

# Minnesota Innovations in Perinatal and Infant Health RFP: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The question-and-answer period opened March 4, 2023. Responses will be shared below based on topic. Questions have been organized by topic; they are not in order of how they were submitted.

## Letter of Intent

- 1. Is a letter of intent required for this application?**
  - a. No, letter is encouraged but not required. **In order to apply for the proposal you must acknowledge the LOI portion** of Foundant, by completing steps identified in question 2.
- 2. I am unable to view the application in Foundant, how can a respondent get to the application submission environment?**
  - a. Due to the upload of the application as a new practice at MDH, applicants will need to submit a blank LOI. For this submission, please include organization name, address, and anticipated funding request. An example for an applicant to submit if they are not formally sending a letter:
    - i. Applicant Legal Name: *Minnesota Department of Health*
    - ii. Applicants Business: *625 Robert Street.*
    - iii. Categories planning to apply for (if planning to submit for more than one category, a LOI must be submitted separately for each category): *n/a*
    - iv. Communities and/or priority populations served: *n/a*
    - v. Geographic area: *n/a*
    - vi. Approaches to be funded: *n/a*
    - vii. Anticipated funding request: *\$100*
- 3. Application states character limits. Is this a word count or character count?**
  - a. Applicants will have a word count limit. Foundant notes this is characters, this has been updated to reflect word count for narrative writing.
- 4. Can I submit LOI via email?**
  - a. No, all LOI's and grant applications must be completed in the Foundant webpage environment. <https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=mdcfh>
- 5. Can I submit an application after the LOI deadline?**
  - a. Yes, LOI deadline is optional. However, in order to apply LOI must be acknowledged, see question 2.
- 6. We asked a question during the information session on 3/11, how to indicate this on the application on the Foundant portal separately but it was not answered so I submitted for one organization to make the deadline.**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- a. The LOI is not scored and cannot be amended. Multiple applications can be submitted. Organizations can submit LOI beyond the deadline.
- 7. Does the LOI have to be amended in Foundant and if so, how do we do that?**
  - a. The LOI is not scored and cannot be amended.
- 8. I had hoped to include some image attachments with our LOI but I did not see that capability on Foundant.**
  - a. This is not an option for the LOI. The LOI is not scored and cannot be amended. In the application, you can include images in the supplement documents.

## Submission and Grant

- 1. Can proposals be emailed as a form of submission.**
  - a. No, all applicants must submit to Foundant by application deadline.
- 2. Can I discuss the grant application questions I have over the phone?**
  - a. Per RFP: To ensure the proper and fair evaluation of all applications, other communications regarding this RFP including verbal, telephone, written or internet initiated by or on behalf of any applicant to any employee of MDH, other than questions submitted to as outlined above, are prohibited. Any violation of this prohibition may result in the disqualification of the applicant.
- 3. Where can I find the RFP posting?**
  - a. The RFP is available at:  
<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/womeninfants/womenshealth/perinata/1h1thrfp.html>
- 4. Is it a total of 8 grants that will be distributed statewide between the 2 categories (Perinatal Health Innovations and Infant Health Innovations)?**
  - a. Yes. Category 1: Perinatal Health Innovations – total 4 grant awards
  - b. Category 2: Infant Health Innovations – total 4 grant awards
- 5. I am not sure if we have an account with Foundant for submitting the proposal. Can you help with that?**
  - a. Please see the below information on how to access Foundant if you are not sure if you have an account.
    - 1. New Users: Please click on “Create New Account” to complete the registration process and create your logon credentials.
    - 2. Existing Users: Please enter your credentials and log in. If you forgot your password, use the “Forgot your Password?” link to the left on the logon screen to reset your password.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

3. **Not Sure:** If you think that you or someone at your organization has already registered in Foundant, do not create a new account. Please contact our MDH Maternal and Child Health staff at [health.MCH@state.mn.us](mailto:health.MCH@state.mn.us) for assistance.
6. **Is there an Appendix F? I downloaded the documents but I did not see an Appendix F.**
  - a. Appendix F is the Application Score Sheet on page 34 of the RFP, not a separate downloadable document.

## TA Session

1. **Will this PowerPoint be made available to attendees?**
  - a. Yes, MDH will post the PDF's of the slides on the RFP webpage.
2. **Is the TA session recorded?**
  - a. No, MDH will post PDF's of the slides from the TA session.

## Eligible Applicants

1. **For a multi-organization collaboration; does each organization submit an application?**
  - a. Eligible applicants who wish to work together but have not formed a legal partnership must designate one organization to be the lead organization with which MDH will write the grant agreement.
2. **Our Program provides both perinatal services and support for new families. Can we apply under both categories or do we submit under one category only?**
  - a. Yes, organizations can submit applications for both categories. If an applicant applies for both, please submit necessary documentation for each proposal. Applications must include all required application materials. Do not provide documentation that is not requested in this RFP, as such information will not be considered or evaluated.
3. **Our organization is a newish LLC and we are trying to go forward with non-profit status but are not, yet. We have several fiscal sponsors but the fees add-up. The eligibility requirements are unclear - are community-based LLCs eligible for the Minnesota Innovations in Perinatal and Infant Health?**
  - a. An LLC would be not eligible to apply as it is a for profit organization.

