

Request for Applications ■ Deadline 5 p.m. Nov. 28, 2018**ABOUT US**

Interact for Health serves as a catalyst by promoting health equity through grants, education, research, policy and engagement. To amplify the impact of our work, Interact for Health focuses on three strategic priorities: reducing tobacco use, addressing the opioid epidemic and ensuring that children have access to health care through school-based health centers. We are an independent foundation that serves 20 counties in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana.

BACKGROUND**Evidence-Based Tobacco Policy Change Strategy**

While tobacco use across the United States has declined dramatically in the last two decades, Greater Cincinnati lags behind. Tobacco use is still one of the leading preventable causes of illness, premature death, lost productivity and health care costs in our region, particularly for low-income residents who have disproportionately higher rates of tobacco use.

As part of its strategic plan, Interact for Health has prioritized reducing tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke among low-income adults and youth in Greater Cincinnati. Over the next five years our work will focus on evidence-based tobacco policy change and innovation to reduce tobacco disparities. Interact for Health will lead change in these areas through funding and convening, coalition and advocacy development, messaging and education, and data, evaluation and learning.

Research shows that evidence-based policy changes have the biggest impact on decreasing

tobacco use rates and changing social norms and community culture surrounding tobacco use. Taking a long-term view and a population-based approach, tobacco policy efforts can reach large numbers of people and have a big impact on tobacco use, initiation and secondhand smoke exposure. In August 2018, Interact for Health launched its first *Evidence-Based Tobacco Policy Change Request for Proposals* with the goal of increasing the number of people in our region covered by evidence-based tobacco policies.

By the end of 2018, Interact for Health will fund seven grantees to work over the next few years to support evidence-based policy change efforts at the community level. The grantees will develop tobacco control coalitions, strengthen existing tobacco control coalitions, educate the community, build advocacy capacity to work on policy change, and carry out policy implementation and enforcement strategies. Based on best-practice models for tobacco policy work, grantees are focusing on one of two evidence-based tobacco policies:

- Increasing the minimum legal age of sale for tobacco products (grantees based in Ohio)
- Creating smoke-free workplaces (grantees based in Kentucky)

Interact for Health anticipates releasing the *Evidence-Based Tobacco Policy Change Request for Proposals* again in 2019 and subsequent years to fund additional grantees throughout its service area.

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Supporting Grantees through Training and Ongoing Technical Assistance

Advocacy and policy change efforts are complex, dynamic and often take a long-term approach. These efforts require leadership and organizations with a strong capacity to plan, coordinate and carry out effective advocacy strategies and monitor progress and the environment to make adjustments along the way.

To strengthen the advocacy knowledge, capacity and skills of the *Evidence-Based Tobacco Policy Change* grantees, Interact for Health intends to provide the following support:

- **Deliver an Advocacy Bootcamp** to build grantees' advocacy knowledge and skills.
- **Provide ongoing technical assistance** about advocacy and policy change topics as well as tobacco-specific policies.
- **Conduct an advocacy capacity assessment** to inform the design of the Advocacy Bootcamp and ongoing technical assistance as well as evaluate changes in advocacy capacity over time.
- **Work with each grantee to develop a work plan and evaluation plan** for their grant activities and outcomes.
- **Hold periodic grantee meetings and group technical assistance sessions** to allow for peer learning and education on relevant topics.

By supporting grantees in these ways, Interact for Health hopes to build on the strengths of our local communities and educate, inspire and cultivate strong local coalitions and advocates to work toward tobacco policy change.

DESCRIPTION OF SCOPE OF SERVICES

Interact for Health seeks applications from experienced contractors to help carry out the two activities outlined below to support the *Evidence-Based Tobacco Policy Change* grantees. The selected contractor will work alongside Interact for Health staff to develop, produce and deliver the

Advocacy Bootcamp as well as deliver ongoing technical assistance about advocacy-related and tobacco-specific issues.

ADVOCACY BOOTCAMP: The Advocacy Bootcamp is a pilot project that will occur during the first half of 2019 (likely beginning in February 2019) with up to seven grantees. Each grantee will be required to send a minimum of two and maximum of four people from their organization and/or coalition. While the bootcamp will be developed by the selected contractor in partnership with Interact for Health and informed by a grantee advocacy capacity assessment, possible training topics may include but are not limited to:

- Understanding the policy change process in your local community
- Developing an advocacy plan and defining roles
- Cultivating relationships with influencers and decision-makers
- Selecting and implementing advocacy strategies and tactics, including understanding the dos and don'ts of lobbying
- Developing effective media and messaging
- Ongoing learning and evaluation of advocacy and policy change efforts
- Understanding the unique aspects of advocacy for evidence-based tobacco change policies (e.g. increasing the minimum sale age for tobacco products, smoke-free workplaces)

ONGOING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: During and following the bootcamp, the contractor will serve as a resource and trusted thought partner to grantees about advocacy and policy change topics as well as tobacco-specific policies. This may include reviewing grantees' work plans and evaluation plans. Up to 20 hours per year of technical assistance will be offered to each of the seven grantees in 2019 (140 hours total for all grantees).

