

## Community Opioid Response and Evaluation (CORE) Project

### Frequently Asked Questions – **UPDATED AUGUST 14, 2019**

The following are answers to questions received from the Request for Letters applicants. If you still have questions not answered in this document or experience difficulties with the application system, please email [COREproject@pewtrusts.org](mailto:COREproject@pewtrusts.org).

#### Grant Application Portal

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IF YOU ALREADY CREATED AN ACCOUNT AND REGISTERED IN THE ONLINE SYSTEM,

[LOGIN AGAIN](#), OR: [https://pewtrusts.force.com/FGM\\_Portal\\_CommunitySignin](https://pewtrusts.force.com/FGM_Portal_CommunitySignin)

#### First time users:

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You will need to register in the [grants portal](#)\*, this will take you to a Pew login screen. Click “**New User?**” under the blue “Sign In” box. You will then be prompted to enter general organization information.

(1) Registration Screens

Step 1: organization name and contact information (only apply as an organization)

Step 2: address information for grant correspondence

Step 3: set up username and password

*Be sure to note your username and password, you will need it each time you access the web portal. By default, the application will pull the part of your email address before the “@” sign and place this in the username field. However, you can change it to any combination of letters and numbers under 20 characters in length.*

(2) Once all data has been entered you will receive an acknowledgement screen directing you to proceed to your email inbox to open the confirmation email and use the registration link to finalize registration.

(3) Next, click on the link in your registration confirmation email.

(4) Before navigating away from the confirmation page, click on the “Go to Login Page” button.

(5) Log in using your newly created username and password.

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\*[https://pewtrusts.force.com/FGM\\_Portal\\_CommunitySignin?retUrl=/FGM\\_Portal\\_CommunityCampaign?id=7010e000001GPzI](https://pewtrusts.force.com/FGM_Portal_CommunitySignin?retUrl=/FGM_Portal_CommunityCampaign?id=7010e000001GPzI)

### **Can I register in the system before I'm ready to submit?**

Yes, the application system includes an Instructions and Applicant tab – you can login and out until you're ready to upload the final letter and submit.

### **I registered and logged into my account but all I see is a blank dashboard?**

Make sure you are using the [correct link to return](#) to your application. If you use the first-time applicant link you may unintentionally create two accounts.

## **Community Applicants**

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### **What is a community applicant?**

The community entity responsible for the program that will be evaluated.

### **What is an evaluation partner?**

The evaluation partner should be an individual or organization that will work closely with the community applicant to develop and execute evaluation activities for the lead community applicant's existing program.

### **Who should submit the letter of interest and application – the community applicant or the evaluation partner?**

The lead applicant, or the community entity in charge of the program to be evaluated should complete the online application and submit the letter of interest.

### **Can applicants submit more than one *letter of interest*?**

No, lead applicants are limited to submission of one letter of interest and those invited to phase II full proposal will also be limited to one proposal submission.

### **Is this funding opportunity open to any organization interested in applying or by invite only?**

The CORE project is an open application – any interested, eligible organization is welcome to submit a letter of interest.

## **The CORE Project**

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### **What is meant by community-research collaborative?**

A community-research collaborative is comprised of the two main groups to conduct the program evaluation: the lead community applicant and their evaluation partner.

**How do we know if our program is “one geographically-defined community?”**

Given the diversity of programs, we assign no specific parameters for this term, but there should be some explanation in the letter of interest as to the area(s) and population(s) the program serves. The program should not encompass communities at opposite sides of the country, but we recognize many programs include regions of more than one state, or multiple counties – these potentially constitute geographically-defined communities.

**Is there a specific population size or minimum number of participants required?**

No, there are not set parameters. For purposes of the letter of interest, it is expected the narrative will describe preliminary data or information (including population size and participants).

**What if my program targets opioid use disorder, but not exclusively, will the organization be eligible?**

While the primary focus on this project is opioid use disorder, we recognize that prescription or illicit opioid use is often in combination with other substances, and many programs address polysubstance use. Program descriptions should explain the target population and substance use issues involved – but are not required to solely focus on opioids to be eligible.

**Can you elaborate on the suggestion that social determinants of health be addressed?**

The lack of specificity around addressing determinants of health was intentional, we are interested in understanding how your organization(s) and program integrate the factors that influence health. We loosely define determinants of health as the social, economic, and physical conditions that influence the health of people and communities. These conditions are shaped by the amount of money, power, and resources that people have, all of which are influenced by policy choices. The determinants of health affect social and economic factors such as education, employment, and community safety as well as physical factors like housing, transit, and air quality.