## Proposal Questions

1. **Question regarding the Infrastructure Fund Innovation Projects RFP. We are currently a grantee and are planning to apply to continue funding for that project. Are we able to also apply for a new project? If we are able to submit more than one application, is it permissible to be funding for both an existing and new project?**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- a. Page 6 of RFP states: “Awardees for Minnesota Partnership for Infant Health-Two Year grants (March 2024- July 2025), may apply for these opportunities, however, supplanting of funds is not allowed. Potential awardees should make best efforts to ensure that the proposal for this project does not replace or overlap any current local, state, federal, or other funding received for the same purpose”. If funded by other grants, these funding requests are not opportunities for continued funding of existing state grants.
  - b. Submitted goals and objectives for proposal must address the category applicant is applying.
- 2. For category 2, is it expected that we will address all four leading causes immediately or can we make a plan to address them throughout the project period?**
  - a. Yes, it is required that applicants address all four leading causes of infant mortality. This can be done throughout the grant period.
- 3. In the project narrative, you ask for previous experience working with the State of Minnesota, including agencies, activities completed, length of time, and amount of money awarded. We have an extensive history of grant funding with the State of Minnesota and cannot provide all of these details while staying under the 1,000 character limit. Even if we only report our current projects with the State, we are over the limit. How should we approach this question?**
  - a. Applicants will have a word count limit. Foundant notes this in characters. This has been updated to reflect word count for project narrative writing. Please provide examples of projects pertinent to this work if you must limit examples for submission.
- 4. I am in the process of applying for an MDH grant but I wanted to know if you've finalized the Perinatal Strategic Health Plan and if you have, can you please send that plan to me to review its key indicators? The page says the final phase should have happened by the end of 2023. Even a rough draft would be ok to review. As this point i am only seeing plans for other states.**
  - a. The strategic plan is estimated to be published in Spring 2024. Main themes of this plan, include but are not limited to, advocacy, cultural recognition/sensitivity, data, mental health and substance-use disorder topic areas. If the applicant is awarded grant funds, they will be asked to work with MDH to revise the work plan and budget before the grant start date. This may include incorporating/modifying activities related to refine their goal to address the Perinatal Health Strategic Plan within the first 4 months of grant.
- 5. For clarity, under, Category 1: Perinatal Health Innovations, the max award for one entity is \$60K for the 2 years? Is that correct? And, each program year is from May thru the end of September?**
  - a. Yes, that is correct. Award amounts from the RFP are as follows:  
Category 1: Perinatal Health Innovations – total 4 grant awards

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- Each applicant can be awarded up to \$35,000-40,000 for year 1 and \$20,000 for year 2; a 2-year total of \$230,000
  - Year 1 total of \$150,000 (May 15, 2024 - September 29, 2024)
  - Year 2 total of \$80,000 (September 30, 2024 - September 29, 2025)
6. **A question for the Category 2: Infant Health Innovations grant. If the answer to Section #2, Question #2 is no, do we still need percentages for Leadership and Board? We do not (and are not required to) ask people about their sexual orientation, disability status, etc. We can answer the percentage on the Project Staff.**
- a. Please still fill out the table with the percentages to the best of your knowledge. It is okay if some of the cells are blank.
7. **Can you please clarify the amount each individual applicant can request for Category 2? Is it \$250,000 per year for a 4-year total of \$1,000,000? Or is it \$62,500 per applicant per year for a total of 4-year total of \$250,000**
- a. Each applicant can be awarded up to \$250,000 per year. Please see the information below:
- Category 2: Infant Health Innovations – total 4 grant awards
- Each applicant can be awarded up to \$250,000 per year for a 4-year total of \$1,000,000
  - Project Period: May 15, 2024 – June 30, 2028

## Budget

1. **For the budget, can we create additional tabs within the excel file to represent each year of the Infant Health Innovation grant if different steps are taken each year? Or do you want the entire 4-year budget documented within the Itemized Budget tab?**
  - a. For the budget, please include the entire four years within the Itemized Budget tab rather than creating four separate tabs.
2. **Where in the budget should we include evaluation costs? Is there a set percentage that needs to be included?**
  - a. Grantees may use evaluation funds for internal staff time or to subcontract with external evaluation partners. All evaluation expenditures must be documented. Apply evaluation costs within the budget categories appropriately in alignment with the work plan activities.
  - b. There is not a set percentage.
  - c. For the overall evaluation, each category has specific grant key tasks and deliverables to meet:
  - d. Category 1: Perinatal Health Innovations: Work with MDH to revise the work plan and budget before the grant start date. This may include

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

incorporating/modifying activities related to refine goal to address the Perinatal Health Strategic Plan within the first 4 months of grant. Create and submit an evaluation plan within two months of the grant start date.

- e. Category 2: Infant Health Innovations: Develop a budget and work plan for the entirety of the grant period (4 years). Work with MDH to revise as needed. Grantees will be required to use part of their grant award on evaluating their project. Within the first six months, grantees are required to submit a logic model and an evaluation plan.
- 3. For category 2, is EACH applicant eligible to apply for up to \$250K per year for four years OR is the total amount that MDH has to grant the 4 awardees \$250K per year for 4 years (so each applicant could apply for up to \$62.5K per year for 4 years)?**
- a. MDH can award four grants up to \$250,000 per grantee each per year, with grants ending June 30, 2028.
- 4. My team had a couple questions regarding the budget portion of the grant application. Wanted to confirm that you'd like us to combine all line items for both years? Or should we be specifying which items are for year 1 and which are for year 2? This would be for a category 1 project. Also, for our project, we would like to allot funds to allow our staff to take a training. We would also like to offer this to our community partners if they'd like to register a few of their staff for the training as well. Is it an allowable expense to pay for a partner agencies training costs?**
- a. For the budget, please include the entire project period within the Itemized Budget tab.
  - b. Yes, staff training is an allowable expense if it is tied to the main goals and outcomes of the RFP. Please see Appendix E in the RFP for more instructions.

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