While an applicant can propose to carry out the full scope of services, the applicant may also propose assembling a team as part of the application to fill any gaps or bring in additional expertise needed to

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fulfill the full scope of services (e.g. if the applicant is not knowledgeable about developing effective media and messaging for policy work, then they could propose adding a team member who could cover this topic). Interact for Health can assist with filling these gaps as the development of the Advocacy Bootcamp is under way.

Additionally, while we anticipate working with the selected contractor to offer the Advocacy Bootcamp and ongoing technical assistance for multiple years and for additional grantees, we are interested in piloting and evaluating these grantee support mechanisms in 2019. Therefore, *applications should be submitted for a scope of services to be delivered in 2019 only.*

Interact for Health and its grant funding cannot be used for lobbying activities. Therefore, the contractor cannot provide services that can be defined as lobbying, such as offering specific advice to a grantee about which specific policymaker or decision-maker they should approach and how. Only general, strategic advice is permissible.

Preference will be given to local contractors.

Anticipated Deliverables

The anticipated deliverables in 2019 for this project include but are not limited to:

- Work with Interact for Health to use results from the grantee advocacy capacity assessment to design, produce and deliver a purposeful, right-sized and appropriate Advocacy Bootcamp.
- Conduct up to 20 hours per year per grantee of technical assistance.
- Document and communicate to Interact for Health the ongoing and overarching technical assistance needs, recommendations and lessons learned across the grantee cohort.
- Attend periodic grantee meetings and assist with group technical assistance sessions as needed.
- Develop materials used for the Advocacy Bootcamp and ongoing technical assistance.
- Contribute to any dissemination of the learnings and results of this project.

COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Interact for Health provides funding and technical assistance to 20 counties in Greater Cincinnati with diverse communities and is committed to expanding diversity (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation) among our vendors and consultants. Interact for Health values working with agencies that have experience working in diverse communities and whose potential staffing is representative of Greater Cincinnati's diverse population.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applications shall adhere to the following:

- Be up to six pages long, single-spaced (excluding the budget);
- Use a type font not smaller than 12 points, and
- Have margins of not less than 1 inch.

Applications shall include the following:

- An outline of a plan, key activities and timeline for meeting the scope of services and deliverables.
- The proposed approach to design, pilot and evaluate the Advocacy Bootcamp, including:
 - Assistance with developing and using a grantee advocacy capacity assessment.
 - Potential delivery format (e.g. three-day intensive training, full- or half-day series over five months, etc.).
 - Potential training topics including advocacy-related and tobacco-specific policy topics.
 - Training approach and facilitation style.
 - Any gaps in expertise that need to be filled in order to fulfill the full scope of services.
- The proposed approach for delivering ongoing grantee technical assistance.
- A brief description of the applicant's qualifications and past or current experience and capabilities, including:

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- Designing and delivering training about advocacy and policy change, tobacco control and/or related topics. Provide examples as you think they relate to facilitating the Advocacy Bootcamp.
- Working in Greater Cincinnati as applicable to the scope of services (i.e. knowledge of local- and state-level policy processes in Ohio, Kentucky and/or Indiana).
- The diversity of the individual and/or team, and their experience working with diverse communities and low-income populations.
- A proposed 2019 budget and justification (see the budget note below).
- A list of three current or past references.

Budget

Provide a detailed cost proposal and justification for carrying out the full scope of services for 2019 as outlined in this RFA, including for the Advocacy Bootcamp for up to seven grantees and ongoing technical assistance of up to 20 hours per grantee; travel specifically related to this project, and any other direct costs related to this project. List any in-kind services or other funding sources, if applicable.

The proposed budget for 2019 should not exceed \$35,000. Interact for Health does not pay administrative or indirect costs. Once a contractor is selected, a mutually agreeable budget based on the final number of grantees will be developed during the contracting process.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Completed applications must be submitted no later than **5 p.m. EST Wednesday, Nov. 28, 2018**. Please submit your application via email to Kelley Adcock, Evaluation and Research Officer, at kadcock@interactforhealth.org.

Interact for Health will review applications, conduct interviews with final candidates and select a contractor by mid-December 2018. Planning for the Advocacy Bootcamp will begin immediately thereafter.

QUESTIONS

For any questions regarding the application, please contact Kelley Adcock, Evaluation and Research Officer, at kadcock@interactforhealth.org or 513-458-6617.