



Accreditation Support Initiative for Local Public Health Departments

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

OVERVIEW

With support from the Office of State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is pleased to offer a funding opportunity for a third year of the Accreditation Support Initiative (ASI). This iteration of the ASI is aimed at supporting **local public health departments (LHDs)** in undertaking accreditation preparation activities.

Approximately **20-30 awards** of **up to \$40,000** (previous years' awards have ranged from \$5,000 to \$40,000) will be provided to selected LHDs to engage in activities that will demonstrate a measurable increase in their readiness to achieve Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) accreditation¹. Selections will be made in early December 2013 and the project period will run from the date of contract execution through May 31, 2014.

Applicants will select one category of work, and one or more deliverables within that category, based on an identified area of need around accreditation readiness. Eligible categories and deliverables are detailed in this RFA. Opportunities for peer networking, sharing, and technical assistance (TA) will be provided by NACCHO. LHDs may submit one application only. Applications must be submitted through the online system by 11:59 PM EDT on **Wednesday, November 13, 2013**.

All necessary information regarding the project and application process may be found in this RFA. A paper copy of the online application is provided for your reference and use. Applicants may pose individual questions to NACCHO at any point during the application process by e-mailing accredsupport@naccho.org. NACCHO and CDC staff will host an optional teleconference call on **Thursday, October 31, 2013** from **1:00 – 2:00 PM ET** (12–1 PM CT; 11 AM–12 PM MT; 10–11 AM PT) (Dial 800-742-6164) to walk through the RFA and application. Please note that no new information will be shared during the call; as such, applicants need not wait for this optional call in order to begin or submit applications. The call will be recorded and posted to the NACCHO website.

ELIGIBILITY

This RFA is open to all LHDs that are [eligible to apply to PHAB](#). Questions pertaining to PHAB eligibility should be directed to PHAB. Please note that the following LHDs are **not** eligible for this RFA:

- LHDs that have submitted an application to PHAB on or before 11/13/2013 (Note: LHDs that have submitted the Statement of Intent, but not the application, are still eligible to apply for this RFA)
- LHDs directly funded under CDC's [National Public Health Improvement Initiative](#)

Selected LHDs will enter into a contract with NACCHO to complete the deliverable(s) specified in the application. Agreement with [NACCHO standard contract terms and conditions](#) is a requirement for application. No modifications to the terms or contract language will be made. LHDs that cannot agree

¹ As outlined in the PHAB Standards and Measures: <http://www.phaboard.org/accreditation-process/public-health-department-standards-and-measures/>

to NACCHO's contract language should not apply for this initiative. As part of the application, the LHD will be asked to verify that it has read NACCHO's standard contract language and has provided a copy to the individual with signing authority at the LHD for advanced consideration.

CATEGORIES OF WORK ([SEE TABLE OF CATEGORIES AND DELIVERABLES ON PAGE 6](#))

Applicants may apply under **one category** of work only. Although the LHD may be conducting more than one area of work simultaneously in their accreditation preparation process, for the purposes of this award applicants are asked to prioritize the category in which they most need the resources and TA available through the ASI.

Within the selected category, applicants may propose to use funds to complete activities that will result in **one or more of the listed deliverables**. The deliverable(s) chosen will be listed in the contract and payment will be remitted, in two increments, upon submission and acceptance of those items. Applicants should select the deliverable(s) based on: 1) feasibility for the LHD to undertake and complete within the project timeframe, and 2) greatest benefit to the LHD in their accreditation readiness. **Applicants should only choose deliverables that that will be completed during the course of this project, and not those that have already been completed.**

For **each deliverable(s)** selected, applicants will be required to describe the **activities** they propose to undertake in order to accomplish that deliverable, the corresponding **timeframes**, and **expected outcomes**. The applicant will also be required to estimate an **overall budget for all selected deliverables**, which will be used as a basis for the award amount.

