



Community Economic Mobilization Initiative (CEMI) Frequently Asked Questions

Q: As a current CEMI grantee, am I allowed to apply for this second CEMI funding round?

A: Yes.

Q: Are we still able to apply for this grant if we submitted an application for the 2022 CERI grant through Sierra Health Foundation?

A: Yes.

Q: I see that a final financial and narrative report will be due 30 days following the conclusion of the grant, but don't see anything mentioned about mid-year reporting in the RFP, nor in the recorded webinar. Is this final reporting requirement the only one for this two-year grant?

A: Correct, there is a final financial and narrative report due 30 days following the conclusion of the grant. There are no mid-year reports.

Q: Are independent public agencies eligible to apply?

A: Yes.

Q: Is a 501(c)(6) nonprofit Chamber of Commerce an eligible entity to apply?

A: No

Q: Can we subgrant to a 501c4?

A: No.

Q: Are collaboratives/coalitions allowed to apply?

A: Yes.

Q: Would applying as part of a collaborative exclude an individual organization from applying for themselves?

A: No.

Q: Are groups that currently have an application open for a different opportunity with The Center eligible to apply?

A: Yes. However, we will have to check to be sure another grant will not trigger the Tipping Point rule.

Q: How often will grantees be expected to meet with other grantees and/or the funder and Sierra Health Foundation?

A: Grantees will be expected to participate in one or two in-person convenings and the webinars that will be scheduled throughout the two-year grant period.

Q: Can the grant be used to hire staff?

A: Yes, but the positions being funded need to align with the proposed capacity-building activities.

Q: Which indirect rate should applicants use?

A: The indirect should be no more than 15%.

Q: We really need money to hire staff; is that considered indirect?

A: This is a direct cost, and you can hire staff with this funding.

Q: Can funds be used for community leader stipends?

A: Yes.

Q: Can some of the funding support a grant writer position to expand capacity?

A: Yes.

Q: Can building capacity include hiring consultants to strengthen our programs?

A: Yes.

Q: Will the recorded webinar be made available?

A: Yes. The webinar recording is posted on the [The Center's CEMI webpage \(SHFCenter.org/CEMI\)](http://TheCenter.org/CEMI).

Q: How do you define "new program"?

A: A new program is a project that is new to your organization.

Q: Can you clarify whether a project needs to be new?

A: No, it does not need to be new.

Q: Could this funding support a new aspect of current programming?

A: Yes, this funding can build off existing projects.

Q: Should we show the full two years on the budget or one year with the expectation that it would be doubled?

A: It is best to show the full two years or note that it is one year in the budget narrative space.

Q: Can you provide activities examples?

A: Refer to the funding guidelines that list examples of potential projects.

Q: Is this grant on a reimbursement basis?

A: No. Funds are dispersed on an annual basis once the grant agreement is completed and signed.

Q: Can we be part of a coalition in two different parts of the state?

A: Yes.

Q: Do staff/board members of the organization need to represent/reflect the communities they serve? Do the project leaders need to be BIPOC?

A: This is highly encouraged.

Q: Is the money over a two-year spending period?

A: Yes.

Q: Is there a focus on awarding small, grassroots organizations that are capable of providing services/meeting objectives?

A: There is no specific focus on size of organizations, but we do encourage small grassroots CBOs to apply.

Q: Are stipends for partners or community member participation allowed if we want to collaborate?

A: Yes.

Q: Is there any insurance that we need to have in order to apply ?

A: No.

Q: Can money be used for capital improvements?

A: No, funds cannot be used for capital improvements or capital campaigns.

Q: Should we include funds in our budget for participation in the collective convenings and activities, or will those be funded separately?

A: No, that will be funded separately.

Q: What examples of financial documents can we submit? The application says not 990s.

A: You can submit audited financial statements, P/L statements.

Q: It is allowable for funding to augment staff salary to be more competitive?

A: Yes.

Q: Can we use funds to update an organizational strategic plan and develop a CDC?

A: Yes.

Q: Are there specific federal sources that you would like us to build capacity to apply for?

A: No.

Q: Is CEMI considered public or private funding? Public funding can NOT count as match for another public grant?

A: CEMI grants are funded by private monies.

