



JACKSON COUNTY
COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH FUND

EXCELLENCE · ACCOUNTABILITY · COMPASSION

February 18, 2019
Mental Health Service Innovation Projects
Instructions for Letters of Interest

Mental Health Service Innovations

The Board of Trustees is offering an opportunity for current grantees of the Jackson County Community Mental Health Fund to receive a one-time funding opportunity for an Innovations Project. The funding can provide partial support for projects that enhance mental health services and outcomes, and utilize evidence-based practices to improve the quality and/or outcomes of mental healthcare in Jackson County, Missouri.

Applicants are encouraged to propose projects that collaborate with partner agencies. Partner agencies do not have to be Levy grantees, but must be a non-profit located in Jackson County. All collaborations are required to have clear rationale for their inclusion in the partnership. Funding may not be used for substance abuse treatment, healthcare or other non-mental health services.

Innovation Project applicants use a three-step application process beginning with a Letter of Interest. Those applicants selected will submit an official work plan then move to final review and approval. Details about the application process is described on page 4 of these instruction. At the conclusion of the application process, the Trustees will consider support for a limited number of innovative projects and award a one-time funding grant.

Priorities for Innovations

Cultural Approaches to Care

The Trustees request Letters of Interest for projects in which cultural practices provide the basis of interventions that promote mental health recovery within cultural contexts of empowerment and resilience.

For mental health organizations, cultural approaches to care can create a *new invitation to engage* participants by bridging gaps between culturally-based responses to mental health concerns and formal systems of intervention, by creating new and alternative spaces for mental health staff and participants to mutually engage. This priority encourages partnerships involving:

- The applicant mental health agency,

- The applicant agency’s internal group responsible for coordinating and advising on cultural competence, and,
- An established community cultural organization (some eligible applicant agencies may have this component internally).

Applicant agencies may propose a single event, a series of activities or some other approach that can demonstrate an integration of cultural approaches to care that can enhance routine service delivery.

Technical Assistance

The Trustees requests Letters of Interest for projects to deliver Technical Assistance to Jackson County Mental Health agencies, working in multi-agency partnerships that focus on the following areas:

- **Trauma informed care partnerships:** Agencies interested in increasing their capacity to develop and provide trauma informed care practices within their agency are encouraged. Agencies may also address individual social or organizational impacts of vicarious trauma, also known as secondary trauma in which helping professionals may experience various impacts of empathic engagement with traumatized participants. This may be included within the above option or may be proposed as a standalone project.
- **Agency capacity for serving LGBT:** The Trustees recognize that persons of LGBT status face specific risks and traumatic issues associated with adverse mental health outcomes. In response they wish to build upon our current experiences and augment agency capacity to better understand and respond to the needs of these communities. Long-term objectives are to enhance best practice and encourage continued development of local trainers and experts. While the Trustees’ intent is to emphasize agencies that serve youth and young adults, any age group will be considered.

Public Benefits: Access and Capacity

The Trustees request Letters of Interest for projects to provide an organized, sustained effort to assist individuals in accessing benefits, or to position their agency to diversify revenue through access to Medicaid and/or some other resource for payment of mental health services. Current grantees planning to implement one or more of the following mechanisms are encouraged to apply:

- **Individual access to benefits:** enrolling low income, disabled persons with severe, persistent mental illness (SPMI) in publicly – supported health care programs is an important gateway to mental health care. Successful enrollment requires substantial time and effort including: outreach, screening to determine eligibility, care coordination, etc.
- **Provider enrollment:** providers of mental health care including psychologists’; counselors and/or social workers may potentially enroll individually or through their organization’s billing panel. This priority will support development of public or private billing capacity only were none currently exists.
- **Other benefit strategies:** this priority will support the development of agency capacity to build public or private benefits programs or services for mental health care. Letters of Interest should specify the programs and services that the billing is intended to cover.

First-time Accreditation

The Trustees request Letters of Interest from current grantee agencies seeking matching funds for first-time accreditation. The opportunity is limited to agencies that have never been previously accredited. The Trustees are especially interested in assisting residential facilities working toward accreditation, however Letters of Interest from all types of grantee organizations will be considered. The Trustees will consider offsetting a portion of costs charged by the accrediting body, rather than covering local costs such as staff time.

