



March 6, 2023

Community Linkages RFP Update

Thanks for your recent application to Better Health Together's Community Linkages RFP. We have some new information to share with you.

But first, a little context:

We designed this process to support our current and future work of connecting healthcare and social determinants of needs systems together. We were especially interested in community-based organizations and by/for organizations that connect folks to housing, food, transportation, and employment. We also know that in the next Medicaid Waiver, we will specifically be working with Medicaid beneficiaries who are youth and justice-involved.

We tried to be clear about what we were looking for to avoid sending mixed messages to our valued partners.

We also learned a ton from our last Community Resilience Fund, especially the power of a low-barrier application process and the importance of a presentation.

So, when we got **44 applications that totaled requests for over \$17m**, we thought we needed to stay the course and get to 14 presentations, meaning we would have to screen this set of applications down. We used the Letter of Intent and a rubric to get us to the previously decided number of presentations.

And then we told some of you that you didn't meet our threshold score. After we sent the email, we realized this didn't feel right to us.

We went back to our values. We value our partnership and want to continue in our aspirations to be an anti-racist organization. We can now see we had reverted to some characteristics that we actively try to work against: a sense of urgency, either/or thinking, and perfectionism.

It's important to us that we reconcile this.

To this end, we are expanding our Community Linkages to include a presentation for all applicants. We know that it's hard to tell your story in a short Letter of Interest, and we suspect that if you knew you'd be screened from the Letter of Interest, it might have affected how you wrote it.

This means that our process will take a bit longer. This means we will have more screeners than we expected. It doesn't change how much money we have, and we know there will still be hard decisions for our panelists to make.

This approach feels right to make sure there is equity in the process.

We are committed to partnership and relationship, even if we aren't a funder of your work. We want you to be seen, heard, and treated fairly.

If you are interested in continuing this process, please email Symetria@betterhealthogether.org and we will get you scheduled for a presentation.

If you are already scheduled for a presentation, no further action is required. Please know that our timing for final decisions will be pushed back to May 1.

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