Q: Will evidence of applying for a federal grant be an expected deliverable at the end of the two-year grant term?

A: No.

Q: Is there a budget limit for organizations to be eligible for these grant funds?

A: No.

Q: If we are based in the Central Valley, would expanding into the Bay Area apply as building capacity?

A: Yes, that could be considered capacity building.

Q: Are any and all direct services not allowed?

A: Direct services are not allowed.

Q: Would conducting community needs assessments, feasibility studies and developing strategic plans be appropriate activities for this grant?

A: Yes.

Q: Can you submit as a public/private/nonprofit collaborative as long as the lead agency is a nonprofit?

A: Yes.

Q: Regarding policy as referenced in the RFP, are we to include policy development work in our application or are we to address our capacity to develop policy and what we need to increase that?

A: You should address your need to build capacity to develop policy and what resources you need to increase that.

Q: Would capital expenses for a project (e.g., building construction for housing of priority populations) be eligible?

A: No.

Q: Can this funding be used to purchase a vehicle?

A: No.

Q: Can you use funds toward the purchase of a property and/or in redevelopment of a property?

A: No.

Q: Could salary increases for front line staff be seen as capacity building?

A: Yes.

Q: Could capacity building and policy advocacy on addressing gaps in health care services for refugees and immigrants be seen as capacity building?

A: Yes.

Q: Would training and technical assistance to direct service be eligible?

A: Yes, assuming the training aligns to this funding.

Q: An organization whose National Center is based in another state but does work and has an office in California is not eligible?

A: The work must fund the California office and the work in California.

Q: Is capacity building for an organization or for a community in historically under-resourced communities eligible?

A: Yes.

Q: How many total grants will be awarded and what is the total amount of money available?

A: We are estimating between 10-15 grants will be awarded in the \$150,000-\$250,000 range.

Q: Will the reviewers be foundation staff or include third-party organization representatives? If using third-party reviewers, how will The Center ensure that reviewers maintain confidentiality of innovative concepts disclosed?

A: The reviewers will be a combination of internal and external reviewers who are obligated to work confidentially when reviewing applications.

Q: We work in the affordable housing field and have a need for increased capacity on our real estate development team. Can we apply for assistance in that area?

A: Yes.

Q: Would paying for a new development director be considered improving capacity? The agency has never had a development director and could really use someone to increase their capacity to raise funds. Or could funds be used for a grant writer?

A: Yes.

Q: Our organization is changing fiscal sponsors on 2/15/2023. We have an MOU already set up. Could we apply under the new fiscal sponsor since the grant start date is in February 2023?

A: Yes, as long as the new fiscal sponsor meets eligibility requirements.

Q: Does the size of the served population matter?

A: No.

Q: We cover services in two counties. Can we include both counties in our application?

A: Yes.

Q: Can mileage be charged?

A: Yes, please follow the CALHR travel claim rates.

Q: Will we be given copies of the deck?

A: The webinar recording is posted on the [The Center's CEMI webpage \(SHFCenter.org/CEMI\)](https://www.shfcenter.org/CEMI).

Q: How do you define a CBO?

A: The RFP has eligibility criteria indicating which CBOs can apply, such as a community-based organization with a 501(c)(3) or fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3).

Q: Would the State prefer to fund new projects?

A: No preference. CBOs can build off existing projects.

Q: Does the CBO have to serve the entire state?

A: No, it can be regional, a single area or multiple.

Q: Are projects that are focused on job development, career opportunities and higher wages eligible?

A: Yes.

Q: Can you give some examples of types of projects that fit your desired scope for this funding?

A: Please see the RFP.

Q: For the W9 requirement, do you need a wet signature and/or a recently dated form? Or does one that we have on file with an electronic signature work?

A: Electronic signature is fine.

Q: Would including a letter of support influence who is awarded?

A: No.

Q: Do you require a match for this grant?

A: No.

Q: Are organizations with a smaller organizational budget weighted the same as larger organizations?

A: There is no weight due to budget size. Proposed budgets should be appropriate to both the organization and the proposed project.

Q: Please let me know if you have target or priority cities and or counties.

A: There are not priority cities, counties or geographic areas, however, geographic coverage will be considered in the factors that inform the final slate of funded partners. For example, all 10 awards will not go only to organizations within a given geographic region.