



**THE CENTER**  
*at Sierra Health Foundation*

**San Joaquin Valley Health Fund  
2017-2018 Funding Opportunity**

***Questions and Answers***

On the [San Joaquin Valley Health Fund web page](#), the link to the application portal is posted under “Round 4 Funding Opportunity.” If you have questions about the grant program or the application that are not answered in this document or in the Request for Proposals on the [San Joaquin Valley Health Fund web page](#), please e-mail [sjvhealthfund@shfcenter.org](mailto:sjvhealthfund@shfcenter.org) with the subject line “Round 4 SJVHF Question.”

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## FUNDING FOCUS

### **Q: What is the focus of this San Joaquin Valley (SJV) Health Fund funding opportunity?**

A: This opportunity focuses on projects and activities designed to reduce health disparities and promote health and racial equity through systems and policy change. We are particularly interested in efforts to improve outcomes for populations that are disproportionately experiencing poor health. The Center has a broad definition of health, believing there is much more to health than health care. Health is influenced by many factors, including socioeconomic conditions, environment, education, income and individual behavior choices – factors that have come to be known as the Social Determinants of Health. Where we live, work and play has a significant influence on our health.

### **Q: What is health equity?**

A: Health equity means achieving the highest possible standard of health for all people and giving special attention to the needs of those at greatest risk of poor health, based on social conditions.<sup>1</sup>

### **Q: What is racial equity?**

A: Racial equity “is the condition that would be achieved if one’s racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them.”<sup>2</sup>

### **Q: Does The Center have a preference of population to be served by projects and activities funded through the SJV Health Fund?**

A. We have particular interest in populations facing significant health barriers and experiencing health disparities, and those who have experienced socioeconomic disadvantage and historical injustice, including, but not limited to, low-income populations, boys and young men of color, immigrants, persons with disabilities, and culturally, linguistically and geographically isolated communities.

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<sup>1</sup> Braveman, Paula. “What Are Health Disparities and Health Equity? We Need to Be Clear.” *Public Health Reports*. 2014 Supplement 2, Volume 129. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3863701/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.racialequityresourceguide.org/about/glossary>

**Important Note:** Applicants proposing work in Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus and/or Tulare counties must meet one of the following criteria:

1. Be a funded organization in the Round 3 SJVHF cohort;
2. Not a current funded organization in Round 3 SJVHF cohort, but is applying to address the social determinants of health and focusing on one of the following populations: Native American, Asian and Pacific Islander, African American, LGBTQ, disability rights, farm workers, immigrants, and/or those who speak indigenous languages; or
3. Organization received a written invitation from Center staff to apply.

#### **WHAT THE CENTER WILL FUND THROUGH THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY HEALTH FUND OPPORTUNITY**

**Q: How much can we apply for?**

A: The maximum amount The Center will award for this opportunity is \$20,000. You may apply for less than \$20,000. We encourage applicants to apply for only the amount they need, up to \$20,000, to support their project.

**Q: Can we apply for direct services?**

A: No. We are interested in proposals that will emphasize advocacy and organizing that have potential to change public policy and increase resources to promote health equity in the Valley for the long haul.

**Q: Can an applicant apply for general operating support?**

A: For this funding opportunity, The Center will consider funding general operating support as it relates to supporting your proposed project, so long as your mission is focused on capacity building, policy development and community engagement with an emphasis on advocacy and organizing that have potential to change public policy and increase resources to promote health equity for the long haul.

**Q: Is it necessary that the proposed project be new? Or existing?**

A: Proposed projects can be either new or existing.

**Q: May an applicant use funding from the San Joaquin Valley Health Fund to lobby?**

A: No.

## **WHO CAN APPLY**

### **Q: Who is eligible to apply?**

A: For this funding opportunity, The Center will fund nonprofit organizations that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and are designated as a 509(a)(1) or 509(a)(2) organization. The Center also will fund public agencies, including local government agencies.

### **Q: If our organization is not a 501(c)(3), may we still apply?**

A: For this funding opportunity, only 501(c)(3) organizations or public agencies may be the applicant organization. Non-501(c)(3) organizations may identify a 501(c)(3) organization or public agency to apply as their fiscal sponsor. The 501(c)(3) will be the applicant organization.

