



# FUNDERS COLLABORATIVE ON COVID RECOVERY

## Vaccine Uptake Initiative Request for Proposals (RFP)

December 2021

### **Background**

The Greater Cleveland COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund (RRF) was established on March 18, 2020, just days after the novel coronavirus was first detected in Northeast Ohio. The RRF was intended to complement the work of public health officials and expand local capacity to address the coronavirus outbreak as efficiently as possible. Nearly \$19 million have been distributed to community organizations across Greater Cleveland serving more than 500,000 people through September 2021.

In January 2021, the RRF began offering support to a number of community organizations to engage in outreach and other neighborhood-based activities to promote vaccine uptake among populations at highest risk for infection. Target populations included Black