
RFP Release Date: January 14, 2022

The COVID-19 pandemic not only shed light on the health inequities and disparities that have plagued marginalized communities for decades, but it also demonstrated how our community can come together in new ways to care for our neighbors in crisis. Let's capitalize on this moment and build a Greater Cincinnati Region where every person can achieve their best health.

The Health Policy Institute of Ohio (HPIO)'s *2021 Health Value Dashboard* reports that Ohio ranks 47 out of 50 states for population health. The driving forces of Ohio's poor health are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and structural racism and discrimination. Our 2021 Regional Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) identifies the most prevalent and untreated health conditions including cardiovascular, mental health and maternal health concerns. The CHNA also finds health disparities among populations most impacted by the social determinants of health and the underlying structural barriers that impact health.

The health, social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to affect the overall well-being of the community. According to the Census Bureau's recent (October 2021) Household Pulse Survey, many individuals are experiencing hardship across a wide range of metrics including loss of income, difficulty paying for usual household expenses, and symptoms of depression or anxiety. Black and Hispanic adults fared worse than White adults across nearly all measures, with significant differences in some measures.

In 2020 Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners and Cincinnati City Council passed legislation declaring racism a public health crisis. These declarations shed light on the current and historical ways racism and discrimination negatively impact health outcomes for communities of color. While these declarations are a critical first step to advancing racial equity and justice they must be followed by allocation of resources and strategic action.

bi3, Bethesda Inc.'s philanthropic initiative to transform health in Greater Cincinnati, is leading the way to a day when every person has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible; a day when a person's health can no longer be predicted by race, ethnicity, ability or zip code. To that end, we are inviting proposals for new ideas and approaches to transform health and reduce health inequities (differences in the distribution of resources) and disparities (differences in health status based on race, ethnicity, ability, etc.).

Grants will fund the planning, pilot and/or implementation of promising projects and initiatives with great potential to lead to ***sustainable systems and culture change that result in improved health***

outcomes and a reduction in health disparities. We are most excited for proposals that incorporate programs, partnerships and advocacy to address structural and systemic barriers. We will prioritize proposals that focus on reducing health disparities for the following populations: Black, Indigenous and People of Color; individuals with lower levels of education and income; individuals living with disabilities; immigrants and new Americans; and individuals without health insurance.

The deadline to submit a Letter of Intent is February 17, 2022, by 11:59 p.m. EST. This is a multi-stage, competitive process. All applicants must submit a Letter of Intent. All applicants submitting a letter of intent under this request for proposals are encouraged to attend an Informational Workshop (see Timeline below). A subset of applicants will be invited to submit a detailed proposal due April 21, 2022. An invitation to submit a proposal does not guarantee a grant award.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

Under the Building Health Equity Request for Proposals (RFP), bi3 invites proposals that address one of three funding priorities: Maternal and Infant Health; Child and Family Resilience; and Transformational Approaches to Address Key Priorities Outlined in the 2021 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). Again, populations of focus include those most impacted by health disparities: Black, Indigenous and People of Color; individuals with lower levels of education and income; individuals living with disabilities; immigrants and new Americans; and individuals without health insurance.

bi3 identified these priorities based on opportunities and needs elevated by our community. Below are just a few of the resources that informed the development of this RFP.

- The [Cradle Cincinnati 2020 Annual Report](#) recognized progress that has been made to address infant mortality, but also the need to focus on maternal health and well-being.
- The 2021 [Community Health Needs Assessment](#), produced by The Health Collaborative, incorporated both local health data and community feedback to determine the region's top health needs including chronic health conditions and mental health.
- Ohio's 2021 [Health Value Dashboard](#) published by the Health Policy Institute of Ohio, indicates that Ohio ranks 47 on health value out of 50 states and D.C. Ohio's low ranking is mostly attributed to the lack of action to address childhood adversity and structural racism and health disparities.

These sources, and others, have helped to identify the health conditions that must be addressed to improve the health of our community. To learn more about the resources that informed this RFP, please visit our website: bi3.org/building-health-equity-rfp-resources/

The funding priority areas for this request for proposals include:

Maternal and Infant Health

bi3 has been committed to improving infant mortality for the past decade. We aim to expand this work to include new partners and improve maternal health and well-being. We seek

projects that can lead to positive health and social outcomes for women, parents/caregivers and very young children, including building a strong foundation for children's healthy development and addressing the social determinants of health. Projects supported under this funding priority may seek to:

- Increase access to and expand services to support the prenatal and postpartum period
- Decrease maternal mortality and morbidity with a particular focus on cardiovascular conditions
- Decrease negative birth outcomes such as preterm birth and infant mortality
- Improve perinatal mental health and well-being

