

Organizational Capacity Building (Emory University Rollins School of Public Health)

The Emory University Rollins School of Public Health COMPASS Coordinating Center is dedicated to empowering organizations that serve individuals living with HIV. Our mission is to foster sustainable change in leaders, organizations, and communities. We achieve this by providing strategic support and capacity-building initiatives; and strengthening the infrastructure of these organizations to enhance their long-term impact.

Through grant funding opportunities, we invest in innovative thinking, expertise, and the ability to address challenges that extend beyond routine operations. These grants serve as a catalyst for driving positive change.

We prioritize directing resources to organizations located in rural areas or recognized as service desert areas with fewer than 50,000 residents not adjacent to urban areas or urban clusters. To clarify, service deserts are regions with limited to no access to essential services. We are committed to promoting inclusivity by encouraging applications from organizations led by and/or serving marginalized communities. This includes same-gender-loving, cis, trans, and gender non-conforming people of color, African American women, and Latinx communities, among others. Together, we strive to create a healthier and more equitable future for all."

Focus Areas:

The Emory University Rollins School of Public Health COMPASS Coordinating Center offers applicants the opportunity to seek funding for organizational capacity-building activities in the following three focus areas:

- **Sustaining and Advancing Initiatives:** Supporting initiatives to maintain momentum, optimize resources, and adapt to changing needs.
- **Organizational Mentoring and Twinning:** Enhancing innovation and efficiency through collaboration across diverse organizations, fostering knowledge exchange, multifaceted problem-solving, and replication of best practices.
- **Community/Systems Level Interventions:** Promoting behavior change and reducing disparities by collaborating with other organizations in the community to create wide scale impact.

Applicants may submit proposals for one (1) focus area that aligns with their organization's goals and priorities.

Focus Area (1): Sustaining and Advancing Initiatives

Description:

This focus area is critical for the longevity and continuous improvement of initiatives that have already been set in motion. This focus area aims to consolidate gains from previous efforts, ensuring that the organization's resources are effectively utilized and that the projects continue to evolve and adapt to the changing needs of the community and stakeholders. By building on established foundations, this

focus area emphasizes the importance of maintaining momentum and fortifying existing structures and systems.

Projects funded under this focus area will be expected to demonstrate a clear plan for sustaining and enhancing their initiatives, highlighting a deep understanding of the project's current state, and outlining tangible steps for future development. Organizations must provide evidence of their project's past success and present a convincing case for its continued relevance and potential for positive impact.

Eligible organizations are encouraged to analyze their current projects, identifying areas of strength, and areas that require enhancement or modification. This may involve a reassessment of the project's goals, strategies, and implementation methods to ensure they are still relevant and effective. Additionally, organizations should consider the long-term sustainability of the project, developing strategies to secure ongoing funding, resources, and stakeholder support.

**Please note existing projects that are already funded are not eligible for funding; however, expansion of existing projects is permissible.

Projects may address one or more of the following areas:

- **Project/Organization Expansion and Adaptation:** Conducting comprehensive evaluations of current projects to identify areas for improvement, adaptation, or expansion. This may involve revisiting the project's objectives, strategies, and implementation plans to ensure they remain aligned with the organization's mission and the community's needs.
- **Resource Optimization:** Ensuring that the organization is making the most efficient use of its available resources, including staff, funding, and technology. This may involve streamlining processes, enhancing productivity, and exploring new avenues for resource acquisition.
- **Strategic Expansion Planning:** Developing a targeted strategy to strategically expand upon previous project achievements, aligning with organizational goals and community needs. This involves identifying opportunities for growth, securing necessary resources, and creating a roadmap to maximize the project's impact through strategic expansion efforts.
- **Knowledge Management and Dissemination:** Enhancing systems for capturing, managing, and sharing knowledge generated by the project. This may involve creating documentation protocols, developing training programs, and disseminating findings to relevant stakeholders.
- **Technological Enhancements and Innovations:** Identifying and implementing technological solutions to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and impact of the project. This may involve upgrading existing systems, adopting new tools, and exploring innovative approaches to service delivery.
- **Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement:** Establishing robust quality assurance mechanisms to monitor the projects or organization's performance and impact. This may involve developing performance indicators, conducting regular audits and evaluations, and implementing continuous improvement processes.

