

**Community Communications Action Plan  
Planning Phase**

**(RFA23-002)**

**APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

**FY 2023-2024**

**Florida Department of Health**

**Division of Community Health, Florida Department of Health,  
Hillsborough County Health Department**

**March 13, 2023**

**Application Deadline:**

**(May 15, 2023)**

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**Note: Information in boxes is to remind and assist applicants with critical components contained in specific sections of the application**

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**TIMELINE**  
**RFA23-002**

Prospective applicants shall adhere to the RFA timelines as identified below.

Schedule	Due Date	Location
Request for Applications Released and Advertised	<b>08/15/2023</b>	Department of Health Grant Funding Opportunities Website: <a href="https://www.floridahealth.gov/about/administrative-functions/purchasing/grant-funding-opportunities/index.html">https://www.floridahealth.gov/about/administrative-functions/purchasing/grant-funding-opportunities/index.html</a>
Submission of Questions	<b>08/31/2023</b>	Submit Questions to <a href="mailto:Robert.Morales@flhealth.gov">Robert.Morales@flhealth.gov</a>
Anticipated posting of Answers to Questions	<b>09/07/2023</b>	Department of Health Grant Funding Opportunities Website: <a href="https://www.floridahealth.gov/about/administrative-functions/purchasing/grant-funding-opportunities/index.html">https://www.floridahealth.gov/about/administrative-functions/purchasing/grant-funding-opportunities/index.html</a>
Applications due (no faxed or e-mailed applications)	<b>Must be received by 09/25/2023, 12:00pm ET</b>	Express Mail or Hand Delivered to:  Robert Morales Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough Contract Office/Department 1105 E. Kennedy Blvd. Tampa, FL 33602
Anticipated evaluation of applications	<b>10/09/2023</b>	Review and Evaluation of Applications Begins
Anticipated award date	<b>10/20/2023</b>	Department of Health Grant Funding Opportunities Website: <a href="https://www.floridahealth.gov/about/administrative-functions/purchasing/grant-funding-opportunities/index.html">https://www.floridahealth.gov/about/administrative-functions/purchasing/grant-funding-opportunities/index.html</a>

# Guidelines for Developing Request for Application and Request for Information

## Section 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Program Authority

The Department of Health is responsible for the state's public health system which shall be designed to promote, protect, and improve the health of all people in the state F.S. 381.001. Duties include providing for the dissemination of information to the public relative to the prevention, control, and cure of diseases, illness, and hazards to human health as designated in F.S. 381.0011.

### 1.2 Notice and Disclaimer

Grant awards will be determined by the Department of Health in accordance with this publication based on the availability of funds.

### 1.3 Program Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Application (RFA) is to select one Provider to work with the Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough (further known as the Department) to **facilitate the development of a local Community Communication Action Plan**, including the development of communication and marketing materials. The Provider will assist the Department in planning for the development and implementation of a culturally and linguistically relevant Community Communication Action Plan using health communication strategies to support prevention and wellbeing. The Communication Action Plan should remain consistent with State Department of Health guidelines and mission.

### 1.4 Available Funding

The total amount of funding available to the Provider in an amount not to exceed \$527,510.00, subject to the availability of funds, for a period of July 1, 2023, through October 31, 2027. Funding will be separated into annual allotments of \$105,502.00, subject to the availability of funds. Annual renewal amount will be based on State and Federal funding each year.

### 1.5 Matching Funds

There are no matching funds requirement under this RFA.

## Section 2.0 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### 2.1 Background

The Department of Health mission is to promote and protect the health and safety of all people in Florida through the delivery of quality public health services and the promotion of health care standards. Pandemics like COVID-19 had provided some unique communication challenges that we are trying to prevent in the future.

Hillsborough County has a diverse population and culturally and linguistically relevant communication is important in the delivery of our messaging to ensure the highest quality public health services possible.