For contextual purposes, categories include references to the most closely related domains within the PHAB Standards & Measures. However, it is understood that work in one or more of the categories may span across several PHAB domains indirectly, or in conjunction with other categories of work.

Category 1: Progress Towards Preparing or Applying for Accreditation (related PHAB Domain: Any)
The accreditation process consists of seven key steps and is based on demonstrating achievement of standards and measures across 12 domains, as described in [PHAB's Guide to Accreditation](#). Applicants to this category may use this award to complete the steps necessary to organize, prepare and apply for accreditation as related to any PHAB domain and to fulfill one or more of the outlined deliverables (e.g., documentation gap analysis and recommendations, staff accreditation training, etc.) or another deliverable described in detail by the applicant.

Category 2: Progress Towards Completing a Community Health Improvement Process (related PHAB Domain: 1 & 5)
The community health improvement process yields a community health assessment (CHA) and community health improvement plan (CHIP), which are two of the three prerequisites to PHAB application and lays the groundwork for community programs, policies and interventions. Applicants to this category may use this award to conduct activities that will fulfill one or more of the outlined deliverables and that will show progress towards completing a CHA or developing a CHIP (e.g., plan for data collection, analysis and synthesis, plan for monitoring progress on implementation of CHIP strategies, etc.).

Category 3: Progress Towards Developing an Agency Strategic Plan (related PHAB Domain: 5)
An agency strategic plan is one of the three prerequisites to PHAB application and lays the groundwork for agency programs and policies. Health departments have a variety of unique needs and processes related to their ability to apply for and achieve PHAB accreditation. Applicants to this category may use

this award to conduct activities that will show progress towards developing the agency strategic plan that will fulfill one or more of the outlined deliverables (e.g., a SWOT analysis, process for conducting visioning, etc.).

Category 4: Establishing and Monitoring a System of Performance Management (related PHAB Domain: 9)

For LHDS to effectively and efficiently improve population health it is important to monitor performance of processes, programs, interventions, and more and a functioning and integrated performance management system allows for that monitoring. Applicants to this category may use this award to conduct activities that will show progress towards establishing and monitoring a system of performance management that will fulfill one or more of the outlined deliverables (e.g., completed performance management self-assessment, performance dashboard and text that shows evidence of an adopted performance management system, etc.).

Category 5: Building a Culture of Quality Improvement (related PHAB Domain: 9)

Quality improvement (QI) is the result of leadership support and requires staff commitment at all levels to build a culture of quality and ensure it is fully integrated into organizational structures, processes, services, operations, and more. Applicants to this category may use this award to conduct activities that will show progress towards building a culture of QI that will fulfill one or more of the outlined deliverables (e.g., assessment of current QI culture and description of desired future state, plan for regularly communicating about QI activities, etc.).

Category 6: Workforce Development (related PHAB Domain: 8)

A multi-disciplinary workforce that is matched to the specific community being served facilitates the interdisciplinary approaches required to address the population's public health issues. PHAB Standards and Measures (v1.0) focus on the need for LHDS to take a strategic approach to the development of a trained and competent workforce to effectively perform duties. Applicants to this category may use this award to conduct activities that will show progress towards training and development of the LHD workforce that will fulfill one or more of the outlined deliverables (e.g., job descriptions that include core competencies, a workforce development plan, etc.).

****Using Award Funds for PHAB Fees:***

Applicants to any category who plan to submit their accreditation application to PHAB within the project period may choose to use award funds to pay up to 50% of PHAB fees (see the PHAB fee schedule for [2013](#) & for [2014](#)). If the applicant indicates they will use funding toward fees, please note that the required deliverable will be to provide evidence that the LHD has applied to PHAB within the project timeframe; award funds will not be remitted without that evidence. As such, it is important that LHDS applying for fees have carefully considered all PHAB application requirements and have developed a feasible plan to submit the application before May 31, 2014.

