FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Developing Core Competencies for Disease Intervention Professionals
# Table of Contents

- Objectives .............................................................................................................. 3
- Purpose and Background ......................................................................................... 3
- Scope of Work ........................................................................................................... 4
- Deliverables .............................................................................................................. 5
- Review Criteria ........................................................................................................ 5
- Funding ..................................................................................................................... 6
- To Apply ................................................................................................................... 6
- Notice to Applicants ................................................................................................. 7
FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Published: July 22, 2024

Funding Amount: One award up to $150,000

Project and Budget Period: October 1, 2024 – September 29, 2025

Eligibility:
This funding opportunity is available to CEPH-accredited schools and programs of public health who are members of the Association of School and Programs for Public Health Programs (ASPPH).

Award Mechanism: ASPPH anticipates making a subaward in support of Cooperative Agreement No. 5 NU50CK000612-03-00, Assistance Listing No. 93.318 awarded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)’s through Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) number CK20-2003 titled Improving Clinical and Public Health Outcomes through National Partnerships to Prevent and Control Emerging and Re-Emerging Infectious Disease Threats.

Timeline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application Opens</td>
<td>July 22, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Questions</td>
<td>July 22, 2024 – August 21, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intent to Submit Email Deadline</td>
<td>August 23, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Submission Deadline</td>
<td>September 13, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Period</td>
<td>September 16-27, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notice of Selection status</td>
<td>October 27, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Period</td>
<td>October 1, 2024 – September 29, 2025</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objectives

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to identify a CEPH-accredited, ASPPH-member school or program of public health to collaborate with in support of the CDC’s National DIS Certification Project. The aim is to develop the Core Competencies for Disease Intervention Professionals. Using the results of the forthcoming Disease Intervention Job Task Analysis and other existing and/or proposed resources, the subawardee will define core competencies – a consensus set of skills essential for Disease Intervention practice - reflecting attributes that public health organizations value in their staff. These competencies will provide a foundational framework for practice and academic organizations, supporting efforts to recruit, train, and retain the disease intervention workforce.

Purpose and Background

National certification programs are used to ensure the competence and proficiency of professionals. They can also significantly contribute to increasing the workforce and retaining employees. Certification provides a formal mechanism for employees to validate their competence, knowledge, skills, and abilities. It also demonstrates the professional has met and consistently adhered to nationally established standards, ensuring a high level of proficiency and professionalism.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in cooperation with the Association for Schools and Programs for Public Health (ASPPH) and the National Board of Public Health Examiners (NBPHE), is supporting the National DIS Certification Project by developing a voluntary disease intervention specialist certification program. The purpose of the DIS Certification is to improve clinical and public health outcomes through national partnerships to prevent and control emerging and re-emerging infectious disease threats. The project aims to:

- Standardize and validate knowledge, skills, and abilities of disease intervention professionals, increase quality and consistency of service delivery, support the recruitment and retention of a diverse disease intervention workforce.
- Recruit, train, and retain the disease intervention workforce and strengthen pathways from educational institutions to the disease intervention workforce and DIS Certification (2017 Final Report to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) prepared by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB).

Disease intervention professional is defined as any public health professional who conducts disease intervention activities, including, but not limited to, the following: person-centered interviews, collection of enhanced surveillance and community assessment data, partner services to include contact tracing, field investigation, directly observed therapy, field specimen collection, filed investigation in outbreaks and emergency preparedness, community outreach, collaboration with medical providers, and navigation of healthcare systems to ensure evaluation and treatment of people diagnosed with or potentially exposed to infectious disease.

Relevant program areas include sexually transmitted infections (STI), human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), tuberculosis (TB), hepatitis, and other infectious outbreak investigation and emergency
preparedness and response.

Implemented by the ASPPH Center for Public Health Workforce Development, the National DIS Certification project contributes to the CDC’s workforce capacity efforts to improve public health services provided to communities by DIS through a high quality, standardized approach to the professional development of this workforce.

Scope of Work
The selected institution will work in consultation with ASPPH and be responsible for completing the following scope of work (SOW). Routine check-in calls and monthly progress reports will be required throughout the project period.

Core competencies provide a framework for preparing professionals in a career field as well as for employers to recruit, train, and develop their staff. The selected institution will design and implement a study to develop national standards and core competencies of disease intervention professionals. ASPPH is focused on the following outcomes:

1. Assessment of the current education and training requirements of the disease intervention workforce
2. Systematic review and analysis of current job tasks and knowledge requirements for the disease intervention workforce (requires the use of the 2024 Disease Intervention Job Task Analysis survey results).
3. Publication of the Core Competencies for Disease Intervention Professionals using a health equity framework for a diverse DI workforce. The tasks for the study may include:

1. Review of the Current DIS Workforce:
   - Systematic Review:
     - Conduct a comprehensive review of the current Disease Intervention Specialist (DIS) workforce, using the soon to be released ASPPH Disease Intervention Workforce Environmental Scan Report, forthcoming results from both the National Coalition of STD Directors Disease Intervention Professional Enumeration Study as well as the 2024 Disease Intervention Job Task Analysis survey.
     - Applicants are encouraged to expand on these existing studies (e.g., explore innovative approaches to address gaps and challenges, novel methods to enhance workforce development, and emerging trends and needs of the DIS workforce).
   - Key Informant Interviews:
     - Interview DIS workers to gather insights on education, training, certifications, and core competencies.
     - Interview employers and agency personnel to understand educational requirements, certifications, and workforce development needs specific to DIS positions.
2. Scan of Hiring Agencies/Organizations with DIS Positions:
   • Job Classification Scan:
     o Examine job classifications of entities with DIS positions to identify educational
       requirements, additional certifications, and ongoing education mandates.

