Data Modernization Workforce Acceleration Initiative (WAI)

## **Request for Application (RFA) – Cohort 3**

### INDIVIDUAL PHA APPLICATION TEMPLATE

Use this template for Tribal PHA proposals or STL PHA proposals.

Please [**use this link**](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/91931160b011498793ba5d752bc1de2d) to answer the following questions and submit the required attachments via the online form. To ensure you have everything completed to submit your application, below is a short checklist and you are encouraged to use the template below to prepare your submission.

* Prepared to enter short-answer or multiple choice questions via the online form.
* Prepared narrative of proposed WAI Placement(s) to upload within the online form.
* Prepared and signed letter of support from the PHA director\* demonstrating a commitment to support this work to upload within the online form (see Additional Attachments).
* Prepared to provide an organizational chart showing how the requested WAI Placement(s) will fit within your PHA’s team (see Additional Attachments)
* Prepared to provide PHA financial reports as outlined in Additional Attachments.
* Prepared Letter of Support from Tribal Nation(s) if the applicant is a Tribal nonprofit organization but not a Tribe. That letter of support must indicate Tribal support for the proposed work and that the Tribal nonprofit organization has vested public health authority to exchange health data from the Tribes that are being represented.
* If the applicant is submitting a Multiple-PHA proposal, prepared Letter or Letters of Support from the supported PHAs’ directors\*. That letter of support must indicate support for the proposed work from each of the PHAs to be supported. Please include the name of the PHA associated with each signature.

\* If public health is just one division of an organization, such as in a health and human services agency, the letter of support may be signed by the leader of the organization’s public health division.

### Short-answer and Multiple-choice Questions (to answer via online form)

**Basic Information**

1. Basic Applicant PHA Information
	1. Legal Organization Name of Public Health Agency/Authority (PHA)?
	2. Organization Address (City, State, Zip Code+4 [XXXXX-XXXX])
	3. Website
	4. Email (Applicant Point of Contact)
	5. Year Established
	6. Federal Tax Identification (ID) Number/Employer Identification Number

(EIN)

* 1. Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number
	2. SAM Unique Entity ID (UEI) – details can be found on this site <https://sam.gov/entity-registration>
	3. SAM UEI Expiration Date
	4. Business Classification
	5. Classification of Public Health Agency/Authority
1. Program Contact Information (if different than Applicant Point of Contact):
	1. Name:
	2. Title:
	3. Address:
	4. Email Address:
	5. Phone Number:
2. Financial Point of Contact:
	1. Name:
	2. Title:
	3. Address:
	4. Email Address:
	5. Phone Number:
3. Application Authorized Signatory (if selected for WAI Placements)
	1. Name:
	2. Title:
	3. Address:
	4. Email Address:
	5. Phone Number:
4. What is the size of the population served by your agency?
	1. Number:
	2. Special notes or explanations (150 characters):
5. How many full-time equivalents (FTEs) does the applicant PHA employ overall?
	1. Number:
	2. Special notes or explanations (150 characters):
6. What was the applicant PHA’s total 2023 public health related expenses budget, including all sources, such as general fund and grants?
	1. Number (dollars):
	2. Special notes or explanations (150 characters):

**Request for WAI Informatics Placements**

Please select the WAI positions that meet your proposal’s needs. You can view a short description of the roles below.

You may request up to four (4) WAI Placements total within your application. Please request the number of Placements necessary to accomplish the proposed work. The CDC Foundation expects that many PHAs will need to add more than one WAI Placement to successfully advance their project(s) and/or activities.

Note that the total number of positions is contingent upon funding availability and the feasibility of identifying candidates fitting to your request and the PHA’s broader organizational culture. Please submit only one application for all positions needed and then prioritize which are your top positions. Staffing awards will be made based on the selection process and review criteria.

