



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 fourth 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.

Awards of **up to \$15,000** 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 late October and the project period will run from the date of contract execution through May 29, 2015.

Applicants may apply under ONE category of work and select one or more deliverables (linked directly to a specific PHAB Measure) 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. Each LHD may submit one application only and applications must be submitted through the online submission form (by uploading the completed Application Document) **by 5 PM ET on Friday, 9/12/14**.

NACCHO and CDC will host an optional webconference on **Tuesday, 8/26/14** from **2 – 3 pm ET; 1- 2 pm CT/12 – 1 pm MT/ 11 am – 12 pm PT** (Web & Audio: <https://cc.readytalk.com/r/k84ohg5glixd&eom>; Audio: Dial 1-800-769-9015) 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.

All necessary information regarding the project and application process may be found in this RFA and accompanying Application Document. If you have outstanding questions after reading these documents in detail, please e-mail asi@naccho.org.

ELIGIBILITY AND CONTRACT TERMS

This RFA is open to governmental 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 already submitted an application to PHAB on or before October 1, 2014 (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](#)
- Previous NACCHO/CDC Accreditation Support Initiative (ASI) Awardees

¹ As outlined in the PHAB Standards and Measures, Version 1.5: <http://www.phaboard.org/accreditation-process/public-health-department-standards-and-measures/>

Selected LHDs will enter into a contract with NACCHO to complete the deliverable(s) specified in the application. Due to the relatively short timeframe of the project, agreement to contract with NACCHO under its [standard contract terms and conditions](#) is a requirement for selected sites. **No modifications to the terms or contract language will be made.** As part of the application, the applicant will be asked to verify that the LHD (or entity that would be contracting with NACCHO, e.g., city government), including any relevant financial or legal offices, has read NACCHO's standard contract language and would be able to enter into a contract without making modifications to the terms and conditions. **Applicants that cannot agree to this provision should not apply for this initiative.** In addition, selected sites should be able to return a signed contract to NACCHO within approximately 30 days of receiving it (estimated early November) and will be asked to verify this in the application as well.

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

Applicants may apply under **ONE** of five categories of work only. Categories of work reflect major processes that are required within the PHAB Standards and Measures. Although the LHD is likely to be working on more than one area of work simultaneously in their accreditation preparation process, for the purposes of this award applicants are asked to prioritize the ONE category in which they most need the resources and TA available through the ASI. Please note that applicants that select more than one category within the Application Document will be deemed ineligible for review and consideration.

Within the selected category, applicants may propose to use funds to complete activities that will result in **one or more of the listed deliverables** (linked to Required Documentation for related PHAB Measures). 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 can realistically be completed during the approximately 6-month project period.** In addition to a selecting one or more deliverables in the selected category of work, applicants may choose to complete one or more deliverables as part of 'other accreditation readiness activities', as outlined below.

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 guidance on allowable expenses (travel to attend trainings, budgeting for PHAB fees, etc.), review the budget section in the Application Document.

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 Completing a Community Health Improvement Process (related PHAB Domains: 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 (e.g., engage partners in conducting a CHA) and that will show progress towards completing a CHA or developing a CHIP.

Category 2: 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 (e.g., conduct a SWOT analysis) that will fulfill one or more of the outlined deliverables.

Category 3: 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 (e.g., complete a performance management self-assessment using foundational element #5 of NACCHO's quality culture self-assessment tool; develop a performance management plan) that will fulfill one or more of the outlined deliverables.

Category 4: Building a Culture of Quality (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 quality (e.g., create a QI plan) that will fulfill one or more of the outlined deliverables.

Category 5: 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. The PHAB Standards and Measures) focus on the need for LHDs to take as 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 (e.g., assess current staff competencies against core competencies) that will fulfill one or more of the outlined deliverables.

Other Accreditation Readiness Activities (OPTIONAL):

In addition to selecting one required category of work, applicants may propose to complete one or more of the additional deliverables listed below within the project period:

- **Using Award Funds for PHAB Fees:** Applicants who plan to submit their accreditation application² 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 [2014 - 2015](#)). 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 29, 2015.

