

**Environmental Public Health Tracking Network and Emergency Communications Mini-Grant
Application**

Summary

The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) is offering mini-grants of up to \$4,950 to organizations to support the development and dissemination of communications products that address preparedness for extreme weather events that have negative impacts on the public's health. RIDOH anticipates funding at least three mini-grants.

Background

Climate change contributes to extreme weather and climate-related disasters, such as periods of extreme heat, droughts, wildfires, flooding, and hurricanes. These extreme weather events and disasters can also indirectly and directly impact human health. For example, hurricanes and flooding can cause power outages that impact our ability to travel, communicate, and access needed healthcare resources. Winter weather can create conditions that lead to injuries, pipes bursting, and carbon monoxide poisoning. Extreme heat and cold can also cause illnesses like heat stroke, frostbite, and hypothermia. Some populations are at an increased risk for negative health outcomes caused by extreme weather events. These populations include older adults, young children, people who are pregnant, people experiencing homelessness, people with behavioral health conditions, people with lower incomes, people with limited English proficiency, communities of color, and refugees.

RIDOH Program Objectives

RIDOH's Environmental Public Health Tracking Network (EPHTN), Climate Change Program, and Center for Emergency Preparedness and Response (CEPR) would like to support the development of improved extreme weather emergency preparedness messaging and education resources. These resources should be accessible and meaningful to populations most at risk for negative health outcomes from extreme weather events in Rhode Island.

EPHTN and CEPR would like to work directly with interested HEZs and HEZ backbone agencies to co-create messaging and deliverables on this topic.

Proposed Scope of Work

The recipient will engage in a program with two components: Development of extreme weather preparedness messaging and communications products and an evaluation of the messaging and communications products.

Extreme weather preparedness messaging and communications product development

Each recipient will identify a specific priority audience in their community who is at risk of one or more specific negative health outcomes from a potential extreme weather event (e.g., older adults without air conditioning during a heat wave). Each applicant should:

- Define the audience, including demographic information or other important details;
- Define the health outcome(s) the project will address;
- Identify the weather events that can contribute to the risk of these health outcomes;
- Engage the members of the priority audience in message development and/or review.

Recipients will develop a series of plain-language, culturally appropriate key messages about the health outcome and weather event for their key audience. If necessary (i.e., if key messages are clinical in nature), RIDOH will coordinate review of proposed messaging by clinical subject matter experts to ensure that guidance is up to current clinical standards. In addition, RIDOH will provide messaging resources that have already been reviewed and approved for recipients to use.

Each recipient should develop a minimum of one communications product and identify planned methods for delivering the product to the community (e.g., flyers disseminated at community events, social media posts disseminated through trusted messenger accounts). People from the priority audience may provide recommendations about effective platforms for delivering the product to other community members. RIDOH expects the number of communications products developed to vary based on the project and proposed delivery channel. If possible, recipients will distribute the educational communications products to their community. RIDOH may be able to offer support for message distribution, should such support be needed.

Recipients are encouraged to translate communications products into the languages that are spoken in their communities. RIDOH may be able to offer support for translation, should such support be needed.

Example projects could include but are not limited to:

- A video (up to two minutes in length) showing how families can prepare for specific weather events (like flooding, power outages, and winter storms);
- Outreach materials and social media posts for young parents on building home or car emergency kits for infants and young children; or
- Educational materials for older adults about extreme heat and when to use air conditioning or how to access a cooling center.

Mini-grant funding may not be used for the following:

- Purchase of materials like air conditioners, heaters, or fans;
- Preparation, distribution, or use of any material related to lobbying, publicity, or propaganda;
- Direct funding of operating costs.

RIDOH suggests a four-month project period but welcomes alternative proposals that will enable organizations to achieve mini-grant deliverables.

Evaluation

- Recipients should document any feedback they receive from the community on the messages and/or materials developed prior to finalizing the materials.
- Each recipient should define how they will determine the success of the project, including number of community members reached and any actions taken as a result of the project when possible.