### **Q: Will The Center fund an organization in the process of applying for 501(c)(3) status?**

A: No. For this funding opportunity, only applicant organizations that have a 501(c)(3) determination letter by the application deadline date and have not received a revocation from the IRS are eligible to apply. Organizations that do not have current 501(c)(3) status may partner with a fiscal sponsor to apply on their behalf.

### **Q: My organization works in two counties and has several programs. May we submit two different applications, one for each county, even though the two applications are under the same umbrella organization?**

A: No. Application eligibility is limited to one application per applicant organization regardless of the number of programs the organization has or how many counties the organization works in.

### **Q: Can city or county government agencies apply?**

A: Yes, they are public agencies. When you click the link for the online application portal, please identify yourself as a government entity by selecting that answer in the pre-application eligibility questionnaire.

**Q: I understand The Center doesn't fund organizations with a 509(a)(3) designation. What is a 509(a)(3) organization?**

A: A 509(a)(3) organization is a "supporting organization" that supports other public charities, governmental units and certain other exempt organizations. It receives public charity status because of the relationship with other organizations, without regard to the source of its income.

If your organization is identified as a 509(a)(3) supporting organization and you believe it should not be, contact the IRS at 1-877-829-5500. The IRS will assist you in the process to have your organization's tax status reconsidered.

**Q: My 501(c)(3) organization is faith-based and our service approach includes Christ-centered language. Are we eligible to apply?**

A: The Center does not fund requests for activities that exclusively benefit the members of sectarian or religious organizations or if specific religious activities are required of participants.

**Q: If our organization is currently funded by Sierra Health Foundation, The California Endowment, The California Wellness Foundation, Rosenberg Foundation, W.K Kellogg Foundation, Blue Shield of California Foundation, Wallace H. Coulter Foundation, Dignity Health Foundation, and/or TIDES Foundation, are we eligible to apply for this funding?**

A: Yes. Also, if you are a funded partner organization in Round 3 San Joaquin Valley Health Fund cohort, you are eligible to apply.

**Q: Can organizations partnering on one application submit their own separate proposals for the same project or for different projects?**

A: Partner organizations may submit their own applications as the applicant organization as long as they meet the eligibility criteria explained above. Keep in mind that applications for the same project submitted by different partners will not be reviewed as a group. In the application, clearly reference the other partner organization that submitted a proposal and clearly identify what each organization will be responsible for in the activities, outcomes evaluation process. Please be mindful that both organizations may not be funded, so ensure that your organization is able to complete what you have indicated responsibility for in the aforementioned sections and ensure that your budget reflects the needs of your organization. It is unlikely that more than one application for the same project will be awarded funding in the same funding round.

**Q: If I currently have a cluster grant, can I apply for a small grant – Round 4?**

A: Your organization may submit a proposal for a project that is different from your cluster project. However, please keep in mind that these are competitive grants with no guarantee of funding. As a member of a cluster, your organization is already a part of the SJVHF with three-year commitments, and given limited resources, priority will be given to those without cluster funding.

**FISCAL SPONSORS**

**Q: May we use a fiscal sponsor to apply on our behalf?**

A: Yes. The fiscal sponsor must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or a public agency.

**Q: Can a fiscal sponsor submit an application on behalf of more than one organization or collaborative group?**

A: Yes. Fiscal sponsors for entities that are not qualifying 501(c)(3) nonprofits are eligible to apply. Fiscal sponsors may apply on behalf of more than one organization or collaborative group.

**GEOGRAPHIC FUNDING AREAS**

**Q: What counties encompass the eligible geographic region?**

A: There are nine counties in the eligible geographic region. They are: Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Tulare.

**Q: Will the funds be distributed to organizations across the eligible funding region?**

A: Our goal is to have a geographic distribution of funds to organizations with high-quality applications within the funding region.

**Q: Will The Center only award funds to one organization per county?**

A: The awards are not limited to one organization per county.