By focusing on Building and Sustaining Current Projects, organizations can ensure that their initiatives remain relevant, effective, and poised for future success, contributing to the betterment of the communities they serve.

Examples include, but are not limited to: Conducting a project review to identify areas of improvement; Expanding access to HIV testing and counseling services in underserved areas (not including use of funds for HIV testing materials); Strengthening partnerships with local healthcare providers for comprehensive care; Enhancing data collection and analysis for evidence-based decision-making; Establishing a disaster preparedness plan to ensure service continuity; or engaging in international collaborations to share best practices and resources for HIV/AIDS services.

Focus Area (2): Organizational Twinning and Mentoring

Description:

This focus area is dedicated to improving the operational capacity and effectiveness of organizations through partnerships with more experienced organizations. This focus area is based on the concept that hands-on learning and mentoring from a "twin" organization, one that has successfully navigated similar challenges, can significantly expedite an organization's growth. Applications are encouraged to detail twinning and mentoring approaches that foster organizational advancement and refinement.

The role of the twin organization is to act as an extensive mentor, sharing insights and advice based on their own experiences and achievements. This partnership allows the recipient organization to adopt and tailor these proven practices to fit their specific needs, enhancing their overall capabilities and replicating best practices in other emerging organizations or areas.

Projects funded in this area must explicitly outline how the twinning and mentoring relationship will concretely enhance the recipient's operations and service delivery. These projects should be committed to broadening the organization's impact, especially reaching new or underserved populations, and this expansion should be supported by the mentor organization's proven experience and success in similar endeavors. Additionally, it is crucial that the mentoring organizations receive only a small portion of the funds, with the majority allocated to the organization being mentored, to ensure that the primary focus and resources are directed towards the mentee's growth, development, and replication of best practices.

Projects may address one or more of the following areas:

- **Cross-sector Collaboration for Innovative Problem-Solving:** Encouraging innovative solutions through cross-sector partnerships, focusing on collaborative problem-solving and project implementation.
- **Resource Mobilization Strategies:** Focusing on innovative and effective strategies for resource mobilization, helping organizations to secure necessary resources through creative and sustainable methods.
- **Strategic Problem Solving:** Enhancing the organization's capacity in identifying, analyzing, and solving strategic problems and operational inefficiencies, thereby improving decision-making processes and strategic planning.
- **Strategic Outreach:** Developing comprehensive outreach strategies to effectively engage with communities, stakeholders, and potential partners. This includes a problem-solving approach to

identify and overcome outreach challenges, thereby expanding the organization's influence and impact.

- **Service Delivery Innovation and Enhancement:** Adopting best practices in HIV/AIDS care, including technological innovations like telehealth, to improve service quality and access.
- **Enhanced Public Health Strategies:** Exploring innovative public health approaches and integrating them into HIV/AIDS care and prevention strategies.

By engaging in Comprehensive Organizational Twinning and Mentoring organizations can significantly enhance their operational capacity, service delivery quality, and overall impact in the communities they serve. This approach encourages a more sustainable, resilient, and responsive organization, capable of addressing diverse community needs effectively.

Examples of projects include but are not limited to: Engaging in a twinning relationship for advanced training in HIV/AIDS treatment protocols and patient support services; Collaborating on the implementation of innovative peer support and community outreach programs for HIV/AIDS; or Learning from a mentor organization's experience in streamlining administrative and operational processes for enhanced efficiency in HIV/AIDS service delivery.

Focus Area (3): Community/Systems Level Interventions

Description:

This focus area concentrates on transforming community norms, attitudes, awareness, and behaviors to address HIV/AIDS-related issues and disparities at local levels such as cities, counties, or regions. The primary goal is to foster behavior change, improve health outcomes, and bridge gaps in health equity for individuals affected by HIV/AIDS within these communities.