**Are there specific qualifications or criteria required for the evaluation partner?**

No, qualifications and abilities of the evaluation partner are left to the applicant’s discretion. Ideally, partners have program evaluation experience.

**Does the evaluation partner have to be external to the organization? Can they be an existing employee or contractor?**

The evaluation partner must be external to the lead applicant organization. In some instances, contractors who have worked with the applicant organization may be acceptable if they have not been involved in the specific program intended to be evaluated.

**Does the lead organization determine the evaluation criteria, or is it in collaboration with the evaluation partner? Does Pew advise and/or provide a set of criteria and protocols to evaluate?**

The evaluation plan and criteria should be developed collaboratively between the partners. Pew and the external evaluation advisor will provide guidance to grantees on developing and refining program evaluation plans.

**Are there restrictions to apply regarding how my program is currently funded?**

No, grant awards are not restricted based on funding sources. However, it is the applicant organization's responsibility to ensure that participating in the CORE project would not conflict with any limitations related to the organization's existing funder agreements.

**Is there a list of previously funded programs under this funding or is this a new project?**

This is a new funding announcement, currently there are not programs in the project.

## **Budget**

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**How much can I request for this project? What is the grant period?**

The CORE project will award grants of up to \$500,000 (per community) for evaluations of existing programs to be completed within two years (24 months) of the grant award.

**If invited to submit a full proposal and ultimately funded, what is the funding start date?**

While no exact start date has been determined, we expect grant awardees will be notified in December with funding beginning in the first two months of 2020.

**How are indirect costs defined? What percentage is allowable?**

Indirect costs funded by Pew are limited to ten percent (10%) of salaries and benefits for staff at the grantee (lead) organization allocated in the grant. Salaries and benefits of the evaluation partner would be considered part of the subcontractor line item.

**Can funds be used to cover costs of hiring an individual that would be directly involved in the program?**

Funds may be used to support staff time, potentially new staff, for work related to the evaluation of the program. Those invited to submit a full proposal will be expected to justify planned expenditures, including staff time.

**Are participant incentives, such as gift cards, allowed to be included in the budget?**

Funds may be used to provide incentives such as gift cards. Additional details will be required in a budget description if invited to submit a full proposal. There are not defined guidelines on type or amount for incentives.

**If I am awarded funding through the CORE project, am I prohibited from seeking other sources of funding for the same program?**

No, we encourage grantees to leverage our funding and seek additional sources of support for their program.

**- END OF UPDATED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS -**

## **Eligibility**

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**What type of organizations are eligible for funding?**

Eligibility criteria is included in the [Request for Letters of Interest \(RLI\)](#).

**Are universities or academic institutions eligible to apply?**

Yes, a non-profit academic institution may be the primary applicant organization OR evaluation partner; however, connections to the community(ies) involved must be evident.

**Can an organization submit multiple proposals?**

No, only one proposal may be submitted per applicant organization.

**Can the primary applicant organization have more than one evaluation partner?**

Partnerships are encouraged, for purposes of this application and project, only one evaluation partner should be included in the proposal.

**Can multiple organizations use the same evaluation partner for this grant?**

Yes, organizations or individuals serving in the evaluation partner role can be listed on more than one letter of interest, if each letter of interest submitted is for a distinct project.

**Can my evaluation partner be an individual outside of an organization?**

Yes, evaluators can be individuals not connected to a larger organization.

**Do the eligibility requirements for applicant organizations also apply to evaluation partners?**

No, but if a subcontract or partner relationship is crucial to a program's success, it can sometimes raise issues that require additional financial and/or legal due diligence, such as when a for-profit entity is a key partner on a program.

### **Can I create a new program with the CORE grant funds?**

No, the intent of CORE funding is to *evaluate existing* programs. Applications that propose developing a new program will not be considered for award.

## **Application System & Process**

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### **What is the Letter of Interest application deadline and late submission policy?**

The deadline is **Friday August 30, 2019** by 11:59PM Eastern Standard Time. To be accepted for review, your letter must be completed and submitted by the deadline. No late submissions will be permitted.

### **Are there formatting requirements for the Letter of Interest phase?**

Yes, please refer to the Request for Letters of Interest for guidance. Letters should be a maximum of four (4) pages, single-spaced, 11-point Arial font, black type, PDF.

### **How do I know what to include in my Letter of Interest?**

There is a list of required responses found on the last page of the Request for Letters of Interest document. For ease of review, we ask that applicants number sections of their letter as they correspond to those questions in the directions. All responses are to be included in a typed letter that will be uploaded and submitted in the system.

