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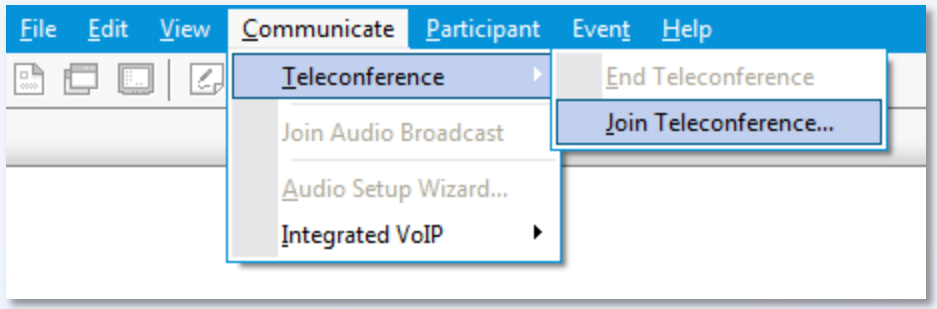

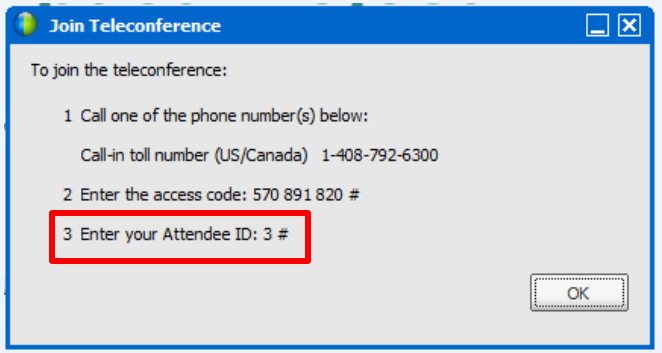

HEALTH IMPACT PROJECT

ADVANCING SMARTER POLICIES FOR HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

www.healthimpactproject.org

Health Impact Project

2011 Call for Proposals

"Screening" Web Conference

May 19, 2011

A collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts.

THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS

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Participants | Chat | Q&A

Participants

Name | Tools

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Burness Communications (Host)

Attendees:

