, including equipment having a unit price of \$5,000 or less. Expenses for personal computers are not allowable unless primarily used for this project.
- **services**, to include work performed by entities other than the applicant or co-applicant organizations in support of the project. Services are provided as a regular part of such entities' normal business operations. Services include project consultants.
- **subcontracts**, to include the expenses of project research performed by co-applicants. For proposals listing for-profit collaborating companies as co-applicants, the companies will be expected to pay for their own internal costs associated with research and development activities performed on a best-effort basis. Monies may be subcontracted from the applicant organization to a company for products and services provided as deliverables to the project.
- **travel**, to include expenses required for field work, attendance at meetings and conferences, and other travel required for the proposed project, including per diem allowance, subject to the applicant's usual accounting practices.
- **other**, applicant to itemize costs falling outside of the typical budget categories above, including education fees for trainees.

Budget Justification. Describe the complete funding plan. List any support from other sources.

Facilities and Equipment. Describe the facilities, equipment, and resources available for the project and proportionate sharing arrangements if any.

Biographical Sketches. Applicants must provide biographical information on the capabilities and experiences of key research.

Letters of Support. Letters of support are required to confirm the commitment of time and resources to the project from key personnel and organizations.

Intellectual Property Certification. HSSA grants support projects that may lead to discoveries having commercial potential. The applicant must agree to negotiate rights to any intellectual properties derived from HSSA funding with the HSSA board.

Evaluation

Following the proposal deadline, all proposals will be screened for compliance with this RFP. Those that are judged to be compliant will proceed to review.

Review Process

A subcommittee of the HSSA Board will evaluate and score each proposal based on individual merits. To assist its evaluation, the subcommittee may, at its sole discretion, seek outside expertise. All reviewers are subject to the HSSA's confidentiality policy. Once all proposals are scored, they will be ranked and awards made by the HSSA Board as provided herein.

HSSA reserves the right to invite applicants for a personal interview or to require a site visit as part of the expert review process.

Names of reviewers will not be made available to applicants. Applicants and their representatives may not contact reviewers regarding submitted applications. Any such contact or attempt to contact may result in the disqualification of that applicant's proposal from the competition.

Evaluation Criteria

The primary criterion for evaluation will be the potential and probability of the project to increase access to health services for under-served persons in Spokane County.

Selection of Awards

The Board will individually review all proposals. The Board's award selections will be based on the Board's individual review of the proposals, the Subcommittee's recommendations, the availability of funds, and the goals of the grant competition. Consistent with these and with its enabling legislation, the Board may also consider the following in making award decisions:

- **Quality** of the proposed project;
- Its potential to **improve health outcomes**, with particular attention to the likelihood it will **lower health care costs**;
- Evidence of **sustainability** through additional extramural funding;

- A **description of the health care benefits provided**; and
- Evidence of **public and private health collaboration**.

Specific to this grant competition, a combination of results also may be considered to include:

- health care cost savings from the project;
- number of underserved people receiving services due to HSSA funding;
- types of services provided (e.g. office visits, surgeries, prescriptions filled, radiology, etc.);
- overall health indicators for under-served people in County (e.g., life expectancy, infant mortality emergency room visits, etc.).

Grant Agreement

Awards are subject to grant agreements that will be negotiated between the grant recipient organizations and the HSSA. Funding will be disbursed to recipients on a cost-reimbursement basis subject to the achievement of mutually agreed upon milestones and timelines. The Grant Agreement will include the right of HSSA to withhold payments if progress reports have not been provided or milestones have not been met in a timely fashion.

Additional Information

RFP Updates

The HSSA reserves the right to amend or terminate this RFP after its release. Any clarifications or changes in guidelines or requirements will be reduced in writing and sent to those submitting responses to the RFP.

Applicants are responsible for consulting amendments to be sure they have the latest information.

Confidentiality and Public Disclosure

Information in grant applications is received by HSSA with the understanding that it shall be used or disclosed solely for evaluation of applications or as required by law. HSSA holds all applications confidential in accordance with its confidentiality policy (HSSA Draft Confidentiality Policy requires Board action) and subject to the public disclosure laws of the State of Washington. (For more information about Washington public disclosure law, applicants are referred to RCW 42.56 and to the amendments to the exemption provisions in RCW 42.56.270(14).)

Applicants responding to this RFP are hereby put on notice that their responses are public records and may be subject to public disclosures under the state's Public Disclosure Act codified in chapter 42.56 RCW. Provided, however, the Public Disclosure Act contains various exemptions with regard to some information contained in the RFP. They include:

(18) Financial, commercial, operations and technical and research information and data submitted to or obtained by a health sciences and services authority in applications for, or delivery of, grants under RCW 35.104.010 through 35.104.060, to the extent that such information, if revealed, would reasonably be

expected to result in private loss to providers of this information is exempt from disclosure.

Please MARK all information provided in your proposal which falls into the above provisions or any other applicable provisions in the Public Disclosure Act which you feel are applicable to your proposal in response to the HSSA RFP. You will be notified of any public disclosure request with regard to your proposal and be afforded an opportunity to provide further information specifying why the information is exempted from disclosure under the above provision or any other application exemption from disclosure.

Typically, when it receives LOIs and proposals, HSSA releases to the public the name of the project director, the applicant organization, the title of the project, the dates of the proposed grant period, the funding amount requested, and miscellaneous contact and demographic data.

Once a proposal has been funded, HSSA will release to the public certain additional information from the application, including an abstract of the work and the names and contact information of co-applicants.

In response to a public disclosure request for a funded application under Washington State law, HSSA may provide further information from the application to the requestor, but only to the extent that provision of such information would not reasonably be expected to result in private loss to the providers of such information.

If HSSA receives a public records request for a funded or unfunded application, it will notify the applicant organization of such a request in a timely manner in order to allow the organization the opportunity to assert objections to disclosure in any applicable proceeding.

Conflict of Interest

When performing HSSA-funded research, it is essential that the personal interests of the proposal proponents do not impede their judgment or compromise their objectivity. Even the perception of a conflict of interest has the potential to erode the public's confidence. It is essential that applicant organizations have a financial conflict of interest policy in place and that all proposals submitted to HSSA have been vetted according to that policy. In accepting an award, the applicant organization will certify to HSSA in the grant agreement that potential financial conflicts of personnel participating in the funded research have been disclosed and that all conflicts have been eliminated or mitigated. Applicant organizations that do not have a financial conflict of interest policy should consult with HSSA early in the application process to discuss how the financial conflict of interest review will be performed.

Reporting Requirements

HSSA grants are an investment by Spokane County and the State of Washington in the future of its citizens. Full and timely reporting of the progress and results of funded projects has great importance for calculating the returns on that investment.

Reporting requirements, specific for each funded proposal, will be finalized in the grant agreement. HSSA requires the following reports: semi-annual progress reports, annual financial

reports, final project and financial reports, and post-project annual reports for a period of five years. Site visits to and in-person briefings from project directors may be used by HSSA as tools to track the progress of funded projects.

Publicity

HSSA reserves the right to publicly disseminate information about its granting activities. HSSA communications to the public may include lists of LOIs and proposals received, the names of applicant organizations, project titles, descriptions of proposals funded, and reports about project progress and outcomes. Recipient organizations will be expected to provide the HSSA with reasonable assistance in communicating about the funded project and its impacts to the public.

Funding Start Date

Funds will not be authorized for expenditure by HSSA until the Grant Agreement between HSSA and the recipient organization is completed.

Contact Information

For further information about HSSA or grant administration, e-mail granadmin@hssaspokane.org or call 509-358-2113.