



# Request for Proposals

## Health Equity Institute

### 2022 Neighborhood Testing Mini-Grant Program

#### Opportunity for Community-Based Organizations to Offer COVID Tests

Mini-grants of \$2,000 and \$4,378 are now available

- **Eligibility and Intent:**
  - Rhode Island community-based organizations serving populations in High-Density Communities in Rhode Island (Central Falls, Cranston, East Providence, North Providence, Pawtucket, Providence, Woonsocket) that are under-immunized and/or disproportionately impacted by COVID-19
  - Cultural, Human Service, and Faith-Based organizations in Rhode Island with federal 501c3 tax exempt status are eligible to apply
  - Test site must be open to the public and allow walk-in testing (no advance appointment needed)
  - Funding is intended to establish reliable, publicly accessible COVID-19 test sites that are open weekly at set times that are convenient for people who live or work nearby
  - Individuals and for-profit businesses and institutions are not eligible for funding
  - All test sites established via this program must be open to the general public
- **Deadline for applications: December 2, 2021, 11:59 p.m. EST**
  - Simple application process (5 pages, including 4 pages of forms)
  - Applications will be reviewed and scored as they are received
  - Not every applicant will be funded

## Purpose

**Overview.** To support the COVID-19 testing needs of residents in urban and suburban areas of Rhode Island with high historic burdens of COVID-19 and/or lower than average COVID-19 vaccination rates, the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) is offering **Neighborhood Testing Mini-Grants** to community-based organizations with the demonstrated ability to test 20-25 or more people for COVID-19 each week via one of two strategies.

**Scope of Work.** RIDOH is soliciting proposals to help people in high-density communities access high quality COVID-19 antigen testing. Specifically, qualified not-for-profit organizations based in Rhode Island are invited to apply for

- **(Option A)** a mini-grant (\$2,000) to **distribute at-home COVID-19 rapid antigen test kits** each week and provide support and referrals to those who test positive, or
- **(Option B)** a mini-grant (\$4,378) to **host a weekly test site in your community** in partnership with a clinical testing service supplied by the State.

Both programs will require that the successful applicant:

- ✓ Provide local community members with weekly opportunities to get tested for COVID-19 for 16 consecutive weeks
- ✓ Help to schedule confirmatory PCR tests for anyone who tests positive via a rapid test
- ✓ Answer basic questions that people may have about COVID-19, and provide them with resources such as vaccine education materials
- ✓ Encourage mask wearing while indoors—give out masks that RIDOH supplies to their community

**RIDOH will provide training, masks, test kits or testing services, and technical assistance** for all funded projects.

Applicants for **Option A** must also:

- Agree to distribute a minimum of 20 home COVID-19 test kits during each week of the 12-week program (note: one extra week is budgeted for startup and orientation)
- Agree to track distribution data, and submit it weekly using an online reporting form supplied by RIDOH
- Agree to educate people about COVID-19 tests using scripts and materials that RIDOH provides
- Agree to help those who report that they have tested positive access PCR confirmatory testing and any resources they may need while isolating (this can be done by helping them schedule a PCR test online and by referring them to a state operated COVID-19 line)

Applicants for **Option B** must also:

- Agree to recruit a minimum of 25 people each week who are willing to be tested for COVID-19 during the 12-week program (note: they do not need to be the same 25 people each week) (further note: one extra week is budgeted for startup and orientation)
- Agree to track and submit data weekly using an online reporting form supplied by RIDOH
- Agree to educate people about COVID-19 tests using scripts and materials that RIDOH provides
- Agree to help those who have tested positive access PCR confirmatory testing and any resources they may need while isolating/ waiting for that result (this can be done by helping them schedule a PCR test online and by referring them to a state operated COVID-19 line)

## **Project Design—please include these elements in Project Narrative**

Each 12-week project must be designed by the applicants to effectively reach the cultural or affinity populations that they currently serve. Applicants must identify the specific cultural, affinity, or faith-based populations they will reach via their **Neighborhood Testing Mini-Grant project** and demonstrate that they have existing relationships with these populations.

In your one page project narrative, please also propose scheduling and staffing that will appeal to your own stakeholders, members, or communities.

RIDOH will fund well-designed projects that improve access to testing for inequitably resourced and under-vaccinated families and communities, particularly projects serving high-risk populations in high-density communities. Three categories of organizations are eligible to apply:

- ✓ **Faith-based community organizations or places of worship**: includes churches, temples, mosques, congregations, meeting houses, religious societies or alliances, charitable organizations with religious affiliations, and other types of faith-based communities that have 501c3 tax exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service.

