

Responding to the 2026 Systems Improvement and Innovation Responsive Grants (SIIRG) Program Request for Proposals

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MAINE HEALTH ACCESS FOUNDATION

Our Vision

We envision a Maine where all people and communities are healthy and well.

Our Mission

To promote access to quality health care, especially for those who are uninsured and underserved, and improve the health of everyone in Maine.

Our Values

Integrity

We develop and share information and approaches to improve the health of Maine people. We use Foundation resources strategically and efficiently.

Transformation

We build advocacy and decision-making power among organizations and communities to ensure responsive and sustainable systems change.

Equity

All Maine people have access to quality, affordable health care. Together we produce fair and just health outcomes for everyone.

Community Engagement

We learn from people in communities across Maine, welcoming perspectives that encourage new ideas and enhance understanding.

Collaboration

Our success is built on honest and respectful relationships and shared purpose with partners from all sectors.

Creativity

We cultivate ideas by bringing people together to jointly address common goals.

SIIRG Program

Purpose

Reduce health inequities by identifying and removing structural barriers to services meant to support health, leading to health systems that are fair and just for everyone.

Focus

Community voice informs and shapes improvements and innovations in one or more of four MeHAF strategic priority areas: rural health, aging/older adults, behavioral health/substance use disorder, maternal & infant health.

SIIRG Program

Terms to Know

- ✓ **System** - interconnected entities and structures
- ✓ **Community-defined** - community members identify and prioritize the health concern
- ✓ **Health Equity** - all people have what they need to be healthy

Five SIIRG Program Criteria

1. Aligns with one or more MeHAF Strategic Priorities
 - a) Aging and older adults
 - b) Behavioral health/substance use disorder
 - c) Maternal and infant health
 - d) Rural health
2. Proposes system/organizational change that addresses health inequities
3. Responds to community defined health needs/concerns
4. Meaningful community member engagement throughout
5. Community informs what success looks like

Letter of Inquiry (LOI) Essential Elements

Eligibility- Part of a large non-profit? Need fiscal sponsorship?

Brief project description- (up to 500 characters); Complete these two sentences: “The grant will support...” “By the end of the grant period this project will...”

Community(ies)- The specific group of people whose health will directly benefit from your project.

Geographic area(s) that is the primary focus of the project

Race and ethnicity of population(s) that is the primary focus of the project

Planning vs. Implementation Grants

Planning Grant	Implementation Grant
<u>Stage of Development:</u> Your work on the issue or need is just beginning or requires more exploration to truly understand the problem and make informed change.	<u>Stage of Development:</u> Most/all the groundwork for your project has been completed – you firmly understand the issue(s) your project will be trying to resolve.
<u>Relationships:</u> A significant part of your work will be establishing relationships with other people or organizations that will help you to accomplish the work you want to do.	<u>Relationships:</u> You have the important relationships already in place that will be essential to the success of the work you are proposing.
<u>Readiness:</u> You are at the stage of needing to gather or analyze information from the community or others to inform how specifically to move ahead.	<u>Readiness:</u> You have a <u>clear and specific</u> plan of action that you and your partners are ready to move forward.
<u>Expected Results:</u> The expected outcome of your work may be described as having learned more about an issue, or problem and developed strategies that will support future action. It may be an output, like a report of recommendations, or a proto-type.	<u>Expected Results:</u> You have a clear idea of the specific changes that if successful, at the end of the project a measurable impact on the health or access to services in your community will be noticed.

Breakdown of the LOI Narrative Summary

1: Alignment with one or more of the four strategic priorities: (a) Aging (b) Behavioral health/SUD (c) Maternal & infant health (d) Rural health

2: Project description, two important parts- (a) Organizational and/or System level change to policies, practices, and or perceptions. (b) Addresses barriers to health and health care access experienced by some groups of people relative to others... i.e., calls out the health inequity

3: Respond to a need or concern that is defined by the community

4: Meaningful involvement of the community throughout project

5: Output or Impact: Learning and readiness as a result of the planning, or anticipated changes as a result of implementing the proposed project

1: Alignment with one or more of four strategic priority areas

“Behavioral
Health/SUD and
Rural health.”

“Aging/older adults.”

Essential elements of the response

2: Project Description Change occurs at a system and/or organizational level to address policies, practices and perceptions that create disproportionate barriers to health and access to care for some groups of people relative to others.

“...Many don’t have a regular income or a personal vehicle, and public transportation in rural areas is largely non-existent.

...determine the likelihood of people with SUD accessing mobile sexual and reproductive health services when coupled with harm reduction and SUD treatment services.”

“...using and honing this tool, which helps providers understand how messages and stereotypes about older people result in under-treatment, over-treatment, and poor health outcomes. All older people risk being disadvantaged in achieving full health simply because of stereotypes held by providers based on age.”

Essential elements of the response

- 3: Responds to a need or concern that is defined by the community.
- 4: Meaningful engagement of the community throughout the project.

“...women in treatment for SUD cited a “high prevalence of trauma, stigma from health care providers, distrust of the health care system, challenges planning for the future, and a perceived lack of autonomy over their reproductive health.”

“Older patients say their complaints are dismissed as “normal aging.” We will formalize the involvement of older people in this work by forming a permanent health policy advisory committee, to include older adults, care partners, and providers.”

Essential elements of the response

5: Key things you expect to accomplish during the planning or implementation period. Community weighs-in on success.

“...Development of interview/survey tools -
Training of staff to conduct interviews/surveys - 300 participants/patients complete interviews/surveys
- Participant/patient data is analyzed to implement operational changes and determine the demand for a mobile health program.”

“...hundreds of healthcare professionals have been exposed to training on age-bias and are more likely to be aware of their own bias and less likely to act on it. It means practices have disrupted outdated processes and adopted new ones to intentionally meet the needs of older patients.”

Essential elements of the response

Draft Budget (Narrative)

Text box – No need for a MeHAF budget form at this stage

List (bullets are fine) all sources of income and the expense amounts

Explain how you intend to use the MeHAF funds

TIPS

- Read the RFP and FAQs carefully
- Check out the online resources i.e., Policies, FAQs, *Practical Guide for Applicants*, *Spectrum of Community Involvement*
- Review this slide deck and the
- Review past and present SIIRG Project Profiles
- Talk to us if you have ANY questions
- Prepare narrative that is clearly and concisely responsive to the all five program criteria.

LOI Open Office Hours

- Zoom link on SIIRG Opportunity Webpage on the day of each session.
- Tuesday, January 13 at 11am – 1pm
- Thursday, January 15 at 10am – 12pm and 2pm – 4pm
- Tuesday, January 20 at 11am – 1pm
- Optional

2026 SIIRG Program

Letter of Interest (LOI) Due 4pm 1.27.26

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