## **2.2 Priority Areas**

Our priority is to improve overall communication to our growing population in Hillsborough County to help build trust with the community and to improve health outcomes and the well-being of all residents and visitors to our county. Special efforts should be made to engage community partners in the planning process for future community communication and marketing of public health information. The planning process should focus on optimal ways to share information with varying populations in the county, e.g. racial and ethnic minorities, Spanish-speaking individuals, veterans, LGBTQ+ communities and individuals with disabilities.

## **2.3 Program Expectations**

- Guide the development of a communication action plan within the first term on the agreement.
- Create a task force with community partners to include public and private entities to assist with the development of the communication action plan.
- Improved coordination, collaboration, and linkages among public and private entities that specifically provide public health education or services to the community. These entities may include but not be limited to: public health universities, hospitals, faith-based organizations, local coalitions, the local school district and medical providers.
- Establish a set of tools, techniques, and principles that provide the foundation for effective communication between our organization, our partners, and the public.
- Gather and analyze input from stakeholders and the public on the barriers to trusting public health information and recommendations and how these barriers can be removed in order to more effectively provide health information and promote behavior change in the public. Behavior change can include, but not be limited to, reduced diabetes rates, increased vaccination rates, and increased participation in the Department's public health and wellness programs.
- Gather and analyze input from the public to fully understand our audience/community and the best approaches for communicating with them in order to develop public health messaging and marketing materials that the public will trust to improve their health and well-being.
- Establish health communication strategies that are candid, clear, timely, and relevant to the interest and needs of our diverse population in Hillsborough County.
- Provide credible information on public health issues and public health functions through multiple methods, languages, and media to a variety of audiences.

## **2.4 Applicant Project Results**

The Provider will be expected to:

- Establish a communications action plan, with the task force's assistance, for how public health information should be shared with the public within the first term of the agreement.
- Execute all aspects of the communication action plan before then end of fifth term.
- Establish routine health promotions, disease prevention and program outreach messaging to be used by the Department and our community partners that is consistent and based in science. Timeline for strategy development will be determined during action plan establishment in term 1.
- Development and use of health communication strategies to support prevention and wellbeing, reduce health inequities, and enhance public responsiveness. Timeline for strategy development will be determined during action plan establishment in term 1.
- Development of communication and marketing materials are culturally and linguistically relevant to all populations in Hillsborough County based on information gathered from partners and Hillsborough

residents. These will include templates for flyers, posters, radio ads, billboard layouts, and any other materials determine by the Department or partners during planning and implementation phases. Timeline for strategy development will be determined during action plan establishment in term 1.

- Enhance the ability of the Department to use social media platforms and innovative media technology to ensure timely and relevant communication to educate individuals in Hillsborough county on emerging public health threats and available public health resources. Timeline for strategy development will be determined during action plan establishment in term 1.

## **2.5 Current and Prior Funded Projects**

Applicants must demonstrate ability to provide the desired services based on current and prior project efforts and have the following qualifications and work experience:

- Maintenance of sufficient and qualified staff to carry out and/or provide the required services. Staff should have a degree in public health or communications or at least 3 years' experience developing communication material that exhibits cultural diversity.
- Can demonstrate experience with communication strategy development to varying populations.

## **2.6 Project Requirement**

Develop and carry out action plan objectives and timelines for meeting established goals to improve overall communication and marketing to all residents of Hillsborough County, leading to improved health prevention and overall wellbeing.

# **Section 3.0 TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SUPPORT**

## **3.1 Eligible Applicants**

Applicants must be legal business entities and include, but are not limited to, institutions of higher learning, health care providers, government agencies, and not-for-profit 501(c)(3) entities. All individuals, organizations and agencies submitting an application for funding are advised that accepting federal and state dollars under this RFA will require recipients' compliance with all federal and state laws, executive orders, regulations and policies governing these funds.

All vendors doing business with the State of Florida must have a completed W-9 on file with the Department of Financial Services. If awarded, the process can be completed at: <https://flvendor.myfloridacfo.com>. To be eligible to receive a grant, all corporations, limited liability companies or partnerships and their sub-contracts seeking to do business with the State shall be registered with the Florida Department of State in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 607, 608, 617 and 620, Florida Statutes.