- ✓ **Cultural communities:** includes, but is not limited to, communities advocating for the differently-abled, indigenous communities, ethnic cultural communities, interfaith communities, and sexual and gender minority communities
- ✓ **Affinity-based communities:** includes, but is not limited to, public housing authorities and their residents' councils, recreation groups, scouting, advocacy-focused entities, arts organizations, professional associations, neighborhood associations, and community gardens

Applicants may propose *any reasonable, safe, culturally affirming strategy* to perform the required scope of work that they feel will best reach and empower the communities that they serve.

**Successful applicants must affirm that they will include all the required public health strategies listed in the Scope of Work, above, into their projects.** Projects that do not include all the required public health strategies will not be funded.

## Project Period

The approximate project period is projected to be **January 3, 2022** through **March 25, 2022** (12 weeks, plus one week for orientation). RIDOH reserves the right to extend or shorten the project period as needed to achieve its goals. Projects will officially begin on either January 3, 2022 or on the date when a purchase order is issued to authorize the work. Successful applicants will be notified. Applicants agree to be flexible about project implementation date.

## Selection and Scoring Criteria (see also Review Criteria, below)

1. **Organization's demonstrated ability to reach and engage the specific cultural population(s) it serves, and its capacity to do the project it proposes, as described in the one-page Project Narrative. (25 points)**
  - Do you have enough staff or volunteers to succeed? Who will supervise the work?
  - Who will you reach through your project? How many people can you test each week? How likely is your proposed project to reach your intended audience?
    - Ability to reach your community can be demonstrated by describing the populations you serve; sharing website link; and/or briefly describing the organization's history of success with similar past projects.
  - Will you be able to complete the work you propose?
    - Capacity to complete this project can be demonstrated by describing your plans for success and the people in your organization who have agreed to do the work. We will consider scale and available human resources in awarding points.
  - How supportive is your community likely to be in helping you reach your goals?
    - How strong is your relationship with community leaders and others who influence the people who you propose to test? Will they help promote the program to those who may need to be tested?

1a. **Bonus Points:** Tell us about your past success with COVID-19 testing at your site (up to 10 bonus points): If your organization has helped to test people for COVID-19 in the past, how successful were you? Tell us about your prior successes.

2. **Organization's ability to begin weekly testing rapidly, as described in your one-page Project Narrative** (up to 25 points)

Plans for speed in starting your project, and setting weekly goals counts for up to 25 points.

- How quickly will you be ready to start your project? (You must begin within one week of receiving your **Neighborhood Testing Mini-Grant** purchase order)
- Did you provide a timeline?
- We will require you to **report your outcomes using a simple weekly reporting form**. You should budget 15 minutes per week for reporting. This is included in the staffing budget.

3. **Overall program impact/merit** (up to 50 points)

- How significantly will this improve access to COVID-19 testing in your HDC?
- How much do the communities you serve need this testing service?
- How likely is it that your program will achieve the goals you established?

## Timeline

- ✓ **Deadline for applications is 11:59 p.m. on Friday, December 2, 2021.**
  - **Applications received after the deadline will not be reviewed.**
- ✓ Successful applicants notified at time of purchase order issuance.
- ✓ Project close date: March 25, 2022 (unless RIDOH extends this date)
- ✓ Final reports and invoices due to RIDOH: by April 10, 2022

## Reporting

Successful applicants agree to submit their weekly activities report online to RIDOH using a simple reporting form at a link supplied by RIDOH. An online link will be provided.

## Number of Awards

Up to 12 mini-grant awards of \$4,375 each and up to 20 mini-grant awards of \$2,000 each will be awarded, depending on available funding and amount of funding requested. Up to \$92,500 will be awarded via this initiative.

## Other Considerations

### Budgeting:

- Indirect costs are **not allowed**. This includes fiscal sponsor fees, rent, and utilities.
- Alcohol, tobacco, drug, and firearms purchases are **not permitted**.
- In-kind match is strongly encouraged but not required.
- You don't need to budget for masks if you wish to use the masks that RIDOH will provide.
- Staffing will be compensated at the rate of \$15.00 per hour.
- The project budget for the option you select is **fixed**; your expenses cannot vary from it. You agree to this by applying for a mini-grant.

- Purchase of supplies (hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, PPE, cleaning supplies, etc.) are allowed, as is printing and copying.
- You must send RIDOH monthly invoices for your project unless you elect to invoice all at once after your project is completed.
- Please email any specific questions you may have to [CKelly.Smith@health.ri.gov](mailto:CKelly.Smith@health.ri.gov) before you submit your application.