Nick Seaver

Mute | Ask for Mic

Chat

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Q&A

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Ask: All Panelists

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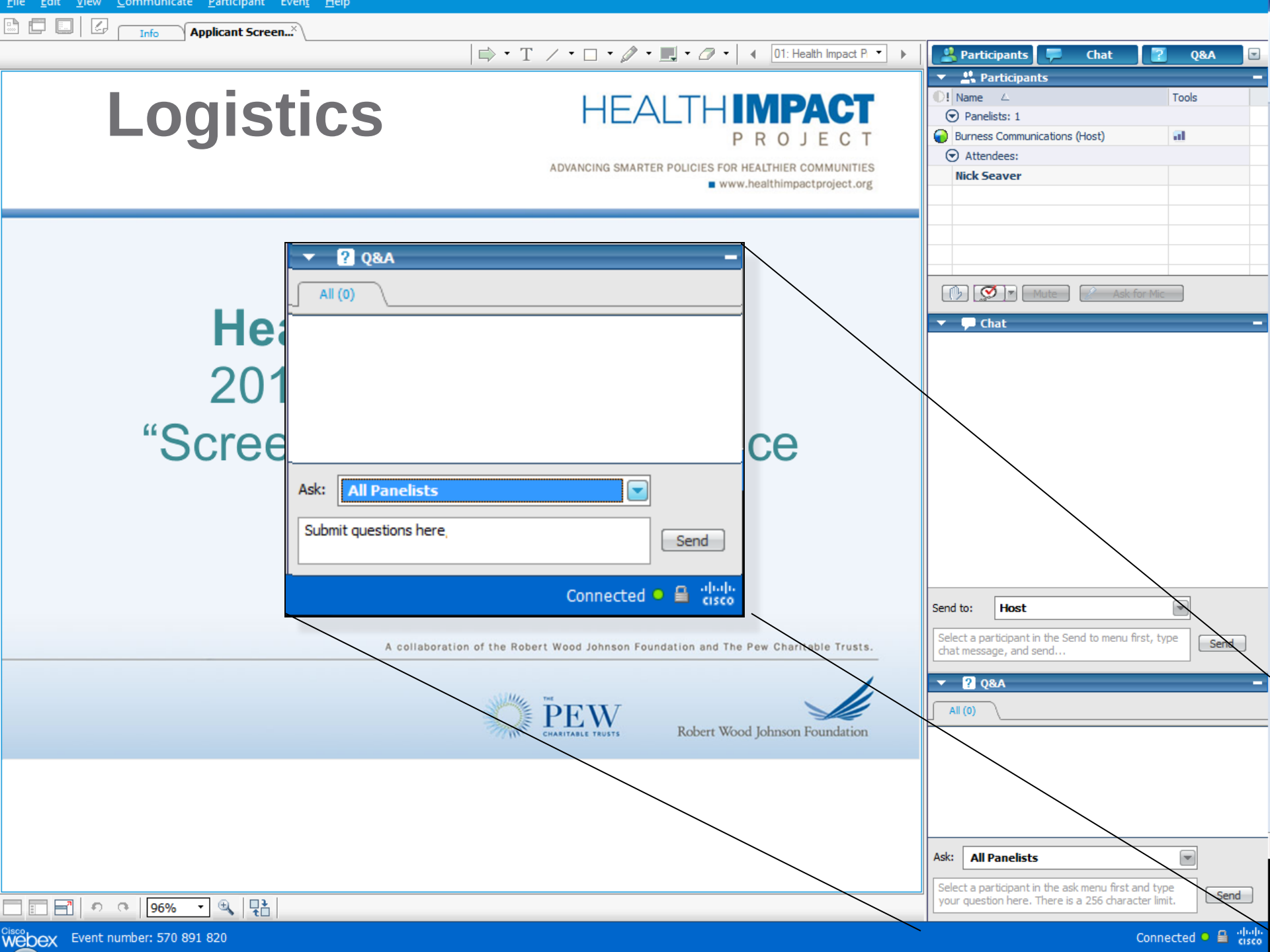
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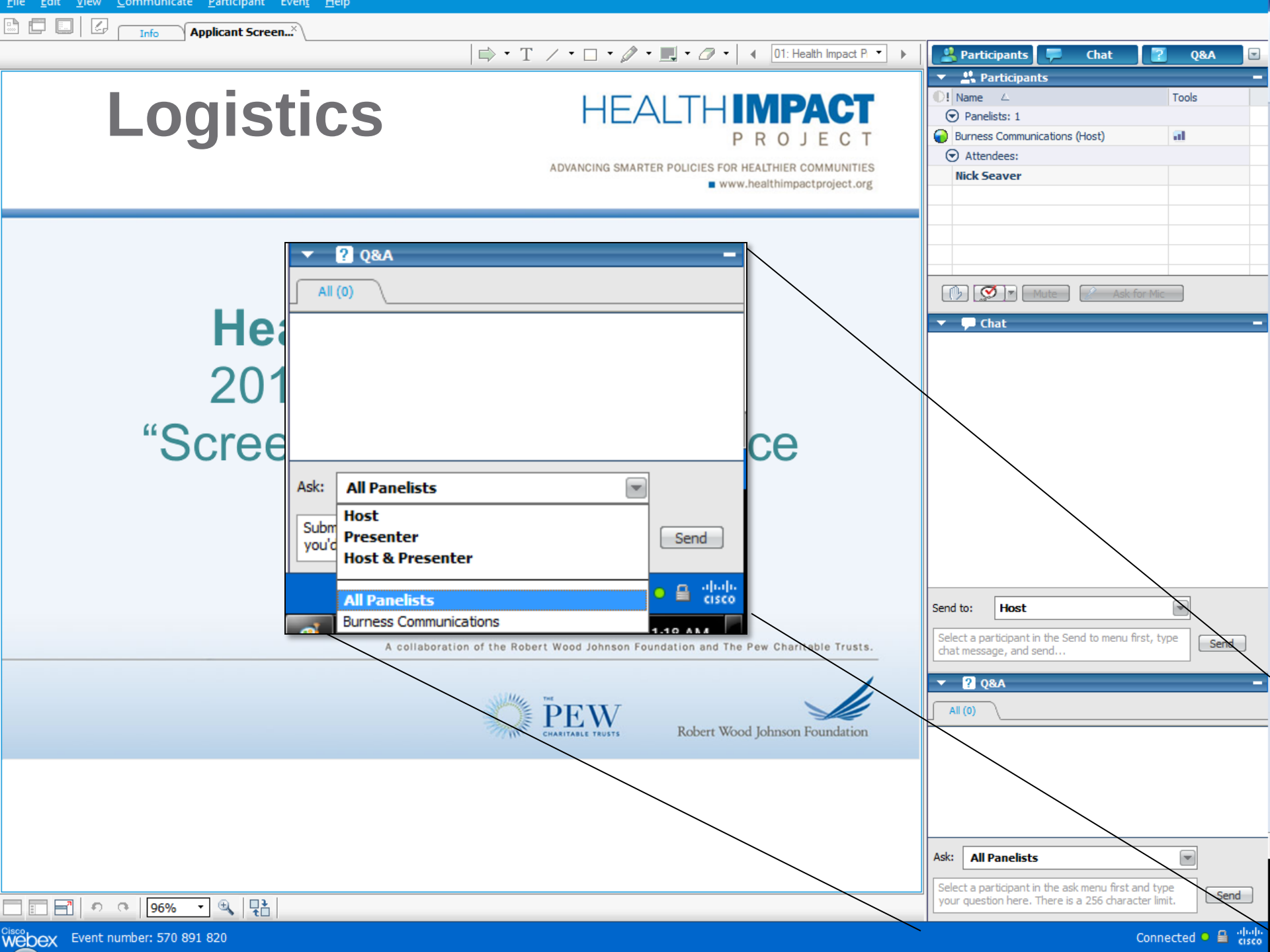