Child and Family Resilience

We seek to promote mental health and well-being for children and their families. We are particularly interested in efforts that seek to build resilience and prevent and mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Projects supported under this funding priority may seek to:

- Increase access and connection to prevention and supportive services
- Support and improve social and emotional skills and resilience
- Increase the availability of trauma-informed services
- Reduce Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and improve caregiver-child relationships
- Improve the mental health and well-being of families and/or build networks of support

Transformative Approaches to Address Priorities Outlined in the 2021 Community Health Needs Assessment

We seek projects that address the most prevalent health conditions and greatest unmet health needs as identified by the CHNA. We are especially interested in proposals that address the structural barriers to improving health identified in the CHNA, specifically: Limited diversity in the workplace, lack of cultural relevancy, lack of effective cross-sector collaboration and community distrust in the healthcare ecosystem. Projects should consider systemic barriers to improving health such as structural racism. Projects supported under this funding priority will focus on:

- Cardiovascular health
- Mental health
- Strengthening and diversifying the health care workforce pipeline, including building cultural competence and reducing discrimination through implicit bias training

bi3 recognizes the CHNA includes additional health priorities, however, we will only consider proposals that address the priorities listed above at this time.

Transformational systems change cannot be achieved through programming alone. We encourage applicants, where appropriate, to employ [bi3's IDEA principles](#) in designing transformative approaches to build health equity: Identifying and leveraging strengths, Driving cross-sector collaboration,

Emphasizing learning, and **Attracting** diverse leaders. bi3 is particularly interested in supporting efforts that:

- Center community voices
- Support the disaggregation of data to understand disparities
- Deploy equitable practices and culturally relevant services
- Implement evidence-based strategies and best practices
- Identify opportunities to engage in policy and advocacy to achieve systems change, including addressing systemic racism and discrimination.

Successful proposals will offer *innovative* approaches to address health disparities and achieve health equity. bi3 hopes to bring *transformative* thinking to life and accelerate change in our community.

TYPES OF GRANTS AND USE OF FUNDS

bi3 awards two types of grants:

1. **Planning Grants** may include support for formal research, needs assessment, and the identification of best practices to develop an implementation plan and/or a written business plan to guide future efforts. The purpose of the planning grant is to allow partners the time and resources to deeply understand a community issue, investigate and pilot solutions and develop a strategy to address it. Planning grants are typically one year and range from \$100,000-\$200,000. Successful planning grants may have the opportunity to apply for implementation support following the grant period but it does not guarantee future funding.
2. **Implementation Grants** support the start-up and/or scale of an initiative that has the potential to transform health; an idea that is fully developed and ready to launch but requires additional resources to execute, measure impact and build toward sustainability. Projects should have an articulated sustainability plan to ensure adequate resources are in place after the grant funding ends. Implementation grants are typically three years and range from \$1.5-\$3 million in total.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to receive a bi3 grant, organizations must:

- Be a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization serving the Greater Cincinnati area, including Hamilton, Butler, Clermont, Highland and Warren Counties in Ohio; Campbell, Boone and Kenton Counties in Kentucky; and Dearborn County in Indiana.
- Address health and/or the social needs and conditions that impact health outcomes
- Work toward reducing racial and health disparities

bi3 does not fund capital campaigns or general operating expenses, although reasonable administrative costs may be included as a percentage of the project budget. bi3 will not fund health care levies, lobbying or political campaigns, emergency requests, scholarships, endowments or grants to individuals.

In addition, projects where bi3 grant funding accounts for more than 40% of the total operating budget of the lead organization, will not be considered.

Bethesda Inc. is a co-sponsor of TriHealth and a support organization of Bethesda Hospital. As a result, bi3 values and encourages a collaborative partnership, when appropriate, with TriHealth. bi3 cannot provide direct grants to other healthcare systems. However, bi3 will consider collaborative projects that engage multiple healthcare systems including TriHealth.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Following the release of the RFP, bi3 will host Informational Workshops. All interested organizations are *strongly encouraged* to attend. The Informational Workshops will provide a brief overview of bi3's application process, a deeper dive into the RFP and the opportunity to ask questions. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we will be offering multiple virtual sessions. It is only necessary to attend **one** session. Registration is required. Please email Erin McDermott (erin_mcdermott@bi3.org) for the link to register. Please include your preferred session date and time in the email.

bi3 will follow a two-step application process: Letter of Intent and final submission of a Detailed Proposal. Respond to this RFP by submitting a Letter of Intent via bi3's online grantmaking system by February 17, 2022, at 11:59 p.m.

To access bi3's online grantmaking system:

Go to: www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=bethesda-inc

Previous applicants can use their existing password to log in. New applicants will select "Create New Account."

Once you log in or create an account, you will be directed to the Applicant Dashboard.