² Application includes submission of three prerequisite documents, application form, and payment of PHAB fee [as defined by Step 2 of the PHAB accreditation process](#)

- **A written self-study/analysis** by the LHD against the PHAB Standards, Measures, and Required Documentation that details the LHD's strengths, opportunities for improvement, and plans for addressing gaps.
- **Other Deliverable:** Applicants may propose ONE 'other' deliverable (e.g., documentation of a formal requirements gathering process for an information system; staff QI trainings, etc.) that falls into any category of work, or related to other accreditation readiness efforts. A proposed other deliverable must be clearly linked to a PHAB Measure. Since this deliverable will be listed in the LHD's contract with NACCHO, applicants choosing should be as clear as possible in describing the proposed deliverable, including the corresponding PHAB Standard, Measure and required documentation, as appropriate.

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 approximately 30 days of receiving it. As described in detail earlier in this RFA, **no modifications to NACCHO's standard contract terms and conditions will be made.**
- Designate one main point of contact with whom NACCHO will directly communicate on all matters related to this project, including notification of selection/non-selection. This primary contact 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.
- Allow selected deliverables to be posted to NACCHO's website to serve as examples for the field (see previous ASI pages at www.naccho.org/asi).

NACCHO and CDC will provide selected LHDs with:

- A monetary award that will be paid in two installments (in February and May 2015) upon successful submission of project deliverables.
- Opportunities for peer-to-peer networking among selected LHDs including hosted conference calls, as appropriate.
- Access to virtual TA and guidance from NACCHO staff, as capacity allows, LHD peers/mentors, and/or potentially subject-matter experts related to the category of work for which the LHD received the award, as appropriate.
- Potential access to a peer mentor assigned by NACCHO, pending the availability of interested mentors. The mentor may be able to assist in a variety of ways, such as providing additional guidance, input, and lessons learned related to accreditation preparation.
- Connection to learning communities and national networks.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- 1) Review the requirements and expectations outlined in this RFA and in the [Application Document](#).
- 2) 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.
- 3) Read NACCHO's [standard contract language](#) and provide a copy to the individual with signing authority for the LHD (or entity that would be contracting with NACCHO, e.g., city government), including any relevant financial or legal offices for advanced consideration. Selected LHDs must

agree to the contract language and be able to sign and return a contract to NACCHO within approximately 30 days of receiving it. **No modifications will be made.**

- 4) Complete the [Application Document](#) with your responses and save a copy for your records.
- 5) Complete the [online submission form](#) by **5 PM ET on Friday, 9/12/14**. No applications will be accepted by fax, e-mail, or postal mail. Please note:
 - **Applicants will upload the completed Application Document into the online submission form. We encourage you to complete the Application Document in its entirety prior to beginning the online form.**
 - **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, as long as it is accessed through the same computer and the cache has not been cleared.
 - Access the online submission form at:
http://naccho.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_2rjN19ThCe5laBL

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
 - Demonstrated need for funding to carry out proposed activities
- The final cohort of selected sites will be selected in consideration of a diverse cohort of LHDs based on size, location, jurisdiction type, and other LHD characteristics.
- 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.
- Applicants will be notified of their selection status by e-mail to the project point of contact on or about Monday, 10/13/14.
- 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.

KEY DATES

Applicants are advised to consider the following dates.

- Informational call: Tuesday, 8/26/14 from 2 – 3 pm ET; 1- 2 pm CT/12 – 1 pm MT/ 11 am – 12 pm PT
- Application deadline: Friday, 9/12/14 by 5 PM ET
- Award notification: on or about Monday, 10/13/14
- Expected contract receipt: early November, 2014
- End of Project Period: Friday, 5/29/15

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 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.

