

Call for Proposals: Building the Capacity of Local Health Departments to Conduct Health Impact Assessment

The Oregon Health Authority's (OHA) Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Program works to build the capacity of Oregonians to use HIA as a tool for improving the health of their communities. HIA is a five-step process that examines the health risks and benefits of public decisions and delivers information to decision makers with the aim of improving public health through the process. For more information about HIA, including examples of completed projects, please visit our website:

<http://www.healthoregon.org/hia>

OHA is looking to fund and support two local health departments (LHDs) to develop and implement a plan for conducting an HIA at the local level. We are most interested in supporting proposals that identify a project or policy that is under active consideration by decision makers, so that the results of the completed HIA can be used in the decision making process. For this round of funding, we will give preference to proposals to conduct HIA on projects or policies related to land use and transportation decisions.

Availability of Funds

In December 2012, OHA plans to award two LHDs \$15,000 each to create and implement a plan for conducting an HIA by August 2, 2013. Any Oregon LHD is eligible to apply for funding. No prior HIA experience is necessary. Successful applications will specify how funding will increase LHD HIA capacity.

A member of your agency must participate in our webinar HIA 101, either live or recorded, prior to submitting your application. You must also participate in our phone call on screening, the process used to determine if a potential project is a good candidate for a HIA.

The funds available are intended to support LHD staff in convening partners to conduct HIA. We will consider proposals from LHDs that pass funds through to partner agencies/organizations in their community, so long as the project is coordinated in the LHD and contributes to LHD HIA capacity.

Health Impact Assessments

There are five recognized steps of HIA:

1. *Screening.* In the first step of any HIA, a project or policy is selected. Screening involves the consideration of several factors including whether a) the proposal affects health, b) a report can be completed and recommendations made in time to inform a decision, and c) resources exist to complete the assessment. Screening is ideally conducted by a group of stakeholders.
2. *Scoping.* After a policy or project is selected the scope of the project must be determined. Scoping includes questions like, "Which health impacts will be considered? Which project components have the greatest impact on health? Which populations will be affected by this proposal?" Scoping also helps determine how in-depth the analysis will be based on the time and resources available.
3. *Assessment.* Assessment comprises the bulk of the work in HIA. This process provides data and information on the health impacts that were identified in the scoping phase, and the people who will be affected by the project or policy. This information can be both quantitative and qualitative, and can be drawn from many sources. These sources include published peer reviewed literature, data from local or regional assessments, modeled data, focus groups or prior HIAs. The process is similar to traditional

public health assessment, but with a focus on a specific proposal.

4. *Reporting and Recommendations.* The assessment will result in a set of conclusions about the health impacts of the project or policy. From these conclusions, recommendations can be proposed that would minimize the negative and maximize the positive health impacts. The final HIA report can be presented in several formats, including a full report, a letter to decision makers or a contribution to an Environmental Impact Statement. An important part of reporting is disseminating your final product to decision makers and other stakeholders through various avenues.

5. *Monitoring and Evaluation.* After an HIA is completed, the project or policy should be monitored to judge whether the HIA was successful. Did the decision makers utilize your recommendations about health in their final decision? Were the recommendations followed when the project was implemented? Did the HIA have other impacts, either anticipated or unanticipated? Continued monitoring of the HIA and the project or policy can help answer some of these questions. Collecting information from monitoring can help to evaluate whether the HIA achieved its goals.

Health impact assessments can vary greatly in depth, from a rapid HIA lasting a few weeks or months to a comprehensive HIA that produces new data and can last many months or years. In light of limited resources, OHA will lead the grantees through a rapid HIA. Sometimes called a table-top HIA, rapid HIAs rely on existing data to provide the best possible assessment in the available time.

Technical Support

OHA's HIA Program, located within the Center for Health Protection (CHP), is available to provide technical assistance to grantees at no additional cost. This assistance includes one site visit/training, unlimited phone and email contact, and up to 50 additional hours of assistance with assessment and reporting for each grantee. The exact activities to be conducted by CHP staff will vary based on the needs of the project, but could include data analysis, literature reviews or report writing. Proposals should identify the specific activities intended for CHP staff to conduct.

Project Deliverables

The LHDs receiving the funds will be responsible for completing activities described in the proposal by 8/2/2013. Grantees will provide:

1. Documentation of activities and outcomes upon the completion of each HIA step.
2. A written report that summarizes the results of the HIA in a format (e.g. formal report, fact sheet, letter in response to an Environmental Impact Statement, etc.) that is relevant to the project and will be useful to stakeholders. The final report should also be made available online.
3. A written final report compiled using information from the documentation at each step. The final report includes the project description, and a summary of activities, outcomes, lessons learned, best practices, and identified challenges and success stories within the context of your agency's application of HIA steps. It should also outline contacts and collaborations, and issues/concerns with recommendations for improvements to the grant.
4. A written evaluation of your project's process and outcomes.

Grantees will also be expected to:

1. Participate in monthly conference calls with CHP staff and other grantees to discuss ongoing progress.
2. Participate in online trainings that meet grantee needs as they conduct the assessment.

3. Share findings with other public health professionals in a local, regional or national presentation by December 2013.

Proposal Expectations

The proposal must address the areas outlined below. Please also provide a timeline that clearly shows the activities to be completed by **8/2/2013**.

Your proposal must address the following:

1. What proposed land use or transportation policy, program, or project will your HIA inform? At which level(s) will the decision(s) be made (i.e. city or municipal, county, regional, tribal, state, federal)?
2. Describe the key stakeholders.
3. Describe the affected communities and decision-makers you are seeking to inform.
4. Describe the decision you are hoping to inform and the timeline of the decision-making process. Include the specific points at which the information and recommendations provided by the HIA could be addressed and implemented by decision makers.
5. Provide a brief description of the most important health outcomes you seek to address.
6. Describe the strategies that you would use to disseminate the HIA recommendations
7. Provide a brief description of your organization's capacity to undertake the project. If known, please also list and briefly describe any partner organizations.
8. Describe how the funds will increase your organization's long-term capacity to conduct HIA.

Application Procedure

Please include information from Parts I-III below in your application. No more than 4 pages of text will be accepted for the narrative of the application, excluding budget and appendices.

- *Part I* – Contact information, as well as CV for the project lead
- *Part II* – Narrative that answers proposal expectations provided above, and appendices (if applicable)
- *Part III* – Budget

Attachments – OHA must receive applications by **noon on Wednesday, November 16, 2012**. Please submit **an electronic copy** of the application and all attachments to HIA.info@state.or.us.

Selection Process

Each application will be reviewed and rated by OHA personnel. Proposals will be rated on the following evaluation criteria:

- Participation in HIA 101 training and screening call.
- Selection of a policy, plan, or project under active consideration so that there is enough time for the HIA to be applied to the decision making process.
- Selection of a policy, program or project decision that is relevant and important to your community's health, with preference given to land use- or transportation-focused proposals.
- Potential for the HIA to highlight health issues that are not already apparent or currently being considered.

- Demonstrated partnerships with stakeholders (agency partners, community groups, etc) relevant to your proposal and a plan for engaging affected communities.
- Commitment to conduct an impartial science-based assessment of the health impacts of the decision, and resources to do so.
- Clarity, organization and detail of the overall plan.
- Feasibility of carrying out the proposed activities.
- Explanation of how the project will increase your organization's long-term capacity to conduct HIA.

Additional Information

For questions about this RFP, contact:

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Additional HIA Resources

<http://www.healthoregon.org/hia>

<http://www.ph.ucla.edu/hs/hiaclic/>

<http://www.humanimpact.org/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm>

<http://www.hiaconnect.edu.au/>