

2021 Overdose Data to Action

Business Process Improvement Capacity Building and Technical Assistance Opportunity Request for Applications

Application Deadline: September 30, 2021

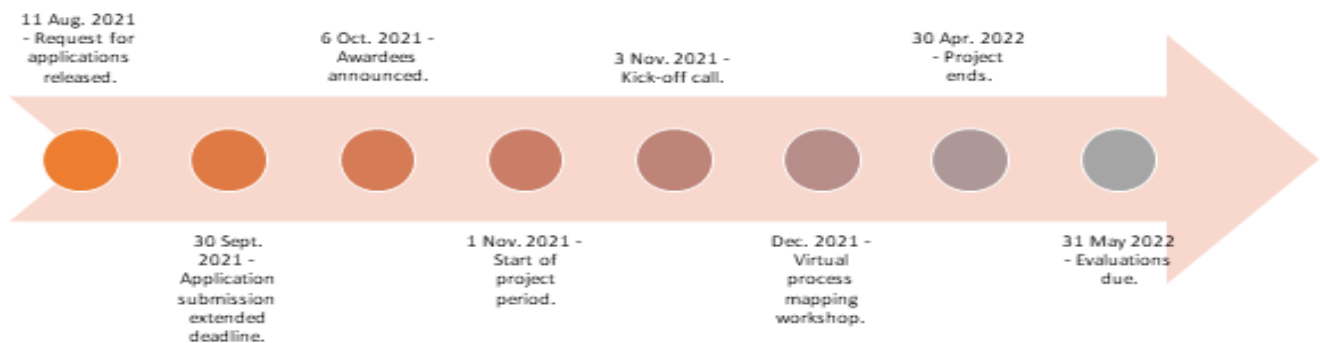
Project Summary

Background: Complex financial and administrative systems, along with cumbersome policies and processes in state, territorial, and local government, can create challenges and barriers to public health agencies in receiving, managing, and spending down federal funds. Additionally, health agencies must stay prepared and nimble to respond to emergencies and quickly mobilize people and resources with the ever-present threat of disease outbreaks, natural disasters, and public health epidemics. In addition to activating supplies and people, health departments must be prepared to execute administrative processes to ensure resources, activities, and services associated with the public health response are delivered in a timely and efficient manner.

Public health agencies are working to improve outdated systems, policies, and procedures to ensure that funding can flow efficiently and effectively to address public health problems. These challenges and delays—commonly found with contracting, recruitment/hiring, and procurement/purchasing—threaten health departments' ability to provide essential public health services that advance the public's understanding of public health; scale-up prevention, surveillance, and response activities; make an immediate impact; and save lives. ASTHO recently conducted a pilot project with three CDC Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) cooperative agreement recipients. The results of the pilot project indicated that standardizing internal business processes, enhancing staff compliance through widespread training, and use of simple job aids that help to reduce errors can yield significant improvements.

ASTHO, with support from CDC, is pleased to announce another cohort of non-monetary capacity building and technical assistance (CBTA) opportunity. This project will help build state, territorial, and local health agency capacity around financial and administrative management quality and systems improvement to efficiently spend federal funding within CDC's Overdose Data to Action award.

Timeline



Eligibility: All OD2A recipients are eligible to apply.

ASTHO’s Point of Contact: Jennifer Farfalla, Director, Overdose Surveillance and Prevention: od2a@astho.org.

Project Elements and Expectations

Purpose: Many recipients of CDC’s Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) award have experienced a range of administrative and financial challenges that make it difficult to efficiently spend down funding. Examples of these challenges include time-consuming contracting, procurement, drawdown, or hiring processes, which can result in unallocated funds at the end of the project year. Additionally, many jurisdictions may be facing the effect of dual epidemics, leadership changes, siloed administrative functions, limited technology supports, and state/territorial government decision that impact efficient spending.

This project aims to recognize financial and administrative processes that affect timely spenddown of OD2A funds and identify areas for performance improvement that will result in efficient utilization and spenddown of OD2A funds. ASTHO will select up to three state/territorial/local OD2A recipients to participate in the Business Process Improvement Capacity Building and Technical Assistance opportunity. Through this initiative, jurisdictions will receive individual technical assistance from quality improvement experts, opportunities to engage in peer-to-peer learning, and hands-on training.