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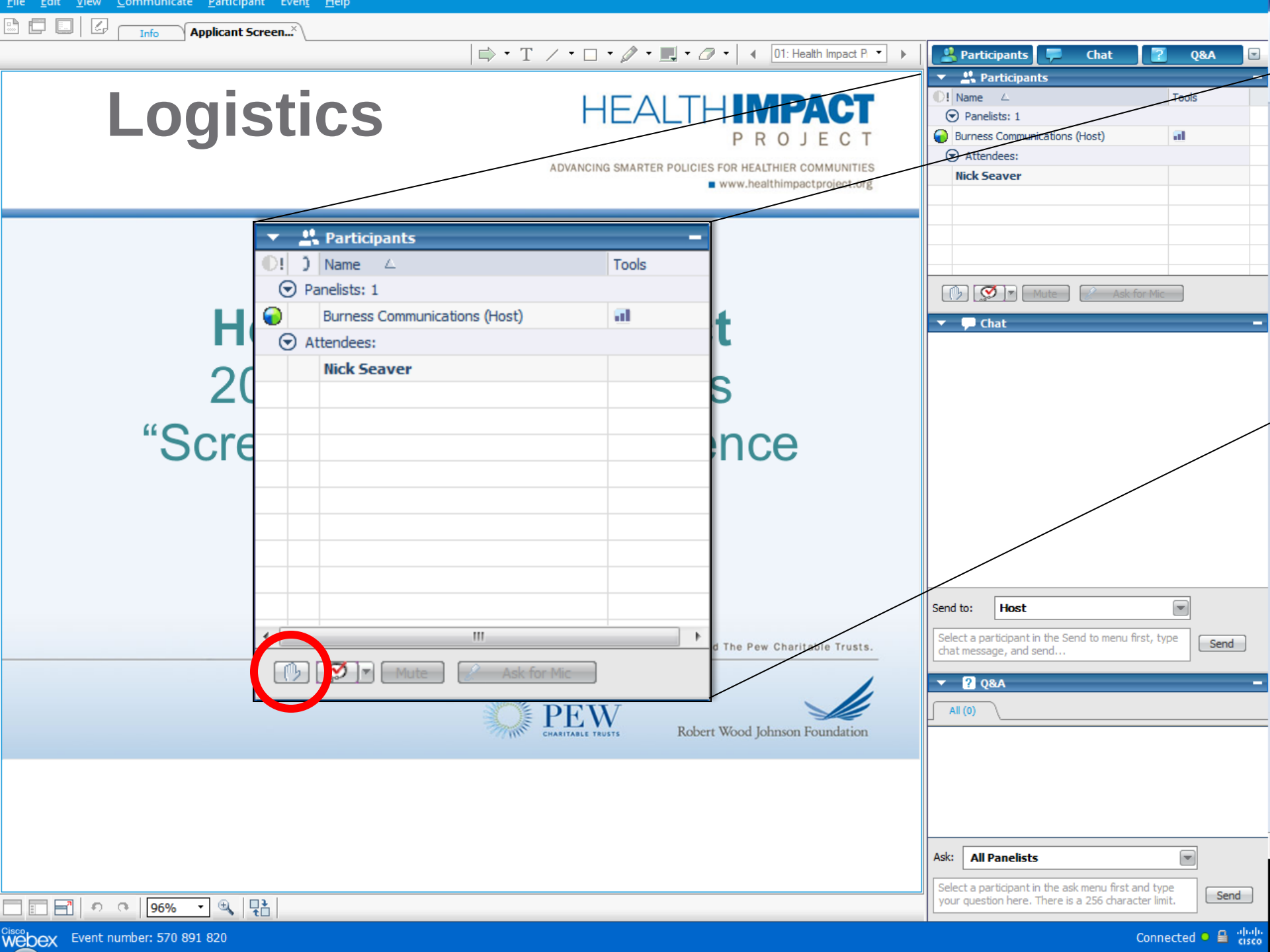
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Introduction