1. For each WAI position below, please indicate the number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) of the position requested. You can request up to 4 FTEs in total across multiple position types. Proposals for strategic planning, such as working with a WAI Senior Data Modernization Advisor to develop a systems improvement roadmap, may request less than one FTE (e.g., may request a quarter or half of an FTE). Proposals requesting at least one full FTE should lease only use whole numbers; proposals for one or more FTE should do not include fractions of FTEs.
	1. **Product Manager** (Staff who oversee the development and launch of new products or systems features. They collaborate with cross-functional teams, including engineers, designers and program staff, to define product requirements, prioritize tasks and ensure successful product delivery across the PHA and with PHA partners.)
	2. **Software Development and Engineering** (Staff that design, build and maintain software applications. They may specialize in different programming languages or development frameworks.)
	3. **Data Science and Informatics** (Staff in these roles analyze complex data to help make strategic decisions. They use statistical analysis, machine learning and data visualization techniques to extract insights from large datasets.)
	4. **Data Engineering** (Staff in these roles assess, build and oversee data management systems, ensuring that data flows smoothly from various sources to databases and data warehouses. This includes the implementation of standards, interoperability, etc.)
	5. **Cybersecurity** (With the increasing threat of cyber-attacks, staff with expertise in cybersecurity skillsets are in high demand. They develop security measures to protect computer systems and networks from unauthorized access, data breaches and other cyber threats.)
	6. **Systems Architecture** (Staff who design and manage technical infrastructure, including cloud computing systems, storage, networking and security. They may also help organizations migrate their infrastructure to the cloud and optimize performance and cost efficiency.)
	7. **DevOps Engineering** (Staff who focus on improving collaboration and efficiency between software development and IT operations teams. They automate processes, manage infrastructure as code, and implement continuous integration and delivery pipelines.)
	8. **Business Analyst** (Staff who analyze processes and systems to identify business needs and opportunities. Responsibilities include gathering requirements from PHA users and beyond, developing and vetting solutions, creating project plans, assuring training and change management, and facilitating communication between technical and non-technical teams to ensure alignment.)
	9. **Data Modernization Senior Advisor** (Staff member who leads the implementation of information systems management and improvement across the PHA.)
	10. **Data Governance Specialist** (Staff who will drive the development of tailored public health data governance framework that is aligned with industry standards and regulatory requirements.)
	11. **Project Implementation Manager** (Staff who will drive the delivery of technical projects that improve the use of public health data to inform decision making.)
2. **Ranking of positions.** If you selected more than one position above, please rank the positions requested above in order of need by your agency (highest need first to lowest need last). If you only selected one position type, please write “Not Applicable.”
3. **Workforce needs addressed by positions.** Describe the workforce capacity constraints or challenges (e.g. competition for resources, missing technical job types, insufficient technology and informatics skillsets) that are impacting your PHA’s ability (or the ability of the group of PHAs for multiple-PHA applicants) to make priority system improvements. Explain how each requested position above will address one of these workforce constraints or challenges. (200 words or less).

**PHA Information Systems Improvement Leadership**

1. **Information systems leadership**.
	1. Does your PHA have a designated individual (or shared leadership) with decision-making authority who directs information systems improvement activities (i.e., data modernization activities) and ensures ongoing progress? Please note: Applicant PHAs are not required to have such an individual (or shared leadership).
		1. No – We do not currently have a leader. Choose this option if such a position does not exist or if it exists but is currently empty.
		2. Yes, with significant limitations – We have a leader or shared leadership, but lack of time, experience, skills, agency influence, agency tenure or other factors has obstructed progress.
		3. Yes, fully supported – We have a leader or shared leadership with sufficient time, expertise, tenure and influence to effectively advance system improvements.
	2. If either Yes option:
		1. What is the title of the individual(s) currently?
		2. Approximately what percentage of this individual’s time (% FTE) is dedicated to leading information systems improvement?
		3. How long has this individual(s) led systems improvement at your PHA?
		4. Is the individual(s) currently in that position as an interim or permanent appointment?

**IT/Informatics Workforce Capabilities and Needs**

1. **IT support structure.** IT support may include support for PHA hardware and software, data management, servers, databases and other information technology. Some PHAs have internal PHA staff that provide IT support, while others depend on external agencies, such as a centralized IT agency that serves many other government agencies. How many IT full time equivalents (FTE) support the work across your entire PHA? If an IT staff member supports your PHA as well as other governmental agencies, only count a partial FTE towards the total FTE (e.g., if an IT team member splits time evenly between your PHA and two other agencies, only count 0.33 towards the total FTE). Enter 0 for those that do not apply.
	1. IT Internal PHA Staff FTE (# FTE, Special notes or explanations)
	2. IT Contracted FTE (# FTE, Special notes or explanations)
	3. IT External Agency FTE (# FTE, agency name, Special notes or explanations)
2. **Other systems improvement full time equivalents (FTEs)**. Beyond IT support, some PHAs have informaticists or other staff who support information systems and software development and maintenance. Excluding the FTEs listed in the last question, how many additional FTE support all types of PHA information system improvements? Please consider individuals including technical staff, business analysts, those working on related training or change management, project leadership and oversight, etc. As in the last question, if an individual supports your PHA as well as other governmental agencies, only count a partial FTE towards the total FTE. Enter 0 for those that do not apply.
	1. Other “systems improvement” internal PHA staff FTE (# FTE, Special notes or explanations)
	2. Other “systems improvement” contracted FTE (#, Special notes or explanations)
	3. Other “systems improvement” external agency FTE (# FTE, agency name, Special notes or explanations)

**PHA Current Organization and Use of Core Data Types**

The following questions will support WAI in understanding your organization’s foundational information systems maturity and needs.