## **3.2 Eligibility Criteria**

Eligible applicants should be an individual or organization active in marketing and communication to varied populations, including minority groups. Applicant should also have experience in community-focused, collaborative efforts, which serve to bring together agencies, community groups, academic institutions, and other groups to address health or social concerns. Providers meeting the following criteria are eligible to apply for funding under this RFA:

1. Licensed to do business in the State of Florida for the services they are proposing to deliver, have a 501(c)(3) certification if the agency is not for profit, and meet all State and local laws and regulations.
2. Not have been placed on the convicted vendor list.
3. Experience developing communication strategies for varying population and cultures.
4. At least one staff member is bilingual in English and Spanish

### **3.3 Minority Participation**

In keeping with the One Florida Initiative, the Department of Health encourages minority business participation in all its procurements. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Office of Supplier Diversity at 850/487-0915 or visit their website at <http://osd.dms.state.fl.us> for information on becoming a certified minority or for names of existing certified minorities who may be available for subcontracting or supplier opportunities.

### **3.4 Corporate Status**

For all corporate applicants, proof of corporate status must be provided with the application. Tax-exempt status is not required, except for applications applying as non-profit organizations. Tax-exempt status is determined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Code, Section 501(c)(3). Any of the following is acceptable evidence:

- a. A statement from a state taxing body, State Attorney General, or other appropriate state official, certifying that the applicant has a non-profit status and that none of the net earnings accrue to any private shareholders or individuals.

#### **Non-Corporate Status**

Documentation that verifies the official not-for-profit status of an organization in accordance with Chapter 617, Florida Statutes

### **3.5 Period of Support**

1. Will receive an award ranging from \$105,502 to \$527,510 total costs (direct and indirect). The funding will be divided into the following terms and dependent on State and Federal fund availability.

**Term 1: July 1, 2023 – October 31, 2023: \$105,502**

Term 2: November 1, 2023 – October 31, 2024: \$105,502

Term 3: November 1, 2024 – October 31, 2025: \$105,502

Term 4: November 1, 2025 – October 31, 2026: \$105,502

Term 5: November 1, 2026 – October 31, 2027: \$105,502

2. Continuation or renewal of grants is not guaranteed and shall be based upon successful performance of the grantees, as determined solely by the Department. The department may request an annual continuation application allowing the grantees to improve or modify programmatic objectives and activities, the completion of outcome measures, or the program budget.

### **3.6 Use of Grant Funds**



**Allowable** Costs – must be reasonable, necessary, and directly related to the provision of services and are limited to the following:

- Personnel
- Consultants employed directly by the Provider
- Supplies
- Meeting space for partner or community engaged meetings (focus groups, data review meeting, Community Communication Action Planning meeting)

**Funds may not be used for:**

- Building alterations or renovations
- Construction
- Direct services (e.g., hiring grant writers to prepare competitive grant applications, supporting direct patient services such as counseling)
- Fringe benefits for temporary employees
- Fund raising activities

## **Section 4.0 APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **4.1 Application Forms**

Applicants must use the official form attached to this RFA. Alternate forms may not be used. Neither the Department of Health nor the State is liable for any costs incurred by an application in responding to this RFA.

### **4.2 Order of Application Package**

Applicants for funding must address all sections of the RFA in the order presented below. Order of application package:

- Application Cover Page (1 page limit)
- Table of Contents (3 pages limit)
- Project Abstract/Summary (1 page limit)
- Statement of Need (1 page limit)
- Project Narrative (8 pages limit)
- Detailed Budget Narrative (3 pages limit)
- Budget Summary Form
- Other Required Forms (Section 9.0)
- Appendices (optional)

**Note:** If funding is requested in an amount greater than the ceiling of the award range, the application will be considered non-responsive and will not be entered into the review process. The application will be returned with notification that it did not meet the submission requirements.