Click on "Apply" at the top of the page, you will be directed to the Application Page.

Select the **Implementation** or **Planning** Grant RFP as appropriate to your project. Click on the **Apply** button on the far right to submit an LOI.

Please contact us with any questions.

Letter of Intent

The letter should not exceed *three pages* and will be uploaded into bi3's online grants management system. Please submit the LOI under the process matching the type of grant you are requesting, planning or implementation. The LOI should include:

- a) A description of the opportunity or problem, including the targeted population

- b) A brief description of the project including key partners
- c) A description of the alignment with the selected bi3 funding priority
- d) A description of the alignment with the applicant's organizational goals
- e) What makes this project innovative?
- f) How the project will lead to transformative or breakthrough change in health or healthcare

Applicants should also be prepared to provide the following in the online application:

- a) The project name, organization name, website, address and EIN (Employer Identification Number) for the organization
- b) The name, title and contact information for the lead project manager
- c) The requested grant amount
- d) The selected bi3 Funding Priority
- e) The requested time period of the grant (e.g. one, two or three years)

Applicants will receive a response on or before March 9, 2022, indicating if they have been invited to submit a detailed proposal.

Detailed Proposal

Selected applicants from the LOI stage of the process will be invited to submit a Detailed Proposal. An invitation to submit a detailed proposal does not guarantee funding.

Proposals will be submitted via bi3's online grants management system by April 21, 2022, at 11:59 p.m. bi3 will announce final grant awards in June 2022.

Applicants submitting a Detailed Proposal may be asked to participate in a site visit and/or invited to present to the bi3 Committee on May 26, 2022. Invited applicants will receive support in preparing the presentation from bi3's communications counsel.

Timeline

Date	Key Activities
Tuesday, January 25, 8:30 - 10:00 a.m.	Informational Workshops (attend one) Registration is required. Contact erin_mcdermott@bi3.org for the link to register.
Thursday, January 27, 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.	
Thursday, January 27, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.	
Tuesday, February 1, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	
February 17, 2022, by 11:59 pm	Deadline to Submit Letter of Intent
By March 9, 2022	Invitations to Submit Detailed Proposals*
April 21, 2022, by 11:59 pm	Detailed Grant Proposals due

By June 10, 2022	Grant Awards Announced*
July 2022	Grantee Onboarding Meetings

** Applicants not selected to move forward in the process will also be notified*

If you have any questions about the RFP, the process, or your proposed idea, we invite you to contact us.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Over the past ten years, bi3 has adopted a [trust-based approach](#) that not only makes bi3 a more effective funder but also fuels our ability to collectively achieve our mission of transforming health for all people in Greater Cincinnati. We seek to authentically partner with grantees to advance community efforts, prioritize transparent communications, and leverage learning to maximize impact. By applying this approach, bi3 seeks to build more equitable relationships with funded partners.

bi3 prioritizes organizations that apply a racial equity lens to their work, have diverse leadership, and listen to and engage with community members in priority setting and decision making. Successful applications will have clear goals and allocate appropriate resources to measure outcomes and engage in continuous improvement efforts. As an invested partner, bi3 will work collaboratively with grantees to monitor and refine project metrics, develop sustainability plans, address unexpected risks, and refresh performance plans based on interim results. bi3 will provide support, thought partnership and technical assistance to evaluate and communicate project results and learning. bi3 is committed to the success of our grantees and will leverage its partnership and resources to achieve the greatest impact for our community.

Specific evaluation criteria for proposals can be found on the bi3 website: bi3.org/rfp-building-health-equity/#evaluation-criteria.

ABOUT bi3

bi3 is on a mission to transform health for all people in Greater Cincinnati by fueling innovation and health equity through grantmaking. bi3 leverages its strategic partnership with TriHealth to spark and scale new approaches to healthcare and partners with community-based organizations to fuel new solutions to deep-seated community health issues.

bi3 envisions a day when every person has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible — a day when a person's health can no longer be predicted by race, ethnicity, ability or zip code. bi3 partners with organizations that apply a racial equity lens to their work, reduce health disparities, have diverse leadership, and listen to and engage with community members in priority setting and decision making.

bi3 is a philanthropic initiative created by Bethesda Inc. to drive innovation in healthcare and improve community health outcomes. The name bi3 reflects our Bethesda heritage along with three core pillars that underlie our work — ideas, investments and innovation. Since 2010, bi3 has awarded more than \$56 million in grants to TriHealth and community-based organizations. This funding has helped attract new grants and resources to the region, enabling bi3 partners to achieve even greater scale and impact.

For more information about bi3: www.bi3.org

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please direct all questions and inquiries to Kiana Trabue, Vice President, Strategic Partnerships, at kiana_trabue@bi3.org or 513-569-9396.