**Service to High-Density Communities:**

- 100% of these mini-grants will be awarded to organizations with projects providing substantial support to residents of Central Falls, Cranston, East Providence, North Providence, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.
- Priority will be given to projects deemed likely to successfully reach populations with disproportionate levels of COVID-19 risk (such as people with disabilities, immigrant or refugee families, Latinx communities, sexual and gender minorities, homeless and housing insecure individuals and families, food insecure individuals and families, the uninsured and underinsured, etc.).

**These instructions do not count toward the page limit. You do not need to include these pages in your application submission.**

**Application Begins on the Next Page**



**Health Equity Institute**  
**2022 Neighborhood Testing Mini-Grant Program Application:**  
**Cover Sheet**

Agency Name:

Address:

City/ State/ ZIP:

Phone:

FEIN#:

Name of Official Contact Person for Correspondence Regarding this Application:

Official Contact Person's Email:

Please list each city/ town, ZIP code, or neighborhood where most of your work will occur:

Please **use the templates provided and do not exceed five pages** (including cover sheet and budget page—please ONLY include budget for Option A or Option B, not both). To be complete, your application needs to contain:

- Mini-Grant Cover Sheet (this page)
- Mini-Grant Application (forms on the following pages, including timeline)
- **One-Page Project Narrative (attach as a Word doc, or similar)**
- **One Page Budget: Choose Option A or Option B, and DO NOT CHANGE THEM.**
- **Signed and dated** About You/Your Organization sheet (last page of this application)
- Please also include: Signed W-9 form (2021) and a copy of your/ your fiscal sponsor's IRS 501c3 tax exempt status letter, unless you have received funding from RIDOH previously\*  
\*Does not count toward page limit

There is no need to include the guidance documents with your application.

**Deadline for applications is 11:59 p.m. on Friday, December 2, 2021.**  
**Materials received after that time will not be reviewed.**

Please email (preferred) or send your application to: [CKelly.Smith@health.ri.gov](mailto:CKelly.Smith@health.ri.gov)

Telephone: 401-222-7899

Funding is limited. RIDOH will not be able to issue awards to all applicants.

## 2021-2022 Neighborhood Testing Mini-Grant Program Application

*Please read through and complete each section below. Please refer to the above guidance to understand how your application will be scored.*

Name of Organization or Group Applying: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Your Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Ours is a:

**Faith-Based Community Organization or Place of Worship** Community Testing Project

**Cultural or Affinity-Based** Community Testing Project

1. Which option are you applying for?

\_\_\_ **Option A:** \$2,000 to **distribute at-home COVID-19 rapid antigen tests each week** and provide support and referrals to those who test positive, **or**

\_\_\_ **Option B:** \$4,378 to **host a weekly test site in your community** in partnership with a clinical testing service supplied by the State

2. Why do you feel that your project is needed in the communities you want to serve?

3. Who will your project serve, engage, or reach? Please be specific. Describe how many people will participate and benefit, their ages, cultural affiliation(s), etc.:

4. About how many people will you be able to test each week? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What areas of our state will your project serve? Please be specific—list neighborhood(s), cities/towns, county, or statewide (a bulleted list is fine).

**PLEASE ATTACH ONE-PAGE PROJECT NARRATIVE HERE**

## Public Health Strategies and Work Plan: Assurances (Signature Required)

Please complete the assurances below, then sign and date this form.

**We certify that we will use the strategies checked below in our Neighborhood Testing Mini-Grant project.** *Note: **All of these are required.** By signing, you are certifying that you will use them in your project. RIDOH will provide training, masks, and other resources.*

- ✓ **Be open to the public:**
  - Serve all members of your community who wish to be tested, without bias
- ✓ Provide your community with **weekly opportunities to get tested for COVID-19**
- ✓ **Help to schedule confirmatory PCR tests** for those who test positive
- ✓ **Answer basic questions that people may have about COVID-19**, and provide them with resources such as vaccine education materials
- ✓ **Encourage mask wearing**—give out masks that RIDOH supplies to your community

If we are funded, **we agree** to:

- ✓ Provide each of the above forms of assistance to the communities we serve via our project
- ✓ Submit our weekly progress reports on time, as required
- ✓ Invoice for our project monthly, unless we request a waiver
- ✓ Use the supply ordering system RIDOH has set up to order masks, etc.
- ✓ Submit all education materials we produce to RIDOH for a communications review
- ✓ Fill out the final report form when we complete our project.
- ✓ Coordinate efforts with our local Health Equity Zone, if requested by RIDOH
- ✓ Follow the public health COVID-19 guidance of the Rhode Island Department of Health.

