

Strategies to Repair Equity and Transform Community Health (STRETCH) Initiative

Request for Applications

The CDC Foundation (CDCF), Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), and the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) are currently accepting applications for participation in the STRETCH Initiative Cohort. See below for:

1. *Summary of RFA*
2. *Project Background*
3. *Program Elements and Expectations*
4. *Submission Instructions and Application Template*

Summary of RFA

The Strategies to Repair Equity and Transform Community Health (STRETCH) Initiative will provide technical assistance and capacity building over a 12-month period to assist state teams in strengthening their community engagement, develop transformational change and build sustainable and equitable cultures of health.

Engagement Timeline

- November 9, 2021: [Project Informational Session](#)
- December 2021: Cohort kick-off call
 - Pre-project assessment
- January-June 2022: Ongoing technical assistance and virtual programming
- July 2022: Mid-point assessment
- August – December 2022: Ongoing technical assistance and virtual programming
- January 2023: Post-project assessment
 - Key informant interviews

Request for Applications Released: **Wednesday November 3, 2021**

[Project Informational Session:](#) **Tuesday, November 9, 2021, at 3:00pm ET**

Applications Due: **Tuesday, November 23, 2021, by 5:00pm ET (DATE EXTENDED)**

Selection Announcement: **Friday, December 3, 2021**

Project Period: December 2021 – January 2023

Number of Participants: Up to 10 state/territorial health agency (S/THA) teams (see below in “Project Elements and Expectations” for team composition)

Project Point of Contact: Equitypartners@cdcfoundation.org.

Project Background

Purpose

With support by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the [Strategies to Repair Equity and Transform Community Health \(STRETCH\) Initiative](#) will be led in partnership with the CDC Foundation (CDCF), the Association of State and Territorial Health officials (ASTHO), and the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI). This Initiative will convene state/territorial teams and their partners to establish a learning community combining virtual engagements, as well as robust and tailored technical assistance (which may include in-person in-state direct assistance) to address the following:

- Designing meaningful and lasting systems change and create inclusive and equitable public health systems
- Embedding equity into SHAs strategic priorities, partnership approaches, program development and implementation, policies, and practices
- Leverage newly available funding to create and execute public health financing strategies that drive the greatest, most equitable public health impact

Through these implementation strategies and a focus on capacity building and technical assistance, the overall goal of the **STRETCH** Initiative is to support Cohort members to strengthen their partnerships and planning with communities, develop connections and strategies to work with intermediaries more effectively as well as leveraging new federal funding opportunities in ways that advance equity, and enable public health and other systems to work together in greater alignment. For the purposes of this project, intermediaries are defined as agents who work between organizations to achieve shared goals. These include academia, community-based organizations (CBOs), public health institutes, local health foundations, private sector, and others. This work will focus on collaborative partnerships to take action to address health equity and build resilient communities.

Program Elements and Expectations

Benefits of Participation

Over the yearlong project, CDCF, ASTHO and MPHI will provide the following to assist states and territories in implementing program and policy change that supports and adds to the evidence-base or promotes innovative state/territorial work:

- Virtual programming through a series of learning sessions (*webinars on emerging topics*)
- Peer-to-peer connections and networking opportunities (Unique cohort-based learning from peers and subject matter experts to improve participant’s ability to achieve significant progress towards their goals).
- Sharing and dissemination of federal, national, and state/territorial resources and materials
- Robust and tailored technical assistance from CDCF, ASTHO, MPHI, federal and national partners, and subject matter experts
- STRETCH Cohort participants will be offered one on-site CDCF field staff member to support the work of the project. Key roles of this person may include project management, strategic

planning, health equity coordinator, liaison between the grantor and grantee, liaison with jurisdiction identified community partners and identification of current or emerging best practices.