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

Selected LHDS must agree to:

- Adhere to NACCHO's [standard contract language](#) and be able to sign and return the contract to NACCHO within 30 days of receiving it. **No modifications to NACCHO's standard language will be made.**
- Designate one main point of contact with whom NACCHO will directly communicate on all matters related to this project, including selection notification. This Project Coordinator will be

responsible for submitting all deliverables, participating in peer networking conference calls or webinars, and completing evaluation activities.

- Submit, per the contract scope of work, 1) all deliverables as selected in the application, 2) two project reports and 3) periodic feedback through evaluation mechanisms throughout the project. Select deliverables will be posted to NACCHO's website.
- Designate one relevant staff member to attend the CDC-sponsored 2-day Public Health Improvement Training in Atlanta, GA in Spring 2014. Funding to support his/her travel will be included in the total award amount and must be included in the applicants' proposed budget.

NACCHO and CDC will provide selected LHDs with:

- A monetary award that will be paid in two installments upon successful submission of the deliverables proposed in the application.
- Opportunities for peer-to-peer networking among all selected LHDs and those within each category of work including hosted conference calls, as appropriate.
- Access to virtual TA and guidance from NACCHO staff, LHD peers/mentors, and/or potentially subject-matter experts related to the category of work for which the LHD received the award, as appropriate. (Please note that this guidance will be limited; if significant TA is necessary for an applicant to complete their work, LHDs should plan to contract with a consultant/SME and budget for the expense within the application.)
- Connection to learning communities and national networks.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- 1) Review the requirements and expectations outlined in this RFA and in the [Application Reference Document](#). (Please note that the Application Reference Document is provided only as a means to help LHDs gather information and prepare responses prior to completing the online submission form.) Applicants are urged to carefully consider the category and deliverable(s) that will be both meaningful and feasible to accomplish during the project timeframe, as described earlier in this document. LHDs may submit one application only.
- 2) Read NACCHO's [standard contract language](#) and provide a copy to the individual with signing authority at the LHD for advanced consideration. Selected LHDs must agree to the contract language and be able to sign and return a contract to NACCHO within 30 days of receiving it. **No modifications will be made. Late contracts will not be accepted.**
- 3) Use the Application Reference Document to prepare responses for the online application and save a copy for your records.
- 4) Complete the [online application](#) by **11:59 PM EDT on Wednesday, November 13, 2013**. No applications will be accepted by fax, e-mail, or postal mail. Please note:
 - **LHDs may submit one application only.**
 - Applicants **will** be able to save responses in the online form and return to them as needed during the submission process.
 - Applicants **will** be able to view and download a response summary at the end of the online application form.

SELECTION PROCESS

- Applications will reviewed by NACCHO and CDC.
- Incomplete applications, those submitted by ineligible applicants, or those received through any format other than the online system will not be reviewed.
- Applications will be reviewed and scored based on the following criteria:
 - Evidence of LHD capacity and feasibility to carry out the proposed activities

- Evidence of awareness/understanding of the accreditation process and intent to ever apply for accreditation
- Degree to which the workplan (activities and timeframes) and budget are clear, realistic, and appropriate
- The final cohort of selected sites will be representative of a diverse sampling of LHDs based on size, location, jurisdiction type, and stage of accreditation readiness (from self-assessment to just prior to submitting an application to PHAB).
- Please note that the number of deliverables chosen alone will have no bearing on the likelihood of selection. Given that the goal of the ASI is to demonstrate measurable and meaningful progress in support of application for PHAB accreditation, LHDs are encouraged to carefully choose both the number and scope of deliverables proposed in the ASI application process.
- Selected applicants will be notified by e-mail on or about Monday, December 9, 2013. Applicants are required in the online application to designate a project coordinator to receive the notification e-mail.
- Selected LHDs will be required to confirm participation and agreement with the contract scope of work (based on deliverables chosen in the application) after receiving notification. The designated point of contact for selection must be available to receive and respond to the notification in a timely manner.
- Non-selected applicants will be notified by e-mail no later than Friday, December 13, 2013.
- Access the application at: http://naccho.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_2bi1be3kRjtqFSZ.