Aaron Wernham, M.D., M.S.
Director
Health Impact Project
The Pew Charitable Trusts

Kim Gilhuly, M.P.H.
Project Director
Human Impact Partners

HEALTH IMPACT PROJECT

Purpose of the Call:
Introduction to HIA Screening

- Brief overview of HIA
- Introduction to the HIA screening step
- Help applicants learn about how to identify appropriate targets for HIA through HIA screening
- Answer applicant questions about screening

The Health Impact Project:
A collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts

A national initiative to promote the use of HIAs in decision-making at the local, state, tribal and federal level.

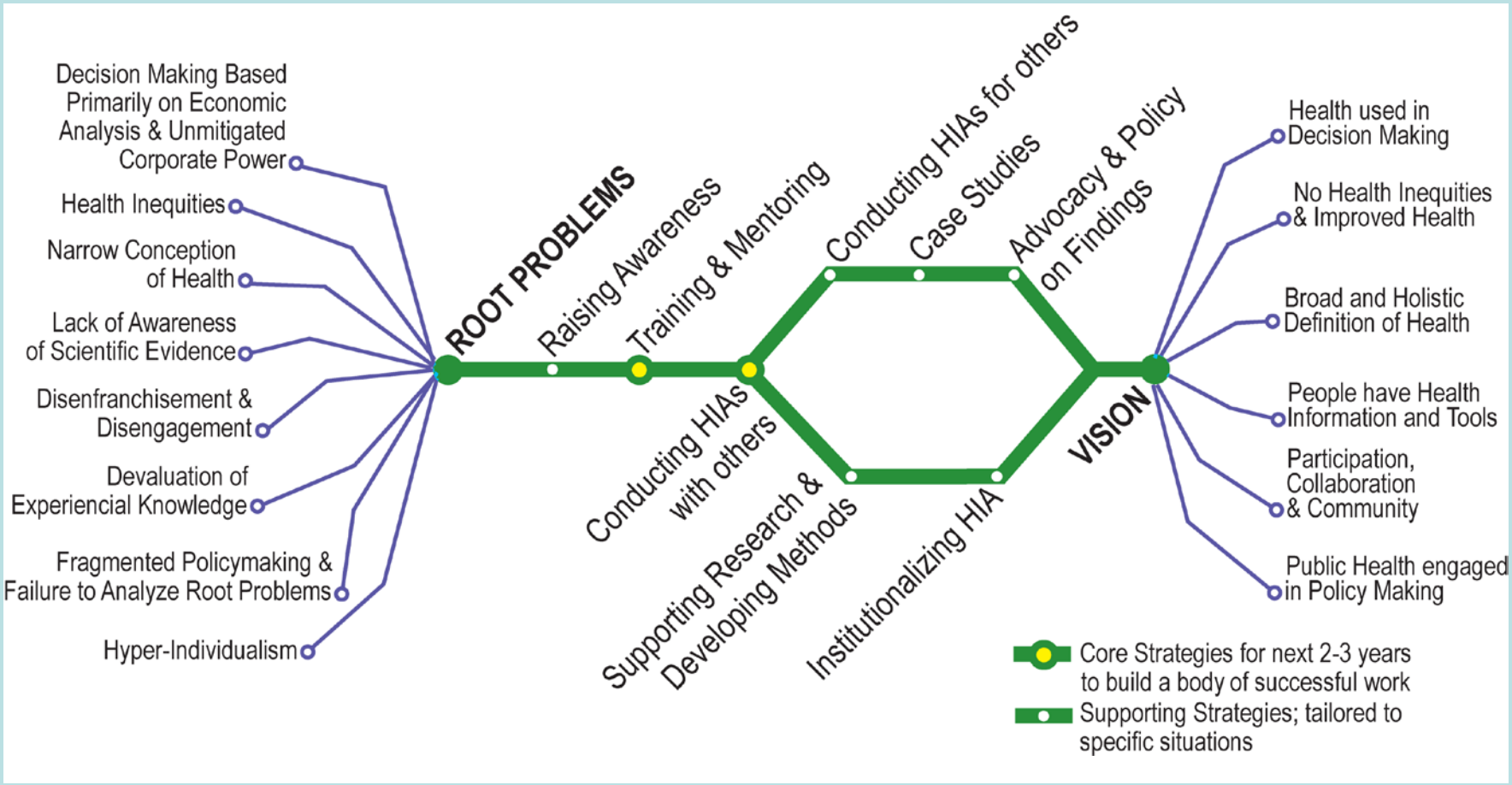
- Creating a national center to support the field
- Funding a series of demonstration projects that address real-time decisions on proposed policies, programs and projects at the local, state and tribal level

  → **see the CFP at www.healthimpactproject.org**
- Building a technical assistance network to support new HIA practitioners
- Completing two federal HIAs
- Review of existing laws, regulations and policies that might support the use of HIA

HEALTH IMPACT PROJECT

Human Impact Partners

The “subway” to our vision



Human Impact Partners - Goals

- Equity and justice
- Democracy and transparency
- Elevation of community voices
- Sustainability
- Improving health
- Reducing health disparities

Health Impact Assessment

HIA is a systematic process that draws on public health data, qualitative and quantitative methods, and stakeholder input to:

- identify the potential health effects of a ***proposed*** policy, project or program
- craft policy recommendations that minimize risks and capitalize on opportunities to improve health

Health Impact Assessment…

- Informs decisions that would not typically consider health and decisions for which the health effects may not be obvious
- Informs an ***active*** decision-making process: proposed legislation, permitting a new project, developing a regulation, etc.
- Looks at health from a broad perspective that considers social, economic and environmental influences (health determinants)
- Varies in terms of analytical methods, length and cost: fit for purpose – works within the timeframe for decision making
- Actively engages stakeholders (affected communities, decision makers, project proponents) throughout the process—builds relationships