Intended Outcomes and Benefits: This is an opportunity to collaborate and engage with members of other teams within your agency to incorporate innovative ideas in your work, better align priorities and goals of all stakeholders, and improve the flexibility of the organization related to the administrative and financial needs. This technical assistance opportunity will be tailored to your jurisdiction’s specific administrative needs. Benefits of this project include:

- Identification of internal administrative and financial process inefficiencies through process mapping.
- Proposed strategies to improve internal cycle time and resourcefully manage programmatic spending and the OD2A grant.
- Opportunities to collaborate and connect with peers across agencies and jurisdictions.
- Access to guidance materials and resources created with support of subject matter experts, ASTHO, and CDC.
- Improvements in efficiency, effectiveness, productiveness, accountability, and ultimately, improved community health.

Project Activities and Participant Expectations

This project will focus on process improvement by sharing best and promising practices around financial and administrative management. ASTHO and subject matter experts will offer a combination of activities to help participants streamline any ineffective or challenging processes of their agency. Participants must commit to all the following activities over a seven-month period (total time commitment – approximately 50 hours):

Activity	Intent	Time Commitment
Virtual project kick-off webinar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand project purpose, goals, and required deliverables. • Identify knowledge, skills, and abilities that will be modeled and practiced throughout the project. 	1.5 hours x 1 session
Virtual peer-to-peer learning convenings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in peer-to-peer discussions to share successes, lessons learned, and progress on the selected improvement approaches. • Receive guidance and technical assistance on various business management topics and best practices from subject experts and guest coaches. 	1 hour x 5 convenings
Virtual 2-3 day process-mapping workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in an interactive workshop to map out the key financial and administrative processes that affect effective utilization of OD2A funds and identify and prioritize issues and solutions. • Surface challenges and co-create solutions in a transparent, safe, and trust-building manner. 	3.5 hours x 3 sessions
Individual virtual CBTA sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss development of the project, share guidance materials or resources, and receive technical support 	1 hour x 6 sessions
Virtual project close-out call	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share successes and accomplishments achieved during project period. • Identify and develop next steps to continue the improvement process. 	1.5 hours x 1 session
Project deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop sharable job aids, agency implementation plans, current and future workflow process maps, or tools to improve financial and administrative systems and processes. 	Up to 18-25 hours of internal preparation throughout the project period

Final evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the process and impact of CBTA provided by ASTHO. 	
------------------	--	--

**Note: Critical to success is leadership support and prioritization of the project including attention to change management for staff and programs participating in the improvement initiative.*

Application Information

Application Package

Participation in this opportunity is open to all OD2A recipients interested in improving their capacity around financial and administrative management systems. The application package consists of the following: statement of interest, organizational capacity and readiness, and letter of support from health agency leadership.

Application Type and Submission Process

Below is a list of all potential tracks available for health departments to apply for as a part of this opportunity:

- Jurisdiction based TA Track:
 - o State health agency participation
 - o Territorial health agency participation
 - o Local (city/county) health agency participation

Use this [form](#) to complete the application by **11:59 p.m. ET on September 30**. If you are interested in reviewing the questions prior to completing the form, please [review the PDF version](#). Incomplete applications or applications received after the deadline will not be considered. If you are having issues accessing the online application, please contact Jennifer Farfalla (od2a@astho.org) for other submission options. Additionally, please note that ASTHO will prioritize selections based on the applicant's needs.

Timeline

- **Request for applications released:** August 11, 2021
- **Application submission deadline:** September 30, 2021
- **Project period:** November 2021 – April 2022
- **Evaluations due:** May 2022

Contact Information

If you have any questions about the application or the project, please contact Jennifer Farfalla, Director, Overdose Surveillance and Prevention: od2a@astho.org.

Disclaimer Notice

This RFA is not binding on ASTHO, nor does it constitute a contractual offer. Without limiting the foregoing, ASTHO reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any or all proposals; to modify, supplement, or cancel the RFA; to waive any deviation from the RFA; to negotiate regarding any proposal; and to negotiate final terms and conditions that may differ from those stated in the RFA. Under no circumstances shall ASTHO be liable for any costs incurred by any person in connection with the preparation and submission of a response to this RFA.