

Marin Community Response Teams RFP Bidder's Conference

June 25, 2021: 11-12pm

Participants: Cicily Emerson (HHS), Kevin Lee (HHS), Kristen Gardner (Multicultural Center of Marin), Douglas Mundo (Multicultural Center of Marin), Alexa Davidson (San Geronimo Community Center), Michele McCourtney (San Geronimo Community Center), Kimberly Grady (Matrix Parent Network), Madeline Nieto Hope (West Marin Community Services), Socorro Romo (West Marin Community Services), Maria Medua (Canal Alliance)

Funding Introduction – Cicily Emerson

- Funding is through the Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Prevention and Control of Emergency Infectious Diseases (ELC), which runs from fiscal year 2021-22 to 2022-23, and comes from the Coronavirus AID, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.
 - In terms of the implementation for the grant, we want to work with vulnerable populations to ensure care navigation; to build capacity for infection control; to gain data use agreements so that we can have data sharing that allows us to quickly communicate with clients in times of emergencies; to continue outreach, education, and linkage to resources; and to coordinate with partners. While focused on COVID-19, this is also about building infrastructure and resiliency, and responding to public health threats.
- Total funding is \$990,000. Sole source of \$90,000 to VOAD, and remainder disbursed to zones – San Rafael and Novato each receive \$150,000 per year (\$300,000 over two years) and West Marin and Southern Marin each receive \$75,000 per year (\$150,000 over two years).
- We want a collaborative effort and would like to see a lead agency (who will receive 60% of funding) and will fund remaining 40% to zone partners to ensure participation.
- Currently planning for an August 1, 2021 contract start date.
- Plan for this RFP is to develop and build a structure where we can stand up a group of people in case of an emergency. Under this particular structure, the Public Health Division, emergency response, and communicable disease is under one umbrella; VOAD will act as the Roster Coordinator; a Senior Program Coordinator will be hired to serve as a backbone along with administrative help; and there will be the four zone lead agencies that then communicate with zone partners. Each lead agency will hold meetings within their respective zones and there will be HHS liaisons participating to help elevate concerns or questions to higher level decision-makers regarding funding or response.
- Zones will have rosters that lay out each partner's role and competencies that can then be stood up in the case of a emergency, with technical assistance provided as needed to ensure response including communications, health education, outreach, and services.
- Roster focuses on activities rather than agencies being responsible for particular response; agencies will be tasked with doing what they do well with training provided to fill existing gaps. This is to ensure quick mobilization of partners when needed. Roster approach will be held by the VOAD.
- We're also working on potentially having community zones do their own testing

Questions and Answers

- Can you clarify piece around lead agency and zone partners receiving a proportion of the funding?

- This means that lead agency will be responsible for doing subcontracts with other people participating within the zone. We are not asking lead agency to take on all these activities themselves; we're asking them to work with partners to leverage resources.
- And it is required that there is a percentage designated to partners in the budget?
 - Yes, you can identify who those partners are or just say "TBD." If there is a reason not to do it that way, we won't say no, but you have to provide some justification that there will be certain partners, but they don't want the funding.
- San Geronimo and West Marin Community Services is interested in applying together with one as the lead agency and the other as a subcontractor, but curious if there are other line items that should be directed to other partners who will be participating.
 - Yes, I imagine there may be others who would be interested in participating, and I would reach out to your partners. It may not necessarily be funding a person, but rather providing a stipend, and working with them on what participation looks like. What we really want is for a lead agency to be taking the lead on coordinating meetings and response with partners within their geographic zones, and who convenes, collaborates, and calls together the partners. Intention of this RFP is to continue some of the work that's been called upon by various funding sources, but create clear expectations of what the lead agency's role is so that work that happens with these various funding opportunities is distributed strategically.
- So would lead agency receive 40%?
 - No, 40% would be contracted out and 60% of funding will stay with the lead agency for staffing to do coordination and other activities.
- Is the indirect cost based on personnel and benefits or all costs?
 - Personnel and benefits.
- Are community health volunteer stipends an acceptable expense?
 - Yes, they are.
- Is 10% okay for an indirect rate?
 - Yes, it is.
- Is it possible to have co-leaders?
 - It's possible to have this, but you just need to provide a strong justification for how you will work together in the application. So explain the rationale for why you're co-leading and how you will work together, and who will be responsible for the day-to-day. For example, one agency may do the subcontracting and fiscal while another is running the meetings – just want to spell it out. We recognize that this may work directly across different zones so we want to be flexible, but this should be communicated in the application.
- Does this mean that two agencies can apply jointly, and the County would split the funds and send them directly to each agency? Or do we still need to have one agency apply and one agency be a sub-contractor?
 - Yes, one agency would apply and that agency would subcontract out to others. In this case where there is a co-lead and the funds are being substantially split between two agencies, it would be useful to have the subcontractor budget for whoever is the co-lead so that we can see the personnel.
- What happens after the funding is over? Will the County continue to support the funding? Is this only temporary for the next two years?
 - If we are successful, it will be easier to justify continuation funds, and there may be other funders who are interested in funding this. I think money will continue to be