Steps of an HIA

www.healthimpactproject.org/hia/process

Screening	– defines the decision that will be addressed – decides whether HIA should be done: is the HIA likely to add new information? Is it feasible?
Scoping	– develops framework for HIA: the important health effects, affected populations, available evidence
Assessment	– analyze baseline conditions – predict potential effects
Recommendations	– develop health-based recommendations and a feasible plan for implementing them
Reporting	–produce a report; disseminate the results (interim and final) to decision makers, public, other stakeholders
Monitoring & Evaluation	– HIA process; impact of doing HIA; outcomes of implementing HIA/decision

Screening questions: Deciding on a good topic for an HIA

- What specific decision will the HIA inform?
- Will the HIA be valuable?
  - Is the proposed policy, program, project or plan important to health?
  - Will it provide new information or uncover previously unrecognized health issues?
  - Are the connections between the proposal and health outcomes neither too obvious nor too distant/speculative?
  - Will health impacts be recognized or addressed without the HIA?
- Is the HIA feasible in terms of available resources (e.g., data, time, money, stakeholder interest and political will)?
- Can you complete the HIA in time to inform the decision?
- Can health-based recommendations be implemented within the legal or regulatory framework of the decision? In another way?

What makes a good topic for an HIA?

There are many possibilities!

- Education
- Transportation planning and projects
- Natural resource extraction and energy production
- Environmental engineering, ecosystem services and water-resources management decisions
- Energy policies
- Climate change
- Food and agriculture
- Housing
- Social, economic and labor
- Incarceration

These are examples: the CFP is not limited to these topics

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Examples of HIA topics

www.healthimpactproject.org/hia

- Alaska: environmental impact statements for federal large mine permitting decisions, and oil and gas leasing
- Massachusetts: state legislature's decision on funding for the Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program
- California: an HIA to inform development of Humboldt County's Growth Plan, commissioned by the County Health Department and supported by the Planning Department
- Baltimore, MD: HIA by the City Department of Transportation for a proposed new light rail project, the Baltimore Redline
- National: HIA by Human Impact Partners to inform congressional consideration of the Healthy Families Act (paid sick days)

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Examples of decisions addressed in HIA: Health Impact Project grantees

- An HIA in Chicago will address the state utility regulatory decision on a proposal by Commonwealth Edison to implement “smart metering” technology.
- Green River District Health Department will inform the planning and permitting process for proposed coal-gasification projects in Kentucky.
- A faith-based organization in St. Paul, Minnesota is undertaking an HIA of the city’s proposed zoning changes related to a new light rail transit line.
- The California Dept. of Public Health conducted an HIA to inform CA Air Resources Board’s rulemaking on carbon cap and trade.
- The Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health will inform the Department of Environmental Quality’s siting and air permitting for a biomass power plant.

The Kohala Center: Screening

*The HIA is being conducted on a proposed plan t*hat would guide future agricultural development on the island of Hawai‘i, and focuses on enhancing opportunities for expansion of the county’s agricultural industry.

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The Kohala Center: Screening

The Hawai‘i County Department of Research and Development is responsible for developing the plan, and is *interested in using the findings and recommendations of the HIA to shape the final version of the plan.*

There is sufficient time to conduct the HIA before county officials adopt a final version of the plan.

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The Kohala Center: Health Impacts

- Hawai‘i County is the site of 63% of farmland and 40% of existing farm employment in the state so the effect of agricultural expansion on the island’s economy could be significant.
- State of Hawai‘i imports 85-90% of its food; potential impacts of the proposed plan include changes to: food security; economic stability; worker safety; environmental impact.
- Plan for engaging diverse stakeholders in the HIA process has been put into place.
- **The economic impact of increase in local food production has been part of the discussion, but health impacts of this proposed plan have not previously been evaluated.**

Health Impact Project: What screening-related topics bear on our decisions?

- We will fund organizations wishing to undertake an HIA. We will not offer general programmatic funding.
- Proposals that address only a single health issue (when there are others that could also be important) will generally not be considered.
- Proposals that focus solely on clinical health care issues will not generally be considered.
- Funding for proposals focused on land use planning decisions is likely to be quite competitive.
- We will not consider proposals addressing “transit-oriented development” (specifically, decisions relating to neighborhood planning in the area of new light rail stops).