1. Does your PHA have a strategic plan or roadmap that guides systems improvements or data modernization across your major information systems?
* No plan in place – We do not have strategic plans for our information systems and have not started developing any.
* System-specific plans only – We have strategic plans for individual systems or data types, but not a PHA-wide strategic plan.
* Plan in development – We are actively working on creating a PHA-wide strategic plan.
* Plan adopted, early implementation – We have a PHA-wide strategic plan with leadership buy-in that was communicated to staff. We are in the early stages of using it to guide decisions and action.
* Plan implemented – We have a PHA-wide strategic plan and have operationalized significant portions.
1. How would you describe your PHA’s current approach to keeping track of what data you have, where it is stored and how it is used? This includes things like lists of datasets, descriptions of what is in datasets, data inventories or dictionaries, inventories of software or systems or guides that help staff understand and use the PHA’s data.
* Not yet started – We don’t have a system in place to organize or describe our data and systems.
* Early stage – We started organizing this information, but it’s limited or inconsistent (e.g. variation in practice across projects or programs).
* Developing – We have some organized information across key systems or datasets, but there are still gaps.
* Established – We have organized information for most systems and datasets, and we update it regularly.
* Advanced – We have a complete, well-maintained system that helps us connect data across systems and use it strategically.

Answer the remaining questions on data analysis and use based on norms across your **entire PHA**.

“Core Data Types” refers to the datasets that your PHA most often uses to meet your mission, such as care reporting, laboratory, immunization, vital statistics, syndromic, emergency department, healthcare capacity, wastewater and/or population health management data.

1. How frequently are core data types analyzed and interpreted to produce findings (i.e., actionable information)? Please include analyses conducted outside the PHA (e.g., by a state PHA) that the PHA frequently relies on for its work.
* Never
* Rarely
* Sometimes
* Regularly/Routinely
1. Who routinely has access to findings from the core data types? Select all that apply.
* Internal PHA staff within the unit/program that works with the data
* Internal PHA staff outside the unit/program
* PHA and/or broader agency leadership
* Public information users
* Other <<Describe>>
1. What formats are routinely used to share findings from your core data types? Select all that apply.
* Static formats (e.g., reports, emails, briefs, articles)
* Static data visualizations (e.g., charts or graphs)
* Social media posts
* Dynamic formats (e.g., dashboards, interactive tools)
* Other <<Describe>>
1. How often are findings from core data types shared in a timely manner?
* Never
* Rarely
* Sometimes
* Regularly/Routinely

**Narrative: Request for WAI Informatics Team Members**

Within an attached narrative, respond to the following questions. Use size 11 font or above.

1. **Broad description of PHA’s information systems infrastructure.** Please briefly describe your PHA’s current information systems infrastructure, including major systems **and** software used, IT support (internal staff, contractor, vendor, other government agency) and system integration, centralization, or automated data exchange. (300 words. A system(s) diagram may be included.).
2. **Proposed Work and Justification.** Describe the proposed project(s) and/or general support requested within this application. Proposed work can include specific systems improvement projects, general systems improvement support needed across your PHA or other activities advancing your PHA’s systems, software or analytic tools (e.g., data system assessment or development of system improvement strategic plan). Include a description of the limitations and gaps related to the system(s)/software/tool(s) that the proposed work will address. Where relevant, refer to systems or software mentioned in part A of the narrative. (Recommend ~150 words per project or line of work).
3. **Strategic Impact.** (Part 1) Describe how the proposed work will: contribute to longer-term information systems maturity and capacity at your PHA and improve your PHA’s ability to effectively use public health data into the future.
	1. If you are proposing a data systems assessment and/or developing a systems improvement strategic plan/roadmap as part of their proposed work, be sure to describe how the assessment or plan will be used.
	2. If you already have a systems improvement strategic plan/roadmap, be sure to describe how the proposed work moves the plan forward.

