

ASTHO Breastfeeding Learning Community – Sustaining Breastfeeding Innovations Through Programs and Policy Frequently Asked Questions

Application Deadline: Oct. 29, 2021

Note: This document will continually be updated with [blue text](#) as new questions are received. This document was last updated on Sept. 23, 2021.

Who is eligible to apply for this funding opportunity?

CDC SPAN recipients who participated in the 2020 Innovations grant program and are in good standing with ASTHO are eligible to apply. Interested SPAN recipients are **required** to select a local entity who participated in their 2020 Innovation grant project as a bona fide or fiscal agent to apply for this opportunity on their behalf. The bona fide or fiscal agent will be required to submit a letter from the SPAN recipient designating the local entity as a bona fide or fiscal agent.

What would be an appropriate group to serve as a bona fide agent or financial designee for the state?

SPAN recipients may work with local health agencies, state-level not-for-profit organizations, local community-based organizations, and institutions of higher education as bona fide or fiscal agents on their behalf. The designee will be required to submit a letter of collaboration from the SPAN recipient designating the entity's status. The designee must also be registered and in good standing with the federal System for Award Management (sam.gov). Preference will be given to bona fide and fiscal agents who are women-, minority-, disadvantaged-, or veteran-owned or small businesses.

Would the bona fide agent or SPAN recipient complete the MOU with ASTHO using the attached templates to the RFP? What role would the SPAN recipient play?

The bona fide agent would complete the MOU. The bona fide agent is expected to work closely with the SPAN recipient and other members of the team to accomplish activities in the proposal and attend the policy academy. The letter of designation and proposal should describe the role the SPAN recipient and bona fide agent will play on the project. For example, the SPAN recipient may play an advisory role and provide project oversight.

Aside from the letter designating the community partner as the bona fide agent, does the SPAN recipient need to submit any other documents regarding this designation?

ASTHO does not require any additional documentation for this designation. However, the SPAN recipient should describe the bona fide agent's role in the letter of designation and proposal description to provide ASTHO with more insight into the roles and responsibilities in proposed activities.

How do states apply for this opportunity?

States must submit required documents via email to breastfeeding@astho.org by 11:59 p.m. ET on Friday, Oct. 29, 2021. Please use the email subject "Breastfeeding Learning Community – Policy Academy Opportunity."

What documentation must be included in the proposal?

Applicants are asked to provide the following information for the proposal:

1. A cover letter that includes the names, email addresses, and telephone numbers for the team's lead programmatic and financial/contract leads.
2. An outline of the team's approach and strategy for accomplishing the requested project activities (proposed approach). Please provide a detailed work plan that includes activities, a

vision statement, a timeline, goals, and milestones your team will reach to achieve the work plan and deliverables. In addition, please describe any specific policy topics of interest, needs, and challenges related to advancing policy in your jurisdiction, and summary of any available state-level data related to the vision statement, chosen BLC strategy area, and any specific policy topics of interest.

3. A description of how applicants will anticipate challenges to meeting their project goals and why the proposed project will have a high probability of success and plans that will illustrate the team's ability to sustain the project past the project period.
4. A description of the applicant's experience and quality of performance on work completed to advance breastfeeding support and promotion within the state or through participation in the ASTHO Breastfeeding Learning Community and Innovation grant. Include successes and accomplishments for the year(s) described.
5. Information about the project team, including the team's ability and capacity to perform the tasks required within the specified timeframe. Please describe staff qualifications and provide a CV for key personnel and the staff lead.
6. A budget and budget narrative. If an applicant includes an indirect cost rate of >10% in their budget, they should be prepared to submit a federally approved indirect cost rate letter upon award.

Please refer to the official RFP for additional detail on application requirements.

What can be purchased under this RFP?

Funding may be used for mini-grants, stipends, materials or supplies, staff and consultant time, training, printing, and other project-related expenses. Funds **may not** be used for equipment purchases. Per HHS requirements, funds awarded under this competitive bid are prohibited from being used to pay the direct salary of an individual at a rate exceeding the federal Executive Schedule Level II (currently \$199,300). Please refer to the RFP for details on allowable expenses.

States should consider equipment as tangible personal property (including information technology systems) that has a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or \$5,000.

How often are awardees expected to report project progress to ASTHO?

The awardees will be required to attend seven monthly virtual learning sessions between January and July 2022, complete homework assignments, participate in technical assistance calls as needed, and submit two progress reports in April and July 2022, and produce their final policy project in June 2022. In these progress reports, awardees will detail their progress on their programmatic efforts to sustain or enhance their Innovation work. Awardees will also be required to deliver presentations on their final policy projects to other teams at the final virtual learning session in July 2022.

What should a SPAN recipient or their local partners do if they are interested in participating in the policy academy but do not want to receive funding?

SPAN recipients and their local partners who are interested in participating in the program but do not want to receive funding should still submit a full application that meets all content requirements and criteria described in Section 4 of the Request for Proposals.

What types of policy skills and topics will be covered in the Policy Academy?

ASTHO will work to tailor the Policy Academy to state interests, based on information from applications and initial technical assistance calls. Resources related to various breastfeeding policies can be found in **Attachment A**. Building capacity and skills will include, but is not limited to, identifying policy options, selecting the most appropriate policy option, policy analysis, community and stakeholder engagement,

communicating with policymakers, writing draft regulations or legislation, drafting organizational policy, and policy evaluation.

When will SPAN recipients, bona fides, and fiscal agents be notified of award status?

All entities will be notified of their award status on **Friday, Nov. 12, 2021**.

Does the proposed project need to directly relate to the strategy for which SPAN recipients are funded?

SPAN recipients and their bona fide or fiscal agents are not restricted to the strategy they selected when participating in the ASTHO Breastfeeding Learning Community.

Do the proposed project and policy deliverable need to impact the state as a whole, or can policy academy teams focus on policy in one or more regions of the state?

Proposed projects do not need to impact the state as a whole and can focus on priority regions as identified by the state. States should discuss where they intend to implement their programmatic project and why, as well their chosen BLC strategy (maternity care practices in birthing facilities, continuity of care/community support, or workplace compliance with federal lactation accommodation law).

What will be expected of awardees shortly after grants are awarded?

Shortly after grants are awarded, ASTHO will work with each awardee to finalize a scope of work and budget and execute a memorandum of understanding. ASTHO will also hold one-on-one technical assistance calls with state teams to identify any specific policy topics of interest and TA needs.