To achieve this, projects must adopt a comprehensive strategy that extends beyond immediate health concerns. This includes tackling broader social determinants like socioeconomic status, educational opportunities, neighborhood and physical environments, food access, employment, social support networks, and issues of racism and discrimination. Such an approach ensures a more wholistic view of health and wellness in the community.

Moreover, these community level interventions necessitate collaborative efforts. This involves forming coalitions or partnerships with multiple organizations, where each entity brings its unique expertise, strengths, and resources. This collaboration is crucial for enhancing the efficacy and reach of the services provided. For funding eligibility, organizations must demonstrate robust collaboration, engaging with at least two other groups. These partnerships should not only highlight the unique contributions of each participant but also align closely with a shared, overarching objective. **The budget and workplan must thoroughly outline each organization's contribution.**

Projects in this focus area may address one or more of the following areas:

- **HIV Risk Reduction and Prevention Awareness:** Implementing targeted campaigns and initiatives to promote HIV risk reduction behaviors and raise awareness about biomedical prevention methods and available resources to prevent HIV transmission.
- **Support Service Provider Collaboration:** Establishing collaborations among support service providers to streamline and coordinate care for individuals living with HIV/AIDS, ensuring comprehensive and accessible services.
- **Equitable Decision-Making Processes:** Implementing transparent and inclusive decision-making processes that prioritize community input and involvement. This may involve establishing community advisory boards, conducting town hall meetings, and utilizing participatory budgeting methods.
- **Resource Mobilization:** Developing the capacity to secure external funding and resources to support community initiatives.
- **Innovative Strategies:** Exploring and implementing innovative strategies to address HIV/AIDS-related challenges, including the development of new approaches for prevention, care, and community engagement.

Community and Systems Level Interventions emphasize shared leadership, innovation, and equity. Proposals should engage small grassroots organizations and individuals from disproportionately impacted populations in the US South, fostering non-traditional HIV-focused partnerships. Through collaboration, inclusivity, and advocacy, organizations can drive lasting change, improve health outcomes, and reduce disparities, contributing to the broader goal of addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Examples include, but are not limited to: Advocating for policy changes to reducing bureaucratic barriers to accessing HIV testing and treatment; Establishing a transportation subsidy program to help patients reach healthcare facilities; Developing a centralized referral system to streamline access to HIV care; Addressing language and cultural barriers through diverse and culturally competent healthcare services; or developing a city-wide financial assistance programs for low-income individuals to cover healthcare costs.

Selection Criteria

Successful programs have successful proposals. The most successful applicants will demonstrate the following criteria in their proposal:

1. **Public Health Problem in HIV:** Articulates the public health needs in their community and/or priority population with respect to HIV and the social determinants of health, and how their organization mission intends to address those needs through evidence based or evidence-informed practices. *Answers the question: What is the potential impact of your organization on HIV in your community to justify our support of your organization?*
2. **Alignment to Grant Priorities:** Clearly explains how the priorities of this funding opportunity align with their organization's needs in one of 3 focus areas: 1) rural infrastructure, 2) alliance and partnership development, and/or 3) upstream (structural) intervention planning. *Answers*

the question: How does your proposal apply to our funding opportunity and to your community's health needs?

