



TOOLKIT FOR

CALL FOR IDEAS

Centered in equity, the mission of the Greater Rochester Health Foundation is to pursue and invest in solutions that build a healthier region where all people can thrive.

WWW.THEGRHF.ORG
(585) 258-1799

Toolkit Purpose & Overview

This toolkit was created by the Greater Rochester Health Foundation in response to invaluable feedback received from our partners following the initial launch of our *Call for Ideas* funding opportunity. It is designed to provide guidance in developing your Idea Proposal, explanations of the information we are requesting, and example responses for each question. Definitions of key terms and concepts, and considerations used during proposal review and selection are provided to offer additional insight as you prepare to submit your best idea.

This funding opportunity was designed to solicit ideas from a broad variety of organizations/entities describing their ideas to address health inequities while providing us with enough information to consider each idea fully and fairly.

Through this funding opportunity we are seeking to advance innovative, partnered work that reimagines systems, programs, and services to disrupt inequities and rebuild stronger, healthier communities.

NOTE: Examples in this toolkit represent samples from a variety of organizations (identifying information has been removed) that reflect key elements of a response, but do not represent what a comprehensive response would look like in the full proposal. Examples of the weaker responses were created by the Health Foundation for illustrative purposes and are not from actual submissions received.

We hope this toolkit will be a helpful tool to support your development a competitive proposal.

Have Questions? Want Feedback on Your Idea?

We welcome and encourage you to reach out with any questions you have, and staff are available to provide guidance on your idea and how it aligns with our goals. Contact Senior Program Officer Monica Brown at (585) 258-1710, Associate Program Officer Hannah Stark at (585) 258-1703, or send an email to ideas@thegrhf.org to discuss your ideas before submitting your proposal.

About the Health Foundation:

The mission of the Greater Rochester Health Foundation is to pursue and invest in solutions that build a healthier region where all people can thrive.

GRHF Equity Value Statement: To achieve justice and fairness in health resources and outcomes, we seek to disrupt the conditions that result in racial and other health inequities in our nine-county region.

Equity: The effort to provide various levels of support based on an individual's or group's needs to achieve fairness in outcomes. Working to achieve equity acknowledges unequal starting places and the need to correct the imbalance (Center for the Study of Social Policy). Just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential (Policy Link, Equity Manifesto).

Health: A state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (World Health Organization).

Health inequities: Differences or disparities in health status between socially advantaged and disadvantaged or marginalized groups resulting from systemic and unfair differences in access to and availability of resources and opportunities.

Proposal Writing Tips:

1. Read the [Call for Ideas Proposal Guidance](#) document in its entirety and reach out to GRHF staff to answer any questions you may have and for guidance on your idea and how it aligns with our goals.
2. Review the *Selection Considerations* below to determine the readiness of your idea, ensuring you are thoroughly addressing equity and including community co-design/voice.
3. Write your proposal as if you are having a conversation with GRHF staff. We find that information is often shared more easily during a conversation. In your writing, try to succinctly provide all details that you would share during a conversation – tell your story!
4. Review the proposal to ensure all questions have been answered and that it meets page length requirements. Ask someone not familiar with the proposed work to review it to make sure the need and idea is clearly stated.

Selection Considerations:

Idea Proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria below. The most competitive proposals engage clients and communities impacted by the given health equity issue(s) as partners in planning and in implementing work that redesigns or reimagines services, practices, or systems to disrupt the status quo of inequity. Specifically, they:

- Focus on a health inequity impacting a marginalized group/community with attention to multiple or intersecting oppressions;
- Clearly describe the project design or approach and how it will contribute to more equitable access, resources, or outcomes;
- Have been shaped by the people or communities impacted, and include plans for continued engagement beyond program participation;
- Reflect an innovative approach with potential to contribute learning to the community and field;
- Exhibit commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within the organization, including staff and board that are representative of communities served, and within programs/services; and
- Reflect experience with the specific type of project and population/community of focus and leverage partnerships to advance the work.

Writing Your Idea Proposal - Cover Letter

The first page we are asking you to submit with your idea is a Cover Page. Please review the outline on this page and make sure you are providing the requested information along with an overview of your project. The “response guidance” will help you understand what to include here; the “response example” is intended to help you as you write your overview.