**Q: My organization is located outside the eligible funding region, but serves within the eligible region. Are we eligible to apply?**

A: Yes. We will consider funding organizations that serve people living in one or more of the counties in the funding region, even if the applicant organization (either the fiscal sponsor or implementing organization) is located outside the region. However, organizations with a presence and demonstrated significant impact in the funding region may be more competitive.

## **HOW TO APPLY**

**Q: What links should I use to apply online for the Round 3 funding opportunity?**

A: There is only one link to apply. For further details, please see the Request for Proposals on the [SJV Health Fund web page](#).

**Q: Can each applicant organization submit more than one application?**

A: No. Only one application per 501(c)(3) organization or public agency will be considered. However, a fiscal sponsor may apply on behalf of more than one organization or collaborative group.

**Q: Is The Center looking for collaborations?**

A: While we are not specifically looking for collaborations for this funding opportunity, to the extent collaboration makes sense to build the capacity of the applicant organization, to broaden or deepen the impact, or maximize resources, collaborations are encouraged. Keep in mind, though, only one organization can be the applicant organization.

**Q: Can two organizations apply as partners?**

A: Yes, but only one organization can be the applicant organization. In the Project Narrative, explain the reasoning behind the partnership in the context of this funding opportunity and make the case for it fitting the criteria and focus.

**Q: Are multiple sources of funding required for an application to be selected for funding?**

A: No. However, if your proposed work will require more than the \$20,000 amount allowed through this funding opportunity, your proposal will be more competitive if you have other funding identified.

**Q: Is there a required start date?**

A: The start date should be April 1, 2018.

**Q: Is there a particular end date required?**

A: Center funds should be expended on the funded activities within 12 months of the start date of the grant. Requests for no-cost extensions will be considered.

**Q: What start and end dates should we use on the application if ours is an ongoing project?**

A: If you are applying for funds to support an ongoing project, use start and end dates that fall within the parameters of this funding opportunity, i.e., Start Date: April 1, 2018; End Date: no more than 12 months after the start date.

**Q: Is the use of funds restricted to just two areas under Project Topics on the application?**

A: In the online application form, select only **one** Topic 1 and **one** Topic 2 use of funds. A Topic 2 use of funds is not required. This information is intended to help The Center categorize requests. You can propose using the funds for multiple areas, but in the online application we ask applicants to select **one** of the areas as the primary and **one** as secondary. You can describe additional components of your activities in your narrative.

**Q: Should we indicate the ethnicity of the populations our organization serves by percent in the application?**

A: Yes.

#### **PROJECT NARRATIVE QUESTIONS**

**Q: How much detail should applicants provide for each application question? What are your preferred minimum and maximum pages?**

A: Use up to the stated word count to clearly and completely answer the application questions with as much detail as needed to make your case for funding. Assume reviewers are not familiar with your organization or its work.



**Q: Should the answers to the application questions be submitted as a separate attachment or incorporated into the application?**

A: The full application is available through the online portal and must be submitted through it. Each question is listed separately and those with a maximum word count will clearly indicate it. The sections include Project Contact, Project Information, Project Topic, Project Approach, Project Geography, Project Population, Project Narrative Questions, Partners, Funders, and Commitment to Learning Community. The 501(c)(3) determination letter, budget, budget narrative and the financial statement will be submitted as attachments to the online application.

**Q: May an applicant attach schematics or diagrams to help illustrate the proposed activities?**

A: No. We are asking that no materials other than what is listed in the Application Materials Checklist be included with the application. You will be unable to attach documents to the application beyond what is requested.

**Q: If our proposed project includes multiple activities, do we include each activity in our response?**

A: Yes. Include each activity and for each include how much you will do and how well you will do it.

**Q: What is a policy target?**

A: The policy target will counter systemic barriers and have long-term impact. The policy target you identify should demonstrate how you will address health and racial disparities through a system and policy change lens.

## **PROPOSED BUDGET**

**Q: Can we use our own budget form?**

A: No. Use the budget form linked in the application portal attachment section. The budget template will allow you to include your budget narrative with each line item.

**Q: Is there a budget narrative required?**

A: No, the budget template has an area to include your budget narrative and description directly on the budget.

**Q: Does the proposed budget need to reflect the Project Topics selected in the application?**

A: The proposed budget needs to support all that you proposed to do with SJV Health Fund funds, as described in the Proposal Narrative Questions.