Agency-Initiated Innovations

The Trustees request Letters of Interest for Agency-initiated innovations that are one-time projects able to produce measurable, long-term improvements in mental health service quality and access. Projects that are intended to operate past the grant period may request start-up funding and demonstrate how they are designed to continue from other sources. Topics for innovations may be wide-ranging, and should reflect applicants' best efforts toward using evidence-based responses to well-documented needs and issues experienced within their own practice. Agency-initiated innovations may include, but are not limited to:

- Response to new population or service needs;
- Response to address high risk communities most impacted by violence, child abuse and neglect and other social determinants
- Capacity to implement and/or improve electronic mental health records; and
- New partnerships that enhance mental healthcare access and mental health outcomes

Participant Engagement Tools

The Trustees request Letters of Interest for projects that will implement new technologies to make it easier for clinicians and providers to stay in touch with their participants thus reducing now-show rates and adherence to behavioral health outcomes. It is common practice for many types of service providers to use text messages for upcoming appointment reminders and for prescription refills. The use of phone apps and web portals are increasingly used to access and/or communicate with care provider.

The Trustees would like to support the adoption and evaluation of these technologies for behavioral health. Agencies may request matching funds to purchase/implement new technology including web-based application or software that will demonstrate improvement in participant engagement outcomes. Agencies should document financial resources that will be used to support the direct costs of the project.

Provider Training

Funding for internal mental health staff training on evidence-based practices is not available through Innovations. Instead, we have established a new funding program to assist with ongoing staff training needs. For more information about financial support for Provider Training, please see "**Provider Training & Community Mental Health Education**" information on the **FUNDING PROGRAMS** page of our web site.

Developing an Innovation Project

Eligibility

Innovation funding is limited to current contractors of the Jackson County Community Mental Health Fund in contract compliance. Funding may not be used to cover the costs for existing services.

Innovation funding cannot replace or supplant programs that previously received support from other sources. Substance abuse treatment and healthcare programs cannot be supported. Physical plant and non-technology capital expenses are excluded.

Steps to Applying

- 1) Innovation Project application process begins with a **Letter of Interest**. Instructions are below.
- 2) The Trustees review Letters of Interests. The process is competitive. A limited number of letters will be selected to compete a **Work Plan** that identifies deliverables, time line and budget.
- 3) The Appropriations Committee will then review Project Work Plans, interview applicants, and make final changes, and offer a limited number of **Innovation Project** recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

Competitive Strengths

Innovation funding is competitive. To increase your chance of success, highlight strengths in the Letter of Interest. Following are *examples*:

- Data showing the need for your project (unserved population, access barrier, etc.)
- Collaborative agreements with partner agencies
- Matching funds, contributed resources, other leveraging
- Actionable plans that use evidence-based, culturally competent approaches
- Participant involvement in planning and delivering the proposed innovation
- Readiness to implement without delay
- Understanding of your intended outcomes and how to achieve them

Applicants selected to develop a Project Work Plan will have additional time to prepare documentation and finalize collaborations and procedures.

Project Duration

Innovation projects are a one-time funding opportunity for projects either of limited duration, or *planned* to continue from sources outside the Mental Health Fund. Time frame should be realistic for the achieving your proposed goals. Levy contracts are a maximum of one year. Projects that extend beyond a single contract year will be considered but require a clear, reasonable rationale within the work plan.

Financial Resources

Contract amounts or limits are not specified. Documentation of available and requested resources for the proposed project will be required. An initial estimate of costs and contributed resources will be required in the Letter of Interest (instructions below). Agencies who are selected to develop a Work Plan will have additional time to prepare a detailed documentation and budget.

A Letter of Interest includes:

Cover Page with contact information, assurances and attesting to consent by the agency CEO and chief voluntary officer or Board president. Available at our web site. Go to Community Investment and select Required Forms.

Letter of Interest (three pages max): please use the following headings to organize the letter: Applicant Agency; Project Title; Priority Area; Project Description; Need for the Innovation; Effectiveness of the Innovation; Anticipated Results, Anticipated Cost.

Application Deadline

We now accept Letters of Interest for Innovation projects throughout the year. The time required for us to review and process Letters of Interests will vary throughout the year. The process usually takes 90 days.

In order to receive an expedited review, please submit letters of interest no later than **12:00 Noon - April 5, 2019.**

Submit one (1) MS Word document that combines Cover Page and Letter of Interest (maximum four pages total). Submit electronically to: almarshall@jacksoncountycare.org Agencies submitting Letters of Interest will receive electronic acknowledgment of their submission. Work Plans for selected Letters of Interest will be due June 3, 2019.