Program Commitments:

Jurisdictions participating in the STRETCH Cohort are expected to:

- Assemble a core STRETCH team which includes representatives from the state public health agency and state health official's office
- Develop an action-oriented work plan and identify technical assistance needs in support of implementing the plan
- Identify intermediary partners to advance the overarching goal of increasing community engagement and building sustainable healthy and resilient communities
- Participate in up to 10 STRETCH virtual and peer-to-peer learning sessions over the project period
- Utilize up to an additional 2-6 hours a month to tailored technical assistance from CDCF, ASTHO, and MPHI
- Participate in the STRETCH Cohort process and outcome evaluation efforts, including completing pre- and post-assessments and key informant interviews

Selection Criteria - Commitment of:

- Implement or expand place based/community-based efforts
- Identify core team
- Identify intermediaries that will advance community engagement
- Peer-to-peer learning and collaboration
- Address disparities through a health equity approach
- Gain or refine knowledge around working with and collaborating with cross-sector partners to develop transformational systems change

Below are some questions state teams should consider when reviewing the STRETCH RFA. Variations of these questions may be asked as part of the initial intake session of the Cohort:

- What does your team identify as "meaningful" engagement?
- What would successful participation in this Cohort look like to you?
- What do you see as your chief need regarding developing relationships with intermediaries and strengthening community engagement?
- What potential barriers do you see for your team in advancing this work?
- How does your agency view health equity, and where does this work sit within your organization?

Application Instructions:

To indicate your interest in participating in the STRETCH Initiative, please complete the form below. For all questions related to the submission process, please contact Equitypartners@cdcfoundation.org.

Strategies to Repair Equity and Transform Community Health (STRETCH) Initiative

Cohort Application

Application Form

Please complete the following form and return to Equitypartners@cdcfoundation.org by **Tuesday, November 23, 2021, by 5:00 pm ET**

State/Territorial Health Agency Name:

Primary Point of Contact:

Title:

Phone:

Email:

Please complete the following box with information for each core team member who will participate in the STRETCH Cohort. Additional stakeholders are welcome to participate in learning community activities.

Teams participating in the STRETCH Cohort should include a minimum of the following four (4) core team members:

- ✓ State/Territorial Health Official (or designee with decision-making ability)
- ✓ Minority Health/Health Equity Director and/or Lead
- ✓ Community Engagement Lead (or designee) where applicable
- ✓ Community Partner/Intermediary Agency Lead(s) (*see definition in the "Purpose" section of the RFA*)

Applicants are also encouraged to engage the following individuals in designing and implementing their STRETCH goals:

- ✓ Finance Director (or designee)
- ✓ Local Health Official(s)

<i>Participant Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Email</i>	<i>Phone Number</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

5.			
6.			

*Add additional rows as needed

Is your state interested in a (no cost) CDCF-funded on-site staff member? ___ Yes ___ No

Please provide a brief explanation (no more than 250 words) about what you would like to focus on during this project, or what needs you find most critical:

Statement of Participation

Please read the statement of participation and provide signature by the State/Territorial Health Official (or their designee) below.

Commitment to Collaboration – CDCF/ASTHO/MPHI STRETCH Cohort

In the spirit of collaboration, CDCF, ASTHO and MPHI are committed to working with and supporting STRETCH state and territorial teams. In this regard, CDCF, ASTHO and MPHI will provide the following:

- Virtual programming through a series of virtual learning sessions (*webinars on emerging topics*)
- Peer-to-peer connections and networking opportunities
- Sharing and dissemination of federal, national, and state/territorial resources and materials
- Robust and tailored technical assistance from CDCF, ASTHO, MPHI, federal and national partners, and subject matter experts
- Optional on-site staff member (CDCF-funded)

Commitment to Collaboration – STRETCH State/Territory Team

In the spirit of collaboration, our team is committed to working with CDCF, ASTHO, MPHI, and their partners. In this regard, our state/territorial health agency will:

- Identify core STRETCH team members
- Identify intermediary collaboration partners assisting in strengthening community engagement
- Develop a work plan and identify related technical assistance needs
- Implement the work plan throughout the year, and provide updates to CDCF, ASTHO and MPHI
- Participate in all STRETCH virtual learning sessions and attend all required virtual meetings
- Participate in process and outcome evaluation efforts

State/Territorial Health Official (or designee) Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____