### **Are letters of support required for this application?**

No, neither phase will require (or allow) submission of letters of support.

### **Can applications be saved and worked on later?**

You should click the "Save" button at the bottom of the screen before closing out of the system. Also note the system will not allow you to save a page if you have not completed required questions.

### **How will I know if I successfully submitted my letter of interest?**

You should receive an automatic confirmation from the application system once you submit. Please ensure that once you select the final file from your computer you press "Upload" for the file to be entered into the system.

### **Is it possible to see full proposal criteria?**

Criteria will be made available to applicants who are invited to submit a full proposal. The goals of this project will not change; however, full proposal criteria will include more specificity around expectations.

### **Can you be more specific as to what you consider to be an “intervention” and what constitutes “evaluation”?**

Pew is purposefully not defining what a community might consider an intervention in response to the opioid epidemic. Intervention in the broadest sense is care provided to improve a situation. As it relates to CORE, the spectrum of interventions from prevention to recovery will be considered. If applicants are confident that they have a potentially effective intervention—any approach or approaches that improve health as it relates to opioid use disorder—and an appropriate approach to evaluating (i.e., learning about the effectiveness of) the intervention, we strongly encourage you to submit a letter of interest.

### **What is your definition of equity and health equity?**

Though there are alternate definitions, we define them as:

**Equity:** Fairness and justice, with a focus on outcomes that are most appropriate for a given group and with a recognition of different challenges, needs, and histories.

**Health Equity:** Everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be healthier. This requires adequately addressing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.

### **How do you define innovative?**

We are open to various interpretations. The Public Health National Center for Innovations defines innovative ideas as those that are: often novel, new, or creative; reflect the dynamic state of change inherent in health transformation; occur by internal or cross-sector collaboration; have the potential to generate a new or improved means to create value; and lend themselves to adaptation, adoption, and diffusion.

### **What constitutes an existing program?**

While there is no set requirement for how long a program has been operating, it is expected that the program you intend to evaluate has already produced some preliminary, promising information or data.

### **How many programs will be funded under this opportunity?**

The CORE project will fund up to six (6) community-research collaboratives.

### **What is the duration of the funded programs?**

The grant awards are for two (2) years.

**Will the community-research collaboratives that are funded interact with one another?**

Yes, there will be frequent project communication through conference calls, an online platform, and annual convenings that representatives from all grantees are expected to attend.

**Does the \$500,000 maximum award include indirect costs?**

Yes, a budget estimate should not exceed \$500,000, and should include all indirect and direct costs.

**What is the role of the external evaluation advisor?**

The advisor is a contractor with expertise in program evaluation to support all the awarded community-research collaboratives evaluations, offer technical assistance, review deliverables, and create a final report encompassing all awardee evaluations. The advisor will meet with grantees in the beginning of the project to develop and revise evaluation plans and provide guidance throughout the project.

**How do I find an evaluation partner?**

For the Letter of Interest phase applicants need to either: describe their confirmed evaluation partner OR describe their plans for establishing an evaluation partner if selected for full proposal submission.

[The American Evaluation Association: Find an Evaluator](#) tool can be used to identify individuals available for evaluation consulting or to serve on evaluation teams due to specific expertise methodologies. Search options include by name, location, and keywords.

[Community Toolbox: Choosing Evaluators](#) provides information from the [KU Center for Community Health and Development](#) on considerations for choosing evaluators.

[Office of Justice: Guide to Hiring a Local Evaluator](#) offers pros and cons of using local academic, individual, or organizations for an evaluation.

**Does this Request for Letters of Interest require the submission of a detailed budget breakdown?**

For the Letter of Interest phase, only the estimated total requested budget amount is required. There are no requirements for additional budget details until the full proposal phase. When entering the budget request at the RLI stage, round up to the nearest hundred as opposed to estimating to the exact dollar amount.

Grantees should budget for up to two (2) individuals to travel to CORE annual convenings.

**How will I know if I've been selected for the full proposal phase?**

Applicants will be notified in October 2019 as to whether they have been invited to submit a full proposal.



**What can be expected if I am invited to submit a full proposal?**

For those applicants selected to complete a full proposal, additional details will be provided at the time of invite. Full proposals will be a maximum of ten (10) pages and include templates for detailed budgets, budget narrative, resumes, and timeline with deliverables.

**What is the anticipated start date for the awards?**

Grants will begin early 2020.