available for public health response based on what we've seen with COVID-19, but I can't guarantee this. The idea behind this grant is to build the infrastructure moving forward whether we have the funding or not. The hope is that with this model, that when there are other funding opportunities that come up, the zones will be positioned to apply quickly and collaborate.

- How is the structure of this model different from what the VOAD is doing?
 - The VOAD is the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, and their role is to liaison with the Emergency Operating Center, maintain a presence, and be a conduit of information. The VOAD's role is not to do a food drive or organize a health education activity. They may elevate that as a need, but they're not operationally responsible for responding. The zones, on the other hand, are operationally responsible for responding. The zones, on the other hand, are operationally responsible for responding. VOAD will be the holder of the roster and communicate what's happening. The VOAD is a countywide convener and information-sharer while the zones are specific to a particular geographic area. This is why the VOAD will be participating in the activities with the zones.

RFP Overview – Kevin Lee

- Funding includes the \$990,000 across the different zones and VOAD from August 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023.
- Priority population is based one each zone, and within each zone, vulnerable populations using an equity-based approach should be described.
- Project is to build infrastructure of different zones to respond to recover from public health threats and emergencies.
- The lead agency is responsible for day-to-day coordination as listed in the RFP.
- Proposal should include strategies that address the core community response areas.
- The intended outcomes include increasing public health preparedness, public awareness and knowledge, infection prevention and control, care and service utilization, critical communication, and racial equity, and decreasing exposure to public health threats.
- Time schedule: Bidder's Conference (6/25), questions close (6/28), RFP deadline (7/9), application review (7/16), notification of intent to award (7/19), protest period (7/23), contract start date (8/1).
- Application instruction: cover page, applicant capability (introduction and executive summary, project approach, staffing, qualifications, sustainability, equity), budget, letter of support.
- Applications should be no more than 12 pages (not including letters of support and budget forms), and should be sent to Cicily Emerson at cemerson@marincounty.org.

Questions and Answers:

- Does the funding have to be split evenly across both years?
 - No, it does not. There can be start-up phase if a lead agency wants.
- For the communications pathway plan, is this based on an existing plan and is for communication with other organizations, to the community, or both?
 - Developing the communications pathway plan is not something that you need to do for the RFP, but what you'd have to perform as the lead agency. This includes both communications with partner organizations as well as with community members within the zone, especially since those who are often most vulnerable are the least likely to receive information. The plan should specify how people are being reached and how this is done in a timely manner.

- Do you want us to gather the letters of support as part of our application package emailed to you from us?
 - Yes, the letters of support should be included in the application.
- Can the stipends that go to community health workers be included as part of the 40% that go to subcontractors?
 - No, that would not count as part of the subcontractor portion. However, if you're working with an agency who does coordinate promotores, they could spend that money on promotores. The point is to build a network where not one agency is holding all the pieces and staff because we know that not everyone can do everything, which will only strengthen partnerships across our CBOs.
- We're based in the Canal and serve the Canal community, but part of the San Rafael zone. If we use an equity approach, how much of the San Rafael should be included in our focus?
 - There's an equity lens within the zones, but you want to make sure you talk about your ability to serve other parts of San Rafael. As an example, the highest COVID-19 rates are in central San Rafael and there are plenty of vulnerable populations who may live there or throughout other parts of San Rafael outside of the Canal. This is also where it's helpful to build relationships with other organizations throughout the zone.