3. **Community Engagement:** Provides a list of community organizations or partners that will be involved or will be recruited in the project, if any, and the roles they will play. Discusses how the population being centered will be fully engaged throughout the project. *Answers the question: Do you have the right people, collaborative partners, and a ready community in place (or to be recruited) to be successful?*
4. **Reasonable:** Provides a realistic timeframe, staffing plan, and budget for the proposed project deliverables, and a commitment to measuring project implementation, outcomes and success. Focuses on a single problem or issue that the organization is facing that may be accomplished within the time of the 18-month period ending no later than December 31, 2022. *Answers the question: Is the proposed project reasonable as described in their plan?*
5. **Sustainability:** Describes a commitment to promote program efforts through this grant, a willingness to capture ongoing stories for sharing with Emory (and the larger COMPASS Initiative®), their organization, and community as appropriate, and plans to develop a long-term sustainability plan to include at least one future funding opportunity after this grant is complete. *Answers the question: Will funding this project result in a return on investment in HIV long term?*

At Emory COMPASS, we're committed to fostering projects that not only create immediate impact but also contribute to long-term sustainability. As such, we require all our Transformative Grant applicants to thoroughly discuss the sustainability of their projects beyond the grant period.

Budget Requirements

Projects will be funded via a sub-award from the Emory University Rollins School of Public Health COMPASS Coordinating Center. Grantees will be responsible for all grant reporting, evaluation, and identifying the point of contact for the award.

Budgets submitted with proposals should include any costs for consultation services and/or training for staff and leadership to address the focus area, any equipment that is needed to build the required capacity, staff time to implement the required changes within the organization, and any other items specific to the project being proposed. **Requests should not exceed \$100,000.**

Funding Limitations

The Emory COMPASS Coordinating center has the following limitations for funding for all focus areas:

- Funds may not be used to support the direct provision of medical services, including medical care provided directly to patients, or provided by an MD, DO, NP, PA, or PharmD who either (1) practices medicine with patients; (2) prescribes drugs to patients; or (3) dispenses drugs to patients.
- Funds cannot support the activities, equipment, or personnel of the medical care component of an organization (this includes HIV testing equipment).

- Funded organizations cannot distribute any grant funds to the medical care component of the organization.

Allowable expenses include, but are not limited to the following:

- Personnel expenses
 - Support for staff positions and/or consultants are acceptable requests under this funding initiative, however, these positions must directly support the proposed capacity building efforts and cannot replace partially funded or uncovered programmatic positions.
 - Fringe benefits
- Consultant costs
 - Consultants do not have to be identified at the time of application; however, they must be able to be on-boarded within 3 months of the initiation of funding. If an organization needs assistance with identifying a consultant, the Emory Center staff can serve as a resource.
- Meeting space
- Continuing education
- Mentoring/twinning visits
- Equipment and supplies
- Travel to implement the proposed project

Allowable activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Cultural Competency Training
- Health Equity Training
- Coalition Development Training
- Pilot and demonstration projects
- Replication/Expansion of successful interventions
- Public health capacity building
- Policy and statistical analysis in line with programmatic goals
- Strategic communications, including public/patient education
- Community engagement and coalition-building
- Program research and evaluation; and
- Indirect expenses of up to 10% of the proposed budget.

Note: Emory has the right to award an amount different from the funds requested based on the available resources.

Evaluation and Program Monitoring

Data-driven programming is central to the objectives of the Emory University Rollins School of Public Health COMPASS Coordinating Center (ECCC). Evaluation provides key data for us to learn from project implementation processes, develop organizational capacity, enhance community accountability, and identify effective practices. If funded, your organization will be required to work collaboratively with the Emory University Rollins School of Public Health COMPASS Coordinating Center and the initiative evaluator, ETR, to define and report on common evaluation indicators and performance measures. This

could include developing and/or revising evaluation plans, monitoring of evaluation plans for the entire grant cycle, completing quarterly reports and participating in qualitative interviews or completing surveys as requested by Emory.

Work plans and evaluation plans developed as a part of the grant application will be reviewed by the ECCC team and will work collaboratively with funded partners to make any required revisions.

Technical Assistance for Application Submission:

In addition to the grant orientation webinars, the Emory Coordinating Center staff will be available for questions and will host office-hours for TA requests related to the submission of proposals on . Additionally, webinar information sessions will answer questions and clarify requirements for the RFP's submission. Applicants may also send questions regarding the Transformative Grant application and RFP (Request for Proposals) to emory@gileadcompass.com.