Partnerships

- We strongly encourage partnerships between organizations such as public agencies, universities, nonprofits and community groups, and new relationships between public health organizations and decision makers or stakeholders outside the health sector.

Basic Screening Questions

Health considerations:

- Are there potentially important health effects?
- Is health already a primary focus of the decision?
- Are there community concerns that are health-related?
- Would the decision have an impact on vulnerable communities?

Decision-making context:

- Can you do the HIA within the timeline for the decision?
- Does the legal/regulatory framework for the decision allow a consideration of health? Actions to address health effects?
- Do you think there are solutions to the important health effects?
- Can you convince decision makers to pay attention to the results?

Practical:

- Do you have the time, staffing, resources and expertise needed?

HEALTH IMPACT PROJECT

Screening Examples

Using the screening questions and selection criteria, we will look at some examples of topics that did not seem ideal for HIA.

Example 1:
Does the HIA inform a proposed decision?

Scenario: A school district wants to better understand the health impacts of the *recent re-siting* of its elementary school.

- **Why *not* do an HIA?** This HIA would not inform a *proposed* decision. In this case there is no decision to influence, as the decision to site the school has already been made.

Example 2:
Is there a decision-making body?

Scenario: A project team at a nonprofit organization is developing a new initiative to combat childhood obesity for presentation to their board.

- **Why *not* do an HIA?** "Decision-making body" generally refers to a public entity – a legislature or public agency; it does *not* refer to an organization's leadership or the organization's own programmatic decisions.

Examples 3 and 4:
Is health "already at the table?"

Scenario: A hospital is considering a new policy to serve healthier foods.

Scenario: A state legislature is considering a new program to provide health care to unemployed and uninsured community members.

- **Why *not* do an HIA?** Decision makers will likely already be considering how these proposals will impact health. Therefore, it is less likely that the HIA will provide new or important information/ insight on previously unrecognized health issues.

Examples 5 and 6: Will the HIA provide an impartial, science-based appraisal of risks, benefits, tradeoffs and alternatives involved in the decision?

Scenario: A community group proposes an HIA to show the benefits of increasing affordable housing in order to convince local officials to increase affordable housing.

Scenario: An environmental advocacy organization proposes to conduct an HIA to show the health risks of a proposed power plant. The organization has a prominent public campaign to stop the power plant from moving forward.

- Applicants should plan an HIA that will provide a balanced and credible consideration of alternatives and use the assessment to weigh the risks and benefits for health.

Example 9: Is the proposal idea a community risk assessment, a needs assessment, evaluation, or baseline health assessment?

Scenario: A local housing agency will evaluate which of its programs have the greatest benefits for health.

- HIA is not the same as evaluation.

Example 10: Is the HIA feasible in terms of timing and resources?

Scenario: A local health advocacy organization wants to conduct an HIA on next month's decision to locate a proposed WalMart distribution center in their county. Over the past two years that this decision has been debated, they have not had any luck getting decision makers to pay attention to concerns about health impacts.

- There may not be enough time to conduct an HIA before the final decision about this proposal will be made. Additionally, decision makers may be less open to considering HIA findings and recommendations so late in the process.