Proposed Deliverables

- A description of community audience, health outcome(s), and extreme weather event(s) the project will address
- Feedback on existing RIDOH messaging (RIDOH would also like recipients to provide feedback on messaging and communication channels that RIDOH will use to complement messaging and deliverables developed by the recipient. This feedback can be provided during check-in meetings or at another specified time that is convenient for recipient and RIDOH program staff.)
- Final materials and translations
- Distribution in your community
- Final report of development process, community feedback, and success metrics

Reporting Requirements

- A proposed project plan, including a detailed description of the audience, health outcome(s), and extreme weather event(s)—as well as a proposed timeline for the project, how the community will be engaged, and a proposed plan for outreach using the developed material.
- Recipients are expected to participate in regular check-ins with RIDOH. These check-ins may include review of materials and messaging by clinical subject matter experts, if proposed messaging is clinical in nature. The frequency of check-ins will depend on the length and complexity of the project and will be determined upon award.
- A final report that encompasses the process for developing the messaging and materials from brainstorming to final delivery. This report should include a summary of any input from the community during this process and specific feedback that helped shape the messaging and materials (including feedback to avoid certain language, etc.). The report should include a section that specifies how the material will be/was distributed in the community and, when possible, the number of people reached. RIDOH understands the challenges of measuring how many people take action based on educational projects and appreciates any effort the recipient makes to document or measure this component.

Timeline

To apply: Please submit the following documents to anna.tomasulo@health.ri.gov no later than **5:00 p.m. on Friday, July 12, 2024.**

1. Mini-Grant Cover Form
2. Completed mini-grant application (Pages 5-9)
3. Completed federal W-9 to verify non-profit status and ensure timely processing of the grant award.

Each applicant may submit only one mini-grant application. RIDOH anticipates funding at least three applicants during this mini-grant cycle.

Eligible applicants include HEZs, HEZ fiscal sponsors, and HEZ backbone agencies.

Please note that mini-grants operate on a reimbursement model. No funding will be provided in advance of the mini-grant activities and deliverables.

Finally, to receive a mini-grant, the selected applicants must be vendors in the Rhode Island Division of Purchases' "Ocean State Procures" (OSP) system (<https://ridop.ri.gov/ocean-state-procures-osp/osp-login>). You do not need to be registered in OSP to apply, but you do need to be fully registered in OSP (including having uploaded a current, valid and signed W9) to receive funds. It can take up to three weeks to register and have your registration approved. You can register at no cost.

Mini-Grant Cover Form

Applicant Name:

Address:

City/State/ZIP Code:

Phone:

Federal Employer Identification # (FEIN):

Contact Person:

Email:

Submissions should use the templates provided and not exceed five typed pages*. This includes the required forms noted below:

- **Mini-Grant Cover Form;**
- **Mini-Grant Application;**
- **[W9 Form.](#)**

Email application to: anna.tomasulo@health.ri.gov

*If you have questions about completing this application, please contact Anna Tomasulo at anna.tomasulo@health.ri.gov. All questions must be submitted in writing by 5:00 p.m. on **Friday, June 21, 2024**. Questions will be collected and made anonymous. We will share our responses with everyone no later than Friday, June 28, 2024. **Final application is due by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, July 12, 2024.**

Mini-Grant Application

Important: Please provide your response either directly within this template or in a separate document that follows the template structure, ensuring the application does not exceed eight (8) pages.

Section I: Agency Capacity (10 points)

Briefly describe your organization and its experience in developing, assessing, and disseminating communications materials and experience in conducting outreach, education, and/or assessment of environmental hazards (specifically, severe weather) and their potential effects on public health outcomes.

Section II: Personnel (10 points)

List the personnel who will work on the project and briefly describe their experience working in this area.

Section III: Project Scope (25 points)

Please provide a summary of the communications project you are proposing to implement. Please be as specific as possible. If the mini-grant funding is intended to support a smaller piece of a larger program, please include that context here. However, please be sure to specifically detail which aspects of the program will be funded by this mini-grant. Important details to include are:

- Your target population(s) and why you selected each population
- The health outcomes the project will address
- The weather events that can contribute to the risk of these health outcomes
- Potential challenges or opportunities that you might face during this work
- How you might include feedback from community members in the development and/or dissemination of the proposed deliverables
- Your plan for ensuring the materials are culturally appropriate and/or translated.

Section IV: Work Plan (30 points)

Explain your plan for completing the proposed project. Identify program activities and associated timelines. Describe how you will measure project outcomes and gauge success.

Please be as detailed as possible in listing steps and dates. Project timelines are flexible, but most projects of this nature can be completed in between four and five months. Please propose a timeline that works best for your scope of work/project.

Section V: Budget (25 Points)

Briefly describe your proposed expenses for this project. The maximum allowable budget is \$4,950. You can provide your budget in a table or in a narrative or both. Please do not exceed one page.