**Signature of Organization Leader:**

**Date:**





**Health Equity Institute  
2022 Neighborhood Testing Mini-Grant  
Budget Template: OPTION A**

<b>Budget period: January 3, 2022-March 25, 2022</b>	
<b>Organization Name:</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Expense Category</b>	
<b>1. Staffing</b> (includes sub-contractors and/or volunteers with stipends)	
Staffing: \$15.00 per hour for 8 hours per week x 12 weeks	\$1,440.00
-Distribute test kits and PPE (regular pick-up hours), report to RIDOH weekly	
-Hang up posters around the neighborhood, reminder calls	
-Help people who test positive at home schedule their confirmatory PCR tests	
<b>Subtotal for Personnel:</b>	<b>\$1,440.00</b>
<b>2. Supplies</b>	
Hand sanitizer, wipes, PPE (RIDOH will supply masks)	\$ 250.00
<b>3. Printing</b>	
Copying (posters, handouts, COVID-19 resources or educational materials)	\$ 310.00
<b>Subtotal for Non-Personnel:</b>	<b>\$ 600.00</b>
<b>Total Amount Requested (\$2,000.00):</b>	<b>\$2,000.00</b>
<b>Matching/ In-Kind Contributions</b> (Goods or Services):	
<b>Total In-Kind Match:</b>	



**Health Equity Institute**  
**2022 Neighborhood Testing Mini-Grant**  
**Budget Template: OPTION B**

<b>Budget period: January 3, 2022-March 25, 2022</b>	
<b>Organization Name:</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Expense Category</b>	
<b>1. Staffing</b> (include sub-contractors and volunteers with stipends)	
<b>Test Site Staffing:</b> \$15.00 per hour for 8 hours per week x 2 workers x 12 weeks	\$2,880.00
-Help register people for COVID-19 tests during weekly drop-in testing hours	
-Hang up posters around the neighborhood, make reminder calls	
-Help people who test positive at home schedule their confirmatory PCR tests	
-Set up and break down test site (example: tables and chairs)	
<b>Promotion Staffing:</b> Stipends for volunteers who help with canvassing, phone banking, social media posts, email reminders, etc.	\$ 900.00
<b>Subtotal for Personnel:</b>	\$3,780.00
<b>2. Supplies</b>	
Hand sanitizer, wipes, PPE (RIDOH will supply masks)	\$ 378.00
<b>3. Printing</b>	
Copying (posters, handouts, COVID-19 resources or educational materials)	\$ 220.00
<b>Subtotal for Non-Personnel:</b>	\$ 598.00
<b>Total Amount Requested (\$2,000.00):</b>	<b>\$4,378.00</b>
<b>Matching/ In-Kind Contributions</b> (Goods or Services):	
<b>Total In-Kind Match:</b>	

## About You/ Your Organization

Name of Person Completing Application: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Number of Person Completing Application: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address of Person Completing Application: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Name of Organization Applying (this is the name on your W-9 form):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please check one:

The organization named above is applying for itself or for one of its programs

The organization named above is the fiscal organization for another applicant

Name of organization doing the project: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Organization's EIN: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Applicant Organization's Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Applicant Organization's Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number of Applicant Organization's Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Email of Applicant Organization's Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address of Applicant Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Website of organization doing the project: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact C. Kelly Smith at 222-7899. Applications must be emailed to [ckelly.smith@health.ri.gov](mailto:ckelly.smith@health.ri.gov)

**Deadline for application is 11:59 p.m., Friday, December 2, 2021.**

***Faxed applications will not be accepted.***

### **Commitment to Health Equity**

*The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) aims to advance health equity for all populations by working to eliminate health disparities, address the socioeconomic and environmental determinants of health, and ensure access to quality health services for all Rhode Islanders, including our vulnerable populations. For the past decade, RIDOH has made strides to improve population health outcomes and achieve Rhode Island's goals for [Healthy People 2030](#). However, disparities persist, and the latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that the average life expectancy has declined in the past few years. In addition, vulnerable populations (women, racial and ethnic populations, people with disabilities, and people with low socioeconomic status) continue to experience higher mortality and poorer overall health (as measured by incidences of chronic and infectious diseases, maternal and child health indicators, and behavioral risk factors) and disparities in access to medical and other healthcare resources.*

*RIDOH recognizes that to improve the health of all Rhode Islanders, we must address the physical, social, economic, and environmental conditions that drive health outcomes. This shift and commitment are reflected in [RIDOH's strategic vision](#).*