   • Comparison and Contextualization:
     o Compare core competencies within DIS workforce programs and public health
       concentrations such as biostatistics, epidemiology, infectious and communicable
       diseases, and informatics.

3. Leveraging Entry-Level Pathways and Promotion Trajectory Pathways to Increase Diversity of
   DI Practitioners:
   • Programs Scan:
     o Review existing DIS competencies and educational pathways, focusing on institutions
       serving underrepresented populations (e.g., historically black colleges and universities,
       Tribal colleges and universities).
     o Identify innovative modalities and additional skills offered in DIS curriculum/training to
       support career progression.

4. Stakeholder Engagement:
   • Facilitate/organize focus groups or workshops with key stakeholders to validate core
     competencies, gather input, and refine recommendations.

Deliverables
1. Reporting:
   Comprehensive report and Executive Summary including:
   a. Background
   b. Methodology
   c. Findings
   d. Core Competencies for Disease Intervention Professionals
   e. Recommendations for developing job descriptions, workforce competency assessments,
      workforce development plans, courses, curricula, and certification/credentials.

2. Slide Deck Presentation
3. Graphic or Visualization of Study Findings

Review Criteria
Applications will undergo an objective review. All applications will receive a compliance review for
eligibility and completeness by ASPPH Center for Public Health Workforce Development staff. A review
panel will evaluate complete, eligible applications in accordance with the criteria below (100 points total):

• 20 points: Demonstrated expertise in developing core competency models and performing
  workforce research.
• **20 points**: Demonstrated understanding of disease intervention practice, training, and certification.

• **20 points**: Demonstrated expertise and experience in conducting quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, including key informant interviews and focus groups.

• **30 points**: Demonstrated organizational capacity to complete the project.

• **10 points**: Budget to support proposed study work plan and outcomes.

**Funding**

All federal grant regulations apply to this funding, including Uniform Guidance 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200 as codified by HHS at 45 CFR Part 75 as well as the CDC General Terms and Conditions for No-Research Awards.

Funds may be used for salaries and benefits for staff engaged in the project, supplies, pre-approved project-related travel, office supplies, and communications. Funds are not intended to supplant state or federal funding. Funds may not be used for: lobbying activities; ongoing general operating expenses or existing deficits; items for which third-party reimbursement is available; endowments; meeting meals; or capital costs, including construction or renovation.

**To Apply**

Submit an application package to ASPPH via email (grants@aspph.org) that includes the following items:

1. Application Cover Sheet with the following information:
   - Institution name and address
   - Institution EIN and UEI number
   - Project Director name/address/email/phone #

2. Project Approach, Workplan, and Organizational Capacity - Format requirements are:
   - Maximum of 20 pages, each page numbered
   - One-inch margins
   - 1.5 line spacing

3. Budget/Budget Justification
   - Line-item budget and budget justification – No page limit and is not included in the Project Narrative page limit.
   - The budget justification must be prepared in the general form, format, and to the level of detail as described in the CDC Budget Preparation Guidelines.

4. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement if requesting IDC

5. Resumes or CVs for all proposed personnel.
All files submitted to ASPPH should be in PDF file format. Applications must be submitted to ASPPH via email at grants@aspph.org no later than 5:00 pm (ET) on September 13, 2024.

Please email grants@aspph.org with your intent to submit by 5:00 pm (ET) August 23, 2024. Send a brief email identifying the name of the institution, the contact person’s name and email, and the name of the project for which you intend to submit an application. This email is non-binding but helps ASPPH plan for the number of reviewers required based on expected applications.

Questions regarding the project can be sent to grants@aspph.org. Technical questions will be forwarded to CDC for response when appropriate. ASPPH will publish responses to all submitted questions on the Funding Opportunities website.

Notice to Applicants

ASPPH views the application process as a learning opportunity. Information from the applications will be shared in the summary format with our funding agency and ASPPH members to support learning and capacity building for the public health workforce.

Please be advised that ASPPH reserves the right to modify the terms of the RFP with reasonable notification to all interested parties. This RFP and any related discussions or evaluations by anyone create no rights or obligations whatsoever. ASPPH may cancel or delay this solicitation at any time at its discretion. Anything to the contrary notwithstanding, the subaward executed by ASPPH and the selected applicant, if any, will be the exclusive statement of rights and obligations extending from this solicitation. Applicants are further advised that all information submitted in response to this solicitation shall remain in the public domain.

This project is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award with 100 percent funded by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government.