Cover Page Information

Please include the below information on your cover page:

Project & Contact Information:

- *Organization name*
- *Project title*
- *Project director (name, title, email address and phone number)*
- *CEO/executive director (name, title, email address and phone number)*

Project Overview:

In a few short sentences, please provide a summary of your idea and its intended impact, including the health inequity related issue or need, the people and/or communities intended to benefit, and what will be different as a result.

Response Guidance

This high-level project overview should include the important points: the health inequity issue; your idea for a solution; the people, or communities to benefit; and the expected results. Specific project details are not intended to be captured in the project overview but should be included as you respond to the four questions that make up the proposal narrative.

Response Example:

WEAKER RESPONSE	STRONGER RESPONSE
<p>Our program will help people to become working adults better positioned to maintain proper health. We will work with partners to provide support to disadvantaged individuals for success in the workplace. Through our program, participants will increase specific career field skills, improve knowledge, and get and maintain employment for a full year.</p> <p>Why is this response weaker?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too general • Lack of detail about the intended population/ communities intended to benefit • Details of solution missing 	<p>Our program will enable our target population (people who are unemployed or underemployed in Monroe County) to become thriving, self-sufficient, working adults who are better positioned to manage factors impacting their health. Working with our collaborative partners, we will provide comprehensive, unique wrap-around support services to equip these individuals for success in the workplace. Upon successful completion of the program, participants will have fulfilled specific skill/career field requirements; enhanced life skills to be successful in the workplace; gained skills/knowledge in managing health issues and employee health benefits; and will have completed a full year of continuous.</p>

Writing Your Idea Proposal - Proposal Narrative

The next part of your Idea Proposal is the “narrative.” The narrative is your response to specific questions we are asking to best understand your idea. A breakdown of each question and response examples are also provided.

Question 1: Project Description

Provide a full description of your project/request: include details that describe the health inequity, the need for the idea/solution, and key project activities. What suggests this is likely to be an impactful approach? What do you expect to be different because of this work? If there are partnerships involved in or planned for this work, please share those details as well.

Response Guidance

Your response to this multi-part question should include enough information for us to understand:

- A) The health inequity you will address, its causes and impact on the people affected;
- B) How your solution/idea will operate and why it is likely to succeed;
- C) The health-related changes that will result from your solution; and
- D) If there are partnerships involved, and if so, what role they will play and their relevant experience and/or expertise.

Below are additional guidance and response examples for each of these four areas:

A. Describing the Health Inequity:

- **Who is impacted by this inequity?** Who are the people affected? Do they share racial, ethnic, gender or other identities, social or economic circumstances, or other health-related characteristics? What geographic area do they live/work in?
- **What is the impact of this inequity?** What specific health conditions or aspects of health status are involved/impacted? Consider impacts on *individuals*, e.g., mental, emotional, or physical harm, risk for developing or worsening of disease, reduced ability to function (work, play, care for others), lost years of life. Consider impacts on *families and communities*, e.g., lower social, emotional, economic well-being, increased burden of care, increased health risks (exposure to violence, pollutants, unhealthy foods).
- **What is causing the inequity?** What are the unfair or unjust differences in resources, opportunities, or supports that bring about the health impacts you described? What is the wrong you intend to help right? Are there gaps in or barriers to accessing resources or systems, practices, and/or policies that are biased against or not responsive to the needs or cultural identities of this population or communities?

Response Examples:

WEAKER RESPONSE	STRONGER RESPONSE
<p>This program will focus on youth and young adults living in the city of Rochester, primarily Black and Brown individuals, experiencing obesity, poor nutrition, and lack of exercise.</p> <p>Why is this response weaker?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too vague • Missing the “what” causing obesity, poor nutrition, and lack of exercise in their community • Missing impact of health inequity (e.g., diabetes, heart disease, etc.) 	<p>This program is designed to provide a grassroots understanding of the inequities behind the high rates of obesity, poor nutrition, and lack of exercise as well as advocate for improved accessibility of nutritious food among BIPOC individuals, ages 6-24, living in the “crescent neighborhoods” of Rochester (Upper Falls, Marketview Heights, parts of 14621, Edgerton, Brown Square and JOSANA). These inequities include poverty, access to affordable nutritious food, stress, and lack of safe space for play. In our region, only 43% of low-income persons report eating vegetables daily, compared to 73% of upper-income persons. 41% of Black high school students in Monroe County report very little physical activity compared to the 12% of white students. Obesity is a risk factor for diabetes, asthma, heart disease, hypertension, and cancer, is related to poverty, and can lead to social isolation and depression.</p>

B. How the Solution Will Work

- **Key Activities:** What are the activities you propose? When and where will they be offered/available? Who will conduct them? How will affected people learn about your project?
- **Likeliness for Impact:** Do you have organizational assets to support the success of your project? For example: Trusted relationships with and direct input/feedback from the people/communities to be served? Research to support your approach? Experience implementing a similar project/program? Staff with needed skills and experience? A culture that values community input and quality improvement processes? Other assets?