For assistance in proposal writing, please consult NACCHO's free archived webinars. The three-part series, *Elements of a Strong Proposal* includes information on writing specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-phased (SMART) goals and objectives, introduction to logic models, and development of a need statement. The webinars can be viewed here: <http://webcasts.naccho.org/series.php?id=569>.

Categories of Work and Deliverables

The eligible categories of work and deliverables under which LHDs may apply are outlined below. Descriptions of these categories and potential types of activities are described [earlier in the RFA](#). As a reminder, the deliverable(s) chosen will be listed in the contract between selected sites and NACCHO, and payment will be remitted based upon successful submission of these and other project requirements.

For contextual purposes, categories include references to the most closely related domains within the PHAB Standards & Measures. However, it is understood that work in one or more of the categories may span across several PHAB domains indirectly, or in conjunction with other categories of work.

Category <i>(choose one)</i>	Deliverables to be completed through the ASI for submission to NACCHO <i>(choose one or more within selected category)</i>
<p>1. Progress Towards Preparing or Applying for Accreditation (related PHAB Domain: Any)</p>	<p>1. A written self-study by the Accreditation Team against the PHAB Standards, Measures, and Required Documentation that details the LHD’s strengths, opportunities for improvement, and plans for addressing gaps</p> <p>2. Materials from staff and governing entity training(s) on the value of and LHD’s process for achieving accreditation</p> <p>3. Detailed written description of process to systematically review and revise department policies and procedures as needed, and evidence of implementation of this process</p> <p>4. Detailed written description of process for identifying and reviewing documentation for PHAB, and evidence of implementation of this process</p> <p>5. List of possible documentation for each of the PHAB measures, using PHAB’s Documentation Selection Spreadsheet or like tool</p> <p>6. Other deliverable related to Category 1: _____</p>
<p>2. Progress Towards Completing a Community Health Improvement Process (related PHAB Domains: 1 & 5)</p>	<p>1. Process for and results of assessing community partner engagement, and plan for action based on results</p> <p>2. Detailed written plan for CHA data collection; analysis; and synthesis, and evidence of implementation of plan</p> <p>3. Detailed written plan for communicating how the CHA and/or CHIP was distributed to partner organizations and the community at large, and how input was solicited</p> <p>4. Detailed written plan for ongoing monitoring, refreshing and analyzing CHA data, particularly specific to populations/geographic areas where health inequities or poorer health outcomes were identified</p> <p>5. Detailed written description of process for and results of CHIP action planning, including: setting community health priorities; developing goals, measurable objectives and improvement strategies; identifying performance measures with time-framed targets and individuals; identifying organizations that have responsibility for specific strategies; and creating a workplan for implementation.</p> <p>6. Detailed written plan to monitor progress on implementation of community health improvement plan strategies in collaboration with broad participation from stakeholders and partners</p> <p>7. Completed CHA with all required components including: 1) use of data from various sources and results of data collection and analysis activities; 2) demographics of population, 3) description of health issues faced by population groups and factors that contribute to higher health risks/poorer health outcomes</p>