**Q: Can administrative overhead be included in the request?**

A: Yes, up to 15 percent of direct costs, which are items such as personnel, consultants and materials specific to the project or program for which funds are being requested.

**Q: What is meant by indirect costs?**

A: Indirect costs are typically those costs that are not directly related to the project. They vary for each organization, but are typically costs that are used to support the organization as a whole. Indirect costs include rent, utilities, administrative staff not dedicated to the program, equipment and services used by staff or other general costs. The person in your organization who handles finances will probably be able to answer that question for you.

**Q: For Personnel, should applicants include the percentage of time each person will spend on the project?**

A: Yes. Provide the full time equivalent (FTE) in the FTE column on the Proposed Project Budget form. For example, if a staff member will spend 25% of his or her time on the project, enter .25 on the FTE line in the Proposed Budget Form.

**Q: Should staff time that will be covered by the applicant organization's internal funds be included in the Other Funding Secured for Activities column of the Proposed Budget form?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Should we include in the proposed budget the cost of travel to the grantee convening(s)?**

A: You may include the cost of travel to the convening(s) if you believe you will have expenses outside of mileage reimbursement associated with travel. For Round 4, outside of the grant award, mileage reimbursements are available for funded organizations to attend the four convenings. The four convenings typically take place over the course of one day, so hotel lodging is not reimbursed outside of the grant award. If you believe your organization will require hotel lodging to attend a one-day convening, we recommend you budget for that expense in the proposed budget. Additionally, we may utilize technology for one of the convenings, allowing participants to join the meeting from an off-site location.

**Q: What is the allowable percentage of indirect costs?**

A: Up to 15 percent of direct costs.

**Q: How should the line-item dollar amounts be listed?**

A: For each item in your proposed budget, enter the total amount for the course of the funding period.

**Q: Is there a budget limit on consultant fees or board stipends?**

A: No. The only budget limitations are the total request amount and up to 15% for indirect costs.

**Q: Can the other sources of funding be in-kind?**

A: Yes. Explain secured in-kind resources in the Budget Explanation. In the Proposed Budget form, list other financial resources secured in the "Other Funding Committed to Project" column.

**Q: If we are applying for funding from other sources but that funding is not secured, where do we indicate that?**

A: Explain that in the Funders portion of the online application.

**Q: If a proposed project is part of a larger project but additional funding has not been secured, how will the proposal be considered?**

A: You can propose the project, but if the success of your project is contingent upon other funding, your proposal will be more competitive if the other funding is in place. Explain in your narrative the status of other funding requested and what it would mean for your project if all needed funds cannot be secured.

**Q: Should we indicate other pending funding in the Other Funding Committed to Project column?**

A: No. Describe pending funding in your answer to the Funders portion of the online application.

**Q: Should the *Requested from The Center* and the *Other Funding Committed* columns equal the *Total Project Budget* column?**

A: Not necessarily. The Total Project Budget should reflect the total budget of the project. Only include other funding that has been committed to the project in the Other Funding column. If all of the other funding required for the project has not been committed, the first two columns will not add up to the total project budget.

**Q: Should we include in the *Other Funding Committed* column other funding that supports the proposed program in geographic areas outside of The Center’s San Joaquin Valley funding region?**

A: No. Use the Proposed Budget Form for the project that will take place within The Center’s San Joaquin Valley funding region. Include the portion of other funding that will be used for the project activities within the funding region. Include information about the larger project and the funding committed to it in the Proposal Narrative.

**Q: For 12 months of a longer project, should we include just the budget for the 12 months that would be covered by the grant?**

A: In the “Requested from The Center” column, just list what you are requesting from The Center. Then, in the “Other Funding Committed to Project” column, include funds available for the full project period. Explain this in your budget explanation column.

## **FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

**Q: Are applicants required to submit an audited financial statement?**

A: No. We require a financial statement showing your organization’s revenue and expenses for the most recent full year. Although an audited statement is preferred, this does not need to be submitted, if not available. If your organization does have an audited statement, we ask that you only submit the summary page(s) from the audited statement. We primarily want to get a sense of the size of your organization, revenue sources and expenses.

