

Call for Proposals: Building the Capacity of Local Health Departments and Tribal Public Health Authorities to Conduct Health Impact Assessments

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, see the attached HIA fact sheet or visit our website: <http://www.healthoregon.org/hia>

The OHA is looking to fund and support two Oregon public health departments 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 target for their HIA 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 the built environment, including land use, housing, and transportation decisions.

Availability of Funds

In December 2014, the OHA plans to announce two \$15,000 awards to create and implement a plan for conducting an HIA by August 3, 2015. Any Oregon local health department or tribal public health authority is eligible to apply for funding. No prior HIA experience is necessary. Successful applications will specify how funding will increase local health department HIA capacity.

The funds available are intended to support local public health staff in collaborating with traditional built environment decision-makers and stakeholders to improve community health. We will consider proposals from local or tribal public health that pass funds through to partner agencies/organizations, so long as the project is coordinated in the local or tribal public health authority and contributes to building local public health capacity for future built environment work.

To apply

A member of your agency and/or application team must participate in our HIA 101 webinar October 21 from 10:30-12:00. Register for the webinar at: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/308480242>

You must also schedule and participate in a phone call on screening, the process used to determine if a potential project is a good candidate for an HIA. Phone calls can be scheduled by emailing andrea.hamberg@state.or.us.

Health Impact Assessments

There are five recognized steps of HIA:

1. *Screening*. In the first step of any HIA, a project or policy on which to conduct and assessment 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 on which to conduct an HIA, the scope of the project must be determined. Which health impacts will be considered? Which project components have the greatest impact on health? Which populations will be affected by this proposal? These are some of the questions to be answered through scoping. 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.* Your assessment will result in a set of conclusions about the health impacts of the project or policy you have studied. From these conclusions, project or policy 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 so that you can judge whether your 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 your HIA have other impacts, either anticipated or unanticipated? Continued monitoring of your HIA and the project or policy can help answer some of these questions. Collecting information from monitoring can help you evaluate whether your 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 and stakeholder engagement to provide the best possible assessment in the available time.

Technical Support

The OHA's Center for Health Protection (CHP) is available to provide technical assistance 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 the CHP 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 that the CHP will conduct.

Project Deliverables

The LHDs receiving the funds will be responsible for completing all activities described in the proposal by 8/28/2015. The 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 steps of the HIA, including findings and recommendations and an executive summary. To allow for review by HIA Program staff, a final draft of the report is due August 3, 2015.
3. A written final report (compiled using information from the documentation at each step) that includes a summary of project description, 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 the OPHD 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 2015.

Proposal Expectations

The proposal must address the areas outlined below. Please also provide a timeline that clearly shows the activities to be completed by **8/28/2015**.

Your proposal must answer the following questions:

- What proposed built environment policy, program, or project will your HIA inform? At which level(s) will the decision(s) be made (City or municipal, county, regional, tribal, state, federal)?
- Describe the key stakeholders
- Describe your audience, the decision-makers who you are seeking to inform
- 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.
- Provide a brief description of the most important health outcomes you seek to address.
- Describe the strategies that you would use to disseminate the HIA recommendations
- Provide a brief description of your organization's capacity to undertake the project. If known, please also list and briefly describe any partner organizations.
- Describe how the funds will increase your organization's long-term capacity to conduct HIA.
- Describe any in-kind contributions to the project from your organization and/or partners.

Application Procedure

Please include information from Parts I-III below in your. 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 questions provided above, and appendices (if applicable)
- *Part III* – Budget, including in-kind contributions to the project.

Attachments – The Oregon Health Authority must receive applications by **noon on Friday, November 14, 2014**. Please submit **an electronic copy** of the application and all attachments to andrea.hamberg@state.or.us.

Selection Process

Each application will be reviewed and rated by Oregon Public Health Division 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 relevant to your proposal (agency partners, community groups, etc), 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:

Andrea Hamberg

Oregon Public Health Division, Center for Health Protection

800 NE Oregon Street, Ste 640

Portland, OR 97211

971-673-04444

andrea.hamberg@state.or.us

HIA Resource

An Oregon Health Authority HIA Toolkit is available at our website:

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

Other resources

<http://www.ph.ucla.edu/hs/hiacliv/>
<http://www.humanimpact.org/>
<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm>
<http://www.hiaconnect.edu.au/>