### **4.3 Compliant Budget Form and Budget Justification Narrative**

In addition to filling out the budget summary (Attachment II) form located in the application, a separate budget justification narrative and computation of expenditures must be provided, as outlined below.

Applicants should recognize that costs do not remain static; the budget narrative should reflect the various phases and activities of planning, organizing, and implementation.

## **Section 5.0      REQUIRED CONTENT OF THE NARRATIVE SECTION**

### **5.1      Project Abstract/Summary**

No more than **1 page in length, single spaced in a 12-point font.**

The project summary may be used to brief the Department selection committee and others about the proposed project. Applicants shall provide a succinct one-page summary of the proposed project in 500 words or less. The summary should identify the main activities of the project to be completed.

**Note:** Page numbering begins with the Project Summary.

### **5.2      Statement of Need**

No more than **1 page in length, single spaced in a 12-point font.**

The Department wants to become one of the top trusted sources of health/public health information and we desire to work with a Provider to develop and implement a Community Communications Action Plan. Applicants shall identify, in narrative form, the following information:

1. Process to engage partners, in particular, those that: provide health information; receive health information; work with individuals from varying populations, e.g. racial and ethnic minorities, Spanish-speaking individuals, veterans, LGBTQ+ communities, and individuals with disabilities.
2. Describe current or prior successes engaging community partners in project action planning at the county-level.

### **5.3      Objectives**

The Department's objective is to provide public health information and programs that meet the needs of Hillsborough County residents and visitors to help all individuals meet their optimal health and well-being goals. Developing a linguistically and culturally relevant communications plan is necessary to ensure optimal messaging to all populations in Hillsborough County.

### **5.4      Project Narrative/Plan**

No more than **8 pages in length, single space in a 12-point font.**

This section should outline in detail how the applicant will meet the needs of the Department as outlined in section 1.3 and the program expectations and project results listed in Sections 2.3 and 2.4. Applicants shall identify in narrative form the following information:

1. The activities or actions that will be undertaken to achieve the Department’s program purpose and programmatic objectives, including timeline with beginning and end dates, and the person(s) responsible for each activity or action.
2. Explanation of how the proposed project will be delivered. Shall include intended program implementation strategy.
3. The provider’s capacity to conduct community engagement, specifically brainstorming sessions, and Action Plan development.

## **5.5 Budget Narrative**

No more than **3 pages in length, single spaced in a 12-point font.**

All costs contained in the Budget Narrative must be directly related to the services and activities proposed to be provided and identified in the application. If there is a match of cash or in-kind (not required) services being committed to the project, indicate the amount of match the organization will be providing for each budget category. Provide justification and details for all cost items, including computations contained in the Budget Information Form. Include only expenses directly related to the project and necessary for program implementation.

## **5.6 Budget Summary**

The method of cost presentation will be a line-item budget using the budget summary format in Attachment II.

## **5.7 Appendices**

All appendices must be clearly referenced and support elements of the narrative. Appendices do not count towards the narrative page total.

Examples include:

- The organization’s mission statement
- Organizational Chart
- Sample evaluation tools
- Previous project action plans
- Letters of support

## **Section 6.0 SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION**

### **6.1 Application Deadline**

Application Deadline: May 15, 2023, at 4:00pm ET

Applications must be received by the date and time indicated in the Timeline.

### **6.2 Submission Methods**

Applications may only be submitted by regular/express mail or hand delivered.

### **6.3 Instructions for Submission of Applications**

#### **Instructions for Mailed or Hand-Delivered Applications**

Applicants are required to submit the application as follows:

- The application must be signed by an individual authorized to act for the applicant agency or organization and to assume for the organization the obligations imposed by the terms and conditions of the grant.
- Applicants are required to submit three copies of the application via express/regular mail or hand delivered.
- Mailed or hand-delivered applications will be considered as meeting the deadline if they are received by the Office of Contracts by **May 15, 2023, at 4:00pm ET**. Applicants are encouraged to submit applications early. Applications that do not meet the deadline will be returned to the applicant unread.

