Request for Letters of Intent

National Program Office for Re-designed Emerging Leaders in Public Health Initiative

The Kresge Foundation's Health team seeks an intermediary organization to be the National Program Office (NPO) for an updated version of its Emerging Leaders in Public Health (ELPH) Initiative. In partnership with the Kresge Health team, the NPO will finalize a new theory of change which will drive the redesigned curriculum components. The NPO will implement an updated curriculum; convene a multi-cohort and multi-site community of practice; and provide training, skills development, and capacity building support.

The NPO should have the existing infrastructure to manage grant funding, coordinate resources, monitor and provide technical assistance (TA) – in-house or through partnerships – and manage the process for selecting and providing grants to future cohorts of state and local governmental public health agency participants. The NPO will work with a third-party evaluation team identified by the Health team and participate in co-designing an evaluation for future cohorts of participants.

While the ELPH initiative has been successful, the rapid shift in and scaling of responsibilities for state and local governmental public health agencies during the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the public health workforce. It is vital to consider the new challenges public health departments are facing and what additional leadership skills and competencies are needed to successfully grow and groom governmental public health leaders for the future.

The ELPH initiative will leverage the successes of the previous cohorts while striving to improve the quality and content to meet the evolving challenges facing governmental public health leaders. The NPO will partner with the Kresge Health team to expand the breadth by:

1. Developing an explicit focus on leading with equity and supporting greater diversity and inclusivity among participants.
2. Emphasizing transformational change beyond the individual and organizational leaders by elevating the importance of community engagement for improving health.
3. Strengthening the focus on developing skills that align and support the cross-sector, collaborative, and strategic initiatives for public health departments and their leaders.
4. Supporting organizational change by providing TA to and training for health departments to increase capacity and expanded impact (e.g., data modernization, public health law, financial sustainability, and resource management).
5. Continuing applied learning opportunities with flexible funding to allow ELPH participants to hone their skills in real-time.
Background Information
The Kresge Foundation
The Foundation is a $4.5 billion private, national foundation headquartered in Detroit that works to expand opportunities in America’s cities through grantmaking and investing in arts and culture, education, environment, health, human services, community development and our place-based efforts in Detroit, Memphis, New Orleans and Fresno. The Foundation emphasizes multi-disciplinary intersectoral, high-engagement philanthropy that encompasses not only grantmaking and social investments but also strategic communications, policy and advocacy and field building activities.

ELPH Initiative
The ELPH initiative was launched in 2014 as a results-oriented leadership development program supported by the Kresge Foundation for teams representing public health leaders from governmental public health agencies across the U.S. Since its launch, three cohorts of governmental public health teams have participated. During each cohort, participants engaged in peer-to-peer learning and worked directly with technical experts on leadership skills development. Each team designed an action plan for their applied learning projects, received individualized and team leadership development support, and received a grant to advance their plan to transform their role in the community. Collaborative leadership skills were emphasized with a curriculum that focused on cross-functional strategic business alliances, innovations in population health improvement, entrepreneurial and upstream thinking to create new financing structures, and fostering a culture of shared learning and accountability in public health agencies.

Program Impact
Participants and alumnae have developed and strengthened competencies in business and strategic planning, health system economics and financing, population health and performance analytics, organizational leadership, and other key areas to effectively lead public health departments and community health improvement efforts. ELPH teams have had their most consistent impacts at the organizational level. In an evaluation, participants shared they were able to create new roles and changes in organizational culture. Finally, participants acknowledged that during the pandemic they were able to successfully apply adaptive leadership skills through the ELPH initiative as they developed their response and recovery efforts.

Request for LOIs
Overview of Application Process
We invite interested organizations to submit a LOI by or before 12 p.m. ET on June 15, 2022, to elph@kresge.org. Applicants should describe their organizational qualifications as outlined below and provide an overview of how they will approach partnering with the foundation to finalize the theory of change, co-design the curriculum, and develop and launch implementation activities. Applicants should include how they will collaborate with the foundation to select local health department participants for the next cohort in early 2023. Kresge will review the LOIs and invite well-qualified organizations to submit a full proposal to serve as the NPO. Full applications will be due by or before July 21, 2022, and we expect to announce the selection of an NPO by the end of August 2022.
Resources Available

The award timeline for the NPO is a maximum of three years (September 1, 2022, through September 30, 2025), with the option of renewal pending funding and programming priorities. Kresge is willing to allow for grants up to $1 million annually to support the NPO; this funding which is specifically for the NPO may be used to sub-contract specific activities with other partners. An additional $1.5 million will be included in the award to support a new cohort of health department participants (i.e., $100,000 per health department grantee with up to 15 sub-awards). Therefore, the total funding available is $2.5 million per year for three years or a total of $7.5 million.

Ideally, the NPO will meet many of the preferred skills and qualifications, however, the foundation recognizes that any single organization may not meet all of these specifications. In the LOI, applicants may describe whether they may need to sub-contract with other partners to meet some of the competencies that may not exist in-house.