**Q: What if we are a new 501 (c)(3) and do not have an annual financial statement that shows revenue and expense for a full year?**

A: If you are a newer organization, please submit a financial statement that shows your revenue and expenses for the time period you have available.

**Q: Will you contact us if the reviewers have questions about our application?**

A: It is possible.

#### **SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION**

**Q: If we submit an application early and realize we need to correct some information in the application, may we resubmit a revised application?**

A: No. You may only submit your application once through the online portal. However, you may save your application and return to it at a later time. While we encourage early applications, we ask that you not submit your application until you are confident it is complete and accurate.

**Q: May we submit letters of support or a memorandum of understanding with our application?**

A: No. Only submit the items listed in the Application Materials Checklist on page 7 of the Request for Proposals on the [San Joaquin Valley Health Fund web page](#).

**Q: May we submit our application by physical delivery, e.g., U.S. Mail or personal delivery?**

A: No. Only applications submitted via the online portal will be accepted.

**Q: What if we can't or don't know how to submit application materials through the online portal?**

A: If you don't know how to submit your application materials through the online portal or you have questions, please e-mail [sjvhealthfund@shfcenter.org](mailto:sjvhealthfund@shfcenter.org) with the subject line "Round 4 Online Help." We strongly encourage you to submit your application before the deadline date, so if you do need help, we can assist you in a timely manner. We may not be able to respond to requests for help on the deadline date.

**Q: May we get help with file formats such as Microsoft Word, Excel or PDF?**

A: If you need help with file formats, send an e-mail to [sjvhealthfund@shfcenter.org](mailto:sjvhealthfund@shfcenter.org) with the subject line: "Round 4 SJVHF Application Help." We strongly encourage you to request help before the deadline date so we can assist you before applications are due. We may not be able to respond to requests for help on the deadline date.

**Q: If our 501(c)(3) determination letter is not in electronic form, should we send it via physical delivery?**

A: No. Submit all required documents through the online portal. If your 501(c)(3) letter is not in electronic format, scan it and save it as a PDF document.

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

**Q: What is the application review process?**

A: A review team reviews the applications based on the criteria listed in the application materials.

**Q: Will the application budget be judged on what is submitted or might a smaller amount be offered for funding?**

A: For this program, we are not planning to negotiate a smaller funding amount than has been requested. However, the project and the budget need to correspond. If it appears that an applicant has included line items as fillers to bring the total requested amount up to the maximum of \$20,000, we may offer a lesser amount that would more directly correspond with the proposed activities.

**Q: Will our unfunded proposal from the last round impact our proposal this round? We are modifying the proposal based on feedback received by SJVHF.**

A: No. Having a previously unfunded proposal will not impact the outcome of your new proposal. Keep in mind, however, that this is a competitive process and the focus of projects must be system change and advocacy.

**Q: Will an application be considered more favorably if the applicant is located in a Building Healthy Communities Area?**

A: No. All applications will be considered using the criteria of this funding opportunity.

**Q: Will those selected and those not selected for funding be notified?**

A: Yes. We will notify the contact person listed on the application cover sheet of the status of your application whether your organization is funded or not.

## **AFTER FUNDING IS AWARDED**

### **Q: How will the award be paid?**

A: The award will be paid in full at the beginning of the funding period.

### **Q: Can the funded organization keep interest earned on the award dollars?**

A: Yes.

### **Q: What reporting is required of an organization receiving funding?**

A: A final report of the funded activities, including a financial report showing how funds were spent, will be due 30 days after the funding agreement end date. Awarded organizations will report on the performance measures included in the application in the template provided by the SJV Health Fund.

### **Q: Are organizations that receive funding required to attend the grantee convening?**

A: Yes. As part of the funding opportunity, funded organizations will be required to be represented at the convening(s).

### **Q: Will there be another SJV Health Fund funding cycle in 2019?**

A: Yes. There will be another SJV Health Fund funding cycle in 2019. Please visit the [San Joaquin Valley Health Fund web page](#) for information about funding opportunities. Also, if you haven't yet done so, [sign up online for the foundation's mailing list](#) to receive future announcements.