Submission of documentation for a specific PHAB Standard and Measure (Version 1.5) to NACCHO does not imply that the documentation will meet the [PHAB Standards and Measures](#) and does not have any bearing on the review of the PHAB site reviewers. Submission of these deliverables is intended to support an agency in preparing documentation for submission to PHAB. 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 during the ASI/submitted to NACCHO <i>(choose one or more within selected category)</i>
<p>1. Progress Towards Completing a Community Health Improvement Process (related PHAB Domains: 1 & 5)</p>	<p>1. Documentation for PHAB Measure 1.1.1 T/L Required Documentation 1, 2 & 3 2. Documentation for PHAB Measure 1.1.2 T/L Required Documentation 1 3. Documentation for PHAB Measure 1.1.2 T/L Required Documentation 2 4. Documentation for PHAB Measure 1.1.2 T/L Required Documentation 3 5. Documentation for PHAB Measure 1.1.3 A Required Documentation 1 & 2 6. Documentation for PHAB Measure 5.2.1 L Required Documentation 1 7. Documentation for PHAB Measure 5.2.2 L Required Documentation 1 8. Documentation for PHAB Measure 5.2.3 A Required Documentation 1 9. Documentation for PHAB Measure 5.2.3 A Required Documentation 2 10. Documentation for PHAB Measure 5.2.4 A Required Documentation 1 & 2</p>
<p>2. Progress Towards Developing and Implementing an Agency Strategic Plan (related PHAB Domain: 5)</p>	<p>1. Documentation for PHAB Measure 5.3.1 A Required Documentation 1 2. Documentation for PHAB Measure 5.3.2 A Required Documentation 1 3. Documentation for PHAB Measure 5.3.3 A Required Documentation 1</p>
<p>3. Establishing and Monitoring a System of Performance Management (related PHAB Domain: 9)</p>	<p>1. Documentation for PHAB Measure 9.1.1 A Required Documentation 1 & 2 2. Documentation for PHAB Measure 9.1.2 A Required Documentation 1 3. Documentation for PHAB Measure 9.1.3 A Required Documentation 1 4. Documentation for PHAB Measure 9.1.3 A Required Documentation 2 5. Documentation for PHAB Measure 9.1.3 A Required Documentation 3,4,&5 6. Documentation for PHAB Measure 9.1.3 A Required Documentation 6 7. Documentation for PHAB Measure 9.1.4 A Required Documentation 1 & 2 8. Documentation for PHAB Measure 9.1.5 A Required Documentation 1</p>
<p>4. Building a Culture of Quality (related PHAB Domain: 9)</p>	<p>1. Documentation for PHAB Measure 9.2.1 A Required Documentation 1 2. Documentation for PHAB Measure 9.2.2 A Required Documentation 1 & 2</p>
<p>5. Workforce Development (related PHAB Domain: 8)</p>	<p>1. Documentation for PHAB Measure 8.2.1 A Required Documentation 1 2. Documentation for PHAB Measure 8.2.1 A Required Documentation 2 3. Documentation for PHAB Measure 8.2.4 A Required Documentation 1,2 &3</p>

Other Accreditation Readiness Activities (OPTIONAL): In addition to selecting one required category of work, applicants may propose to complete one or more of the additional deliverables listed below within the project period:

- **Using Award Funds for PHAB Fees:** Applicants who plan to submit their accreditation application³ 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 [2014 - 2015](#)). 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 29, 2015.
- **A written self-study/analysis** by the LHD against the PHAB Standards, Measures, and Required Documentation that details the LHD's strengths, opportunities for improvement, and plans for addressing gaps
- **Other Deliverable:** Applicants may propose ONE 'other' deliverable (e.g., documentation of a formal requirements gathering process for an information system; staff QI trainings, etc.) that falls into any category of work, or related to other accreditation readiness efforts. A proposed other deliverable must be clearly linked to a PHAB Measure. Since this deliverable will be listed in the LHD's contract with NACCHO, applicants choosing should be as clear as possible in describing the proposed deliverable, including the corresponding PHAB Standard, Measure and required documentation, as appropriate.

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