Preferred Skills and Qualifications

Content Expertise

- Demonstrated experience in integrating equity and racial justice approaches in program design and implementation.
- Demonstrated success and experience in designing and implementing synchronous and asynchronous executive and management-level leadership training programs.
- Experience in designing, managing, and/or delivering TA resources and tools.
- Comprehensive knowledge of strategies to support organizational transformation, redesign, innovation, and quality improvement in state and/or local governmental public health agencies.
- Experience developing and implementing applied project-based learning models and methods.

Field knowledge

- Significant and successful engagement with governmental public health agencies and their staff.
- Expertise in integration of health equity in program design and administrative activities and programs within local and/or state public health departments.
- Understanding both the challenges and opportunities within governmental public health agencies in the current context.
- Active participation in national collaboratives that have developed key recommendations for the future of public health workforce such as the National Consortium for Public Health Workforce, Public Health Forward, Public Health Communications Collaborative, and/or CDC Foundation’s Lights, Camera, Action series.

Management and Leadership

- Extensive experience collaborating with philanthropy, governmental public health, communities, health care, and other sectors involved in community health improvement.
- Demonstrated effectiveness in promoting transformative leadership.
- Experience convening and facilitating peer-to-peer sharing through a community of practice.
- Demonstrated experience and infrastructure to support in-person and virtual multi-cohort-multi-site community of practice.
Experience creating an application process and criteria for reviewing applications and selecting participants.

Communications and Field Building

- Established connections with public health practice and public health leadership programs.
- Familiarity with different national TA resources available for state and local governmental public health agencies.
- Familiarity with how strategic communications can be used to partner with communities to inform policy and practice and enhance impact.

Information Required in LOI

Each LOI must include the following:

- An executive summary of up to 300 words.
- A narrative document not exceeding three pages (12-point type, 1-inch margins) that describes:
  - Organization’s mission and how it relates to serving as the NPO.
  - Specific examples that demonstrate experience serving as an NPO:
    - Collaborating with funding staff, TA providers and program evaluators to advance a theory of change.
    - Demonstrating experience managing or directing collaborative efforts that lead with equity for advancing health.
    - Staffing capacity and organizational infrastructure: dedicated staffing to support NPO activities and existing infrastructure to support multi-cohort and multi-site training, including, online platform and technology support to facilitate virtual convenings and learning sessions.
    - Designing an application process and criteria for reviewing applications and selection of participants for a community of practice.
    - Infrastructure and capacity to sub-contract collaborative partnerships, as needed.
  - Experience collaborating with governmental public health:
    - Partnering with state and/or local public health agencies to advance equity at the organizational level and in partnership with the communities served.
    - Active participation in national collaboratives that have developed key recommendations for the future of public health workforce such as the National Consortium for Public Health Workforce, Public Health Forward, Public Health Communications Collaborative, and/or CDC Foundation’s Lights, Camera, Action series.
  - Approach for developing a multi-year implementation plan:
    - Applying an equity lens for individual and organizational leadership development.
    - Integrating community-engagement principles that support advancing policy and programmatic activities aimed at achieving health equity (e.g., inside-outside strategies)
  - Partner engagement:
    - If you plan to collaborate with other partners, please describe their respective roles in your proposed approach, as well as the skills and competencies they would bring to the initiative.
The following information may be included as separate attachments to the LOI and therefore, they would not be included within the three-page limit.

- Names and qualifications of staff members and consultants who would lead and contribute to the planning and implementation activities.
- High-level budget estimate to support the NPO activities described above.
- The applicant’s 2021 operating budget.

All LOIs should be submitted via email to elph@kresge.org.

**Criteria for Reviewing the LOIs**

This opportunity is open to organizations doing applied-based leadership development and able to demonstrate experience managing collaborative efforts that lead with equity for advancing health in public health departments. We anticipate that competitive applicants will include specific examples of their work on transformative leadership development, leading and managing diverse communities of practice both in-person and virtual, and ideas for strengthening adaptive, equitable skills for public health leaders and departments.

**Tentative Timeline**

Through the LOI and RFP process, the Health team intends to support the selection of an NPO for the ELPH initiative. The proposed timeline for this effort includes the following:

- 9 a.m. ET, June 1, 2022 Release of LOI
- 12 p.m. ET, June 15, 2022 LOI deadline
- June 23, 2022 Invitation to submit full proposal
- 12 p.m. ET, July 21, 2022 Full proposal deadline
- August/September 2022 Funding recommendation
- September/October 2022 Grant Start Date

**Selection Criteria for NPO**

- Demonstrated experience co-designing and implementing transformational leadership development;
- Demonstrated experience managing or directing collaborative efforts that lead with equity for advancing health;
- Sustainable and high-functioning infrastructure for program management;
- Successful experience and expertise in delivering and managing TA and capacity building support for diverse learning communities;
- Experience in successful support of health equity focused initiatives with public health agencies (i.e., local, state, tribal, and/or federal); and
- Clear understanding of the context for local public health leadership to advance health equity in partnership with communities.

Please address any questions regarding this invitation to elph@kresge.org.