	<p>of populations; and 4) description of existing assets or resources.</p> <p>8. Completed CHIP with all required components including: 1) desired outcomes of health improvement, priorities for action that consider health inequities, measurable objectives, improvement strategies, and performance measures with time-framed targets, 2) policy changes needed to address objectives, 3) individuals and organizations that have accepted responsibility for implementing strategies, and 4) consideration of alignment with state and national priorities.</p> <p>9. Other deliverable related to Category 2: _____</p>
<p>3. Progress towards Developing and Implementing an Agency Strategic Plan (related PHAB Domain: 5)</p>	<p>1. Detailed written description of strategic planning process used and membership of strategic planning group</p> <p>2. Detailed written description of process for developing a vision, mission and guiding principles/values</p> <p>3. Detailed written description of process for identifying agency strategic priorities, goals and objectives with measurable and time-framed targets</p> <p>4. Detailed written description of process for and results of how LHD has 1) considered key support functions required for efficiency and effectiveness (e.g., enhancement of communication and branding policies) and 2) identified external trends, events, or factors that may impact community health or the health department</p> <p>5. Detailed written description, materials and results of assessment process and analysis of the health departments strengths and weaknesses (e.g., SWOT analysis)</p> <p>6. Completed agency strategic plan with all required components including: 1) mission, vision, and guiding principles/values; 2) strategic priorities; 3) measurable and time-framed goals and objectives; 4) identification of external trends, events or factors that may impact the LHD or community health; 5) consideration of key LHD support functions and capacity required for efficiency and effectiveness (e.g., for enhancement of communication and branding policies); 6) assessment of LHD strengths and weaknesses; and 7) link to CHIP or QI Plan, or description of how they will be linked in the future.</p> <p>7. Other deliverable related to Category 3: _____</p>
<p>4. Establishing and Monitoring a System of Performance Management (related PHAB Domain: 9)</p>	<p>1. Completed performance management self-assessment</p> <p>2. Detailed written performance management plan including: leadership and staff roles and responsibilities; objectives and standards for measuring progress toward milestones; methods, tools, and processes for measuring, tracking, and reporting performance; and timelines for completion.</p> <p>3. Performance management staff training including training goals and objectives, and documentation of training content such as PowerPoint presentation, a curriculum, evaluation results, etc.</p> <p>4. Evidence of an adopted system of performance management including the agency's selected performance goals, standards, objectives, targets, and indicators. This should include an established mechanism for data collection, analysis, and reporting of performance progress such as performance dashboards, spreadsheets and narrative text.</p> <p>5. Detailed written description of a formal process used to select and implement an information system to support performance management efforts, such as a requirements gathering process, and evidence of implementation of process. The process should detail how the agency examined its needs related to performance management; explored various information system options; considered various</p>

	<p>stakeholders; and accounted for financial considerations.</p> <p>6. Other deliverable related to Category 4: _____</p>
<p>5. Building a Culture of Quality Improvement (related PHAB Domain: 9)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Detailed written description of assessment results for current QI culture and desired future state of quality in organization 2. Detailed written description and documentation of the LHD's QI governance structure 3. Detailed written description of process and criteria for identifying and initiating appropriate QI projects 4. Detailed written description of process for identifying performance goals, objectives, and measures with time-framed targets 5. Detailed written plan for collecting, analyzing, and tracking progress toward performance goals and making improvements as needed 6. Detailed written description of the LHD's plan for regularly communicating about QI activities in the department, and evidence of at least 3 of those mechanisms implemented 7. Completed QI plan with all required components including descriptions of: 1) key quality terms; 2) desired future state of quality; 3) key elements of the QI governance structure; 4) types of internal QI trainings available and conducted; 5) how projects are identified and initiated and aligned with agency strategic plan; 6) QI goals, objectives, measures with time-framed targets, and responsible parties; 7) plan for collecting, analyzing, and tracking progress toward performance goals and making improvements as needed; and 8) plan for regularly communicating about QI activities. 8. QI staff training including training goals and objectives, and documentation of training content such as PowerPoint presentations, a curriculum, evaluation results, etc. 9. Written or visual example of a completed QI project(s) in a program and/or administrative area 10. Other deliverable related to Category 5: _____
<p>6. Workforce Development (related PHAB Domain: 8)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Detailed written plan for ensuring adoption of relevant public health core competencies among staff 2. Assessment(s) used to assess staff competencies against the adopted core competencies and detailed description of process for implementing assessment. 3. Staff training plan based upon results of assessment, including training schedules and description of curricula topics, and how identified gaps in staff competencies will be addressed 4. Workforce development plan that includes all required components including: 1) adopted public health core competencies for staff; 2) assessment of staff competencies against adopted core competencies; 3) curricula and training schedules; and 4) identification of barriers and strategies for addressing them. 5. Other deliverable related to Category 6: _____