(Part 2) Describe how the proposed work aligns with one or more of the four (4) [PHDS](https://www.cdc.gov/ophdst/public-health-data-strategy/index.html) goals. (Total: 300 words or less encompassing both parts)

1. **Non-personnel budget planning**. Please describe the major non-personnel costs associated with the proposed work within this application (e.g., software costs, licensing fees, etc.) and the source(s) of funds for these costs. (200 words)
2. **Anticipated challenges.** Identify the greatest potential risks to implementing the proposed work and how you might address them. (200 words)
3. **Requested position workplans.** For each requested position, respond to the following questions to provide an of each requested position’s role, responsibilities and deliverables. Please do not combine your responses across position types. If you request two positions of the same type, please include this information for both positions (for example, if you request 2 Business Analysts [BA], include parts a - d for the first BA and parts a - d for the second BA).
	1. Projects (20 words). What proposed project(s) or other work outlined in section B will this FTE support? FTEs can support more than one project.
	2. Position’s milestones and deliverables (150 words, visual timeline may be included). What are the key milestones and deliverables to be completed by this position within the funding period (currently ends June 30, 2025)?
	3. What are the main activities or tasks that this position will be responsible for performing? (100 words).
	4. Who at the PHA will be responsible for providing day-to-day supervision to the requested Placement? (20 words).
4. **Sustainability:** Describe your PHA’s plan to maintain the deliverables and systems improvements implemented through WAI after the program ends. Include considerations of how financial, human and technical resources will support continued use and maintenance of deliverables. (100 words or less).

**Additional Attachments**

**Application attachments**. Please use this section to attach the following items (as applicable) to your submission. **All attachments must be submitted as ONE (1) COMPILED PDF.**

**(Required) Narrative** outlining request for WAI Informatics Team Members. See above for details.

**(Required) One letter of support** from the PHA director\* demonstrating a commitment to support this work. The letter of support must include:

* That the PHA has existing staff time available to onboard and supervise the requested position(s), integrate them into the larger PHA and provide oversight/assistance to guide project completion.
* That the PHA has existing infrastructure to support remote WAI Placements, including policies and procedures that ensure remote Placements will be granted timely access to necessary equipment and data to complete job responsibilities.
* Endorsement of the requested WAI Placements from PHA leadership.
* Confirmation that there is funding to execute the non-personnel aspects of the project(s) or work for which FTEs are being requested (e.g., system acquisition or other purchases).
* Confirmation that the PHA already has or can quickly establish any approvals or agreements required for the proposed work, such as budget approval, legal agreements (e.g., data use agreements), contracts, or resource approvals (e.g., IT staff time).
* Prioritization of the proposed project(s) or proposed work by the PHA.
* Recognition that systems improvement project(s) and activities require time from program staff, IT staff and leadership to support and guide the project(s). For example, program staff may need to provide information about their work processes, to define what they need from tools being developed, to test the tools, and to develop, provide or attend training regarding the use of tools that are developed. IT staff will need to provide appropriate system access and integrate what is developed into the PHA’s existing information system infrastructure.

\* If public health is just one division of your organization, such as in a health and human services agency, the letter of support may be signed by the leader of your organization’s public health division.

**(Required) Letter of Support from Tribes.** If the PHA applying as a Tribal nonprofit organization, attach a letter of support for this application that also confirms that the Tribal nonprofit organization has vested public health authority to exchange health data from the Tribe(s) that are being represented.

**(Required) Organizational Chart.** Provide a current agency organizational chart showing how the requested WAI Placements will fit within your PHA’s team. Please ensure the organizational chart includes all your PHA’s technical staff as well as the reporting pathway between the individual leading systems improvement and the agency director. The organizational chart will be used to help us assess your readiness to onboard new WAI Placements. We will discuss it further during your PHA’s interview if your PHA is invited.

**(Required) PHA Financial Reports:** Current year (available) audited Balance Sheet and Income Statement and/or IRS 990Tax form. If the organization is 501 (c ), they may submit an IRS 990 Tax form. We are requesting submitted 2023 audited financials (Balance Sheet and Income Statement) however if they are not available/completed we will accept 2022/ audited financials (Balance Sheet and Income Statement) as the oldest records submitted.

**(Optional) PHA Information Systems Improvement Strategic Plan or Roadmap.** If you have a documented strategic plan, roadmap or something similar, attach it here.

**(Optional) Data Modernization Assessments.** If you have completed one or more agency data modernization assessments, attach them here. These could have been done by outside consultants or using available toolkits.

***The CDC Foundation recognizes that your Systems Improvement Strategic Plan, Roadmap or Assessment may contain sensitive information that your PHA may not want to be made public.*** *If submitted, this plan will only be viewed by CDC Foundation project staff to better support your PHA in meeting your staffing needs. The CDC Foundation team members will not share this document beyond the CDC Foundation project team. The Smartsheet application subscription is owned by the CDC Foundation with encryption for secure transfer of materials. Upon receipt of your plan, the document will be placed on secure CDC Foundation servers to which only the CDC Foundation team members have access.*