Response Examples:

WEAKER RESPONSE	STRONGER RESPONSE
<p>The program will deliver legal immigration assistance to low-income individuals. There will be clinics offered for undocumented farmworkers for preparation in the event of detention and removal. Our team of pro-bono attorneys will work with individuals and families to provide civil legal services.</p> <p>Why is this response weaker?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information on activities (what, where, when) 	<p>From January 2021 thru December 2021, the program will deliver legal immigration assistance to low-income individuals providing legal representation, advice and counsel, and Know Your Rights information on applying for citizenship, legal permanent residence, and other immigration status (virtually or in-person). The program will also conduct five clinics (virtually or in-person) for undocumented farmworkers in rural areas on immigration screening and family preparedness services in the event of detention and removal. Staff will coordinate outreach visits to enable limited, in-person contact to facilitate communications and/or provide access to and assistance with technology. Working collaboratively with our partners, the program has adapted its service delivery model to the community’s current needs. With its panel of approximately 1,600 pro-bono attorneys, the organization serves as a national pro bono model for providing civil legal services and is a leader in efficiency, technology innovations, and collaboration.</p>

C. Results Expected

How will the health status of recipients directly change? Will the factors that support health equity be improved or increased? For example: access to culturally competent care, nutritious food, safe housing and neighborhoods, sustaining employment, high quality education?

Response Examples:

WEAKER RESPONSE	STRONGER RESPONSE
<p>The center will result in increased trust and improved relations between the LGBTQ community and healthcare.</p> <p>Why is this response weaker?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lacks detail on the results/health outcome 	<p>Utilizing the center, designed specifically for LGBTQ people of color, will lead to trusting relationships between the staff and clients, bridging the gap from community to clinic. The goal of the project is to reduce barriers to healthcare by creating a safe space where sex and sexuality are viewed as affirming and less stigmatizing; therefore, patients who experience social or economic barriers can receive the services and care they need to improve their health regardless of their ability to pay.</p>

D. Partnerships

Identify partners and collaborators for the project and describe the roles/work of each. Do you already have a relationship with the partner(s)? Do partners not only have experience with, but a trusted and respectful relationship with the people you serve? How will the partnership support/contribute to the goals of the work?

Response Examples:

WEAKER RESPONSE	STRONGER RESPONSE
<p>We have a number of partnerships with varying businesses and organizations who will work with us on increasing inclusion in our programs.</p> <p>Why is this response weaker?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missing partner names Lack of detail on the roles partners will play Lack of detail describing partners experience with creating an inclusive environment 	<p>Since 2015, we have used our collaborative model to close gaps in service delivery to people with disabilities. Our Community Health Inclusion partnerships are multi-year contracted consultation services to assess, train, and provide on-going support to recreation businesses, with outcomes of both physical accessibility and social inclusion. Our work with businesses such as Erie Canal Boat Company, Pickled Power, Victor Parks & Recreation, Genesee Valley Park Sports Complex, Healthy Highway, Irondequoit Recreation, and Adlai Stevenson School #29 has resulted in tangible operational changes that sustain a culture of inclusion such as hiring/training practices or daily library displays of books by and/or about people with disabilities; removal of physical barriers at facilities (ADA rail at fishing dock, push button door openers); increases in participation by over 550+ individuals with a variety of I/DD and physical disabilities alongside their family/ peers without disability; and outreach to over 8,000 people in the Greater Rochester region.</p>

Question 2: Community Voice

How did the community you seek to serve inform the identification of the need and your idea/approach? How will you continue to engage the community (e.g., in decision making, delivery, continued improvements, etc.)?

Response Guidance

Describe how you gathered information in a way the affected people/community *identified their needs and priorities* (e.g., focus groups, survey, listening sessions, observations, other methods).