### **6.4 Where to Send Your Application**

Express Mail or Hand Delivered

Robert Morales  
Florida Department of Health, Hillsborough County Health Department  
Contract Management Office  
1105 E. Kennedy Blvd.  
Tampa, FL 33602

## **Section 7.0 EVALUATIONS OF APPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 Receipt of Applications**

Applications will be screened upon receipt. Applications that are not complete, or that do not conform to or address the criteria of the program will be considered non-responsive. Complete applications are those that include the required forms in the Required Forms Section of this application. Incomplete applications will be returned with notification that it did not meet the submission requirements and will not be entered into the review process.

Applications will be scored by an objective review committee. Committee members are chosen for their expertise in health and their understanding of the unique health problems and related issues in Florida.

### **7.2 How Applications are Scored**

Applications will be reviewed on their own merits and will not be compared to each other. Each application will be evaluated and scored based on the evaluation criteria below. Evaluation sheets will be used by the review committee to designate the point value assigned to each application. The scores of each member of the

review committee will be averaged with the scores of the other members to determine the final scoring. The maximum possible score for any application is 100 points.

<b>Evaluation Question</b>	<b>Maximum Possible Points</b>
<b>Purpose and Goals (20 points)</b> To what extent does the applicant demonstrate an <b>understanding of</b> and <b>ability to</b> fulfill the goals and requirements of the Community Communication Action Plan project?	20
<b>Services (10 points each)</b> To what extent does the applicant demonstrate ability to furnish the eligible services listed in this RFA including: A. Experience gathering and analyzing data from the community. B. Experience developing and implementing action plans. C. Experience engaging community members in project planning meetings D. Experience developing communication plans and materials for varying populations.	40
<b>Program Plan (5 points each)</b> Does the applicant completely describe: A. How current and prior projects/programs can or will contribute to success of the Community Communication planning process. B. How funding will be used to meet project goals. C. The provider’s staff capabilities to meet project requirements. D. The process that will be used for program planning and project implementation.	20
<b>Approach to Inclusiveness (10 points each)</b> To what extent does the applicant describe: A. How they will engage communities underrepresented in communication and marketing action planning B. Plans to identify ways to increase culturally relevant information and tactics in public health communications and marketing strategies.	20
<b>Total</b>	100

### **7.3 Grant Awards**

Grant awards will be determined by the Department of Health at its sole discretion based on availability of funds. The awards will be awarded to one provider.

### **7.4 Award Criteria**

Funding decisions will be determined by the Department of Health on the basis of merit as determined by responses to this RFA and with established criteria as described in section 7.2. The Department will fund projects in Hillsborough County, Florida.

### **7.5 Funding**

The Department of Health reserves the right to revise proposed plans and negotiate final funding prior to execution of contracts.

## **7.6 Awards**

Awards will be listed on the website at <https://www.floridahealth.gov/about/administrative-functions/purchasing/grant-funding-opportunities/index.html> on or about June 5, 2023.

## **Section 8.0 REPORTING AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

### **8.1 Post Award Requirements**

Funded applicants will be required to submit:

- Progress reports in accordance with the Attachment I.
- Quarterly Financial Status Reports.
- The Department reserves the right to evaluate the organization administrative structure, economic viability, and ability to deliver services prior to final award and execution of the contract.

## **Section 9.0 REQUIRED FORMS**

### **9.1 Application for Funding**

### **9.2 Budget Information**

### **9.3 Budget Narrative**

### **9.4 Personnel Form**

### **9.5 Statement Of No Involvement**

### **9.6 Certification Of Drug Free Work Place**

### **9.7 IRS Non-Profit Status 501 (C) (3)**

### **9.8 Florida Department of Health Standard Contract**

### **9.9 Financial Compliance Audit**

### **9.10 Lobbying and Debarment forms (federal funds only)**