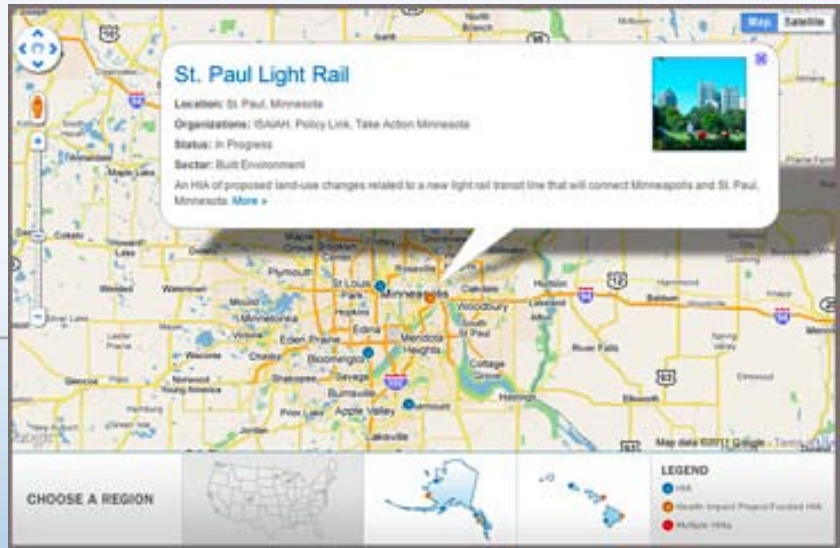
Resources

www.humanimpact.org

- Screening Questions
- HIA Readiness Questions
- Screening White Paper

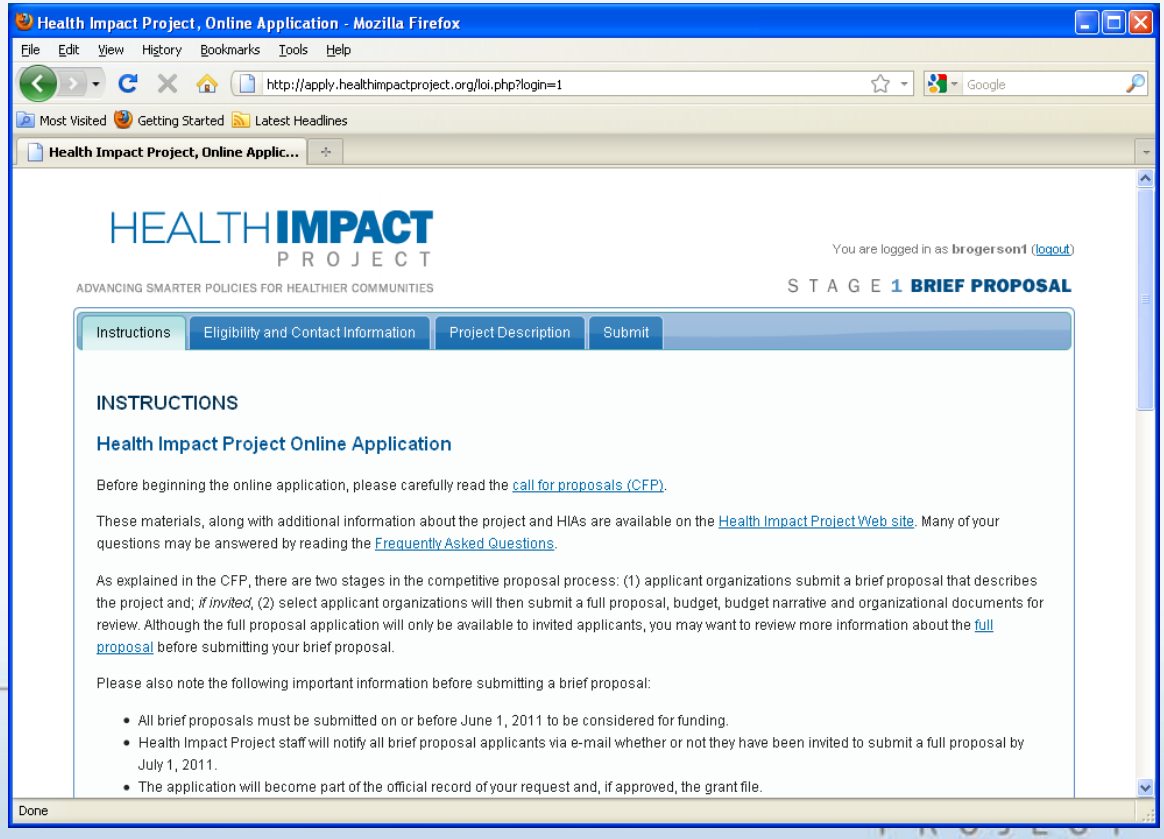
www.healthimpactproject.org/hia/us

- Review completed and in progress HIAs



Application Process: Getting Started

- Proposals **must** be submitted through the online application system: http://apply.healthimpactproject.org



Questions?

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