How were affected persons/communities involved in *shaping your idea* through their lived experience and preferences for the design and delivery (e.g., were they members of the project design team)? Was there an opportunity for them to review and give feedback on your approach, other methods?

What processes will you use to engage affected persons/communities as *partners in project implementation* (e.g., as advocates, members of advisory boards/panels, participants in project quality improvement process, other methods)? How will you continue to gather their input and feedback (e.g., focus groups, advisory board/panel, consumer satisfaction surveys) throughout the project?

Response Examples:

WEAKER RESPONSE	STRONGER RESPONSE
<p>We conduct a survey every two years to ask our clients if they are satisfied with our services. Our staff are also in daily contact with our clients, so they keep us updated on what people want and need.</p> <p>Why is this response weaker?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacking clarity of survey questions/results • Relies on staff to interpret client needs/preferences rather than partnering with clients directly to hear their needs/preferences 	<p>We have learned that engaging people who are partaking in the services is critical. Only those actively living through a situation can really understand not only what is needed, but how likely they would be to participate. Recent needs assessments have been conducted in our soup kitchen during our new strategic planning survey (summer 2020). Clients were interviewed as stakeholders and were asked about unmet needs and programs/services missing that would be of benefit. We have talked with clients and heard that in addition to screenings, folks are interested in education that teaches prevention and health management as well. It was determined that hiring a medical professional to provide screenings and education would improve access, usage, and health of residents. In addition to stakeholders helping to identify the need and solution, we envision a small committee of clients working with us to help come up with topics that will be addressed in the program. The committee will be charged with asking questions of our final candidate(s) as part of the interview process, so that they have a hand in choosing the person who will be responsible for caring for them ensuring they are involved with all aspects of design and decision making.</p>

Question 3: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

Please tell us about efforts to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion within your organization and programs/services.

Response Guidance

Describe steps you have taken to advance EDI within your organization and programs/services. For example: Have you diversified your staff and Board or set goals and activities to do so? Have you reviewed organizational practices, policies, and requirements to identify and remedy inequity for consumers or staff? Have you provided training to inform and educate your staff and board about systemic racism and the causes and impacts of social or health inequities? Have you modified or added programs/services to be more responsive to the cultural identities and experiences of the people you serve? Is your organization actively involved in any community coalitions or initiatives to address systemic barriers such as racism, poverty, inadequate education, housing, or health care?

Response Examples:

WEAKER RESPONSE	STRONGER RESPONSE
<p>We have improved access to yoga for all people. We have helped women of color in the community become certified yoga instructors and created a space for conversation for people in the community to talk about social injustices.</p> <p>Why is this response weaker?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing detail on specific EDI goals/activities • Too vague 	<p>We are a woman and BIPOC-led organization, a healing force by and for BIPOC. We launched to help diverse groups of people access yoga for health and healing. We have created an inclusive space with racially and economically diverse members. Over three years, we have helped 35 women of color complete the 200-hour Yoga Teacher Training certification course. We are part of Free the People ROC and provide healing circles, meditation, and movement for protestors, medics, and others in the fight for social action. Our goals are to train and nurture a network of conscious yoga teachers of color, to create a brave space for conversation for people of all race/ethnicities, to teach yoga in ways that center the wisdom and creativity of BIPOC and acknowledge systems that fracture their wholeness, and to offer affordable and accessible yoga classes, events, and educational materials that promote health, wellness, and belonging.</p>

Question 4: Funding Need

Please indicate the estimated amount and duration of grant support you are looking for, as well as a general idea of what the funding from the Health Foundation will support.

Response Guidance

Describe the length of the project (is it one year, three years?, etc.). Provide the estimated total budget you are requesting from the Health Foundation along with a high-level description of what the funding is expected to be used for.

Response Examples:

WEAKER RESPONSE	STRONGER RESPONSE
<p>We are requesting \$225,000 in financial support.</p> <p>Why is this response weaker?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing length of funding request (including per year) • Unclear how money will be used 	<p>We are requesting \$225,000 over three years (\$75,000 per year) to support staffing and match coordination among program participants, specifically for one full-time employee (FTE) Volunteer Coordinator for Monroe County and one FTE Volunteer Coordinator for Genesee, Livingston, Ontario, and Wayne Counties. Grant funding will also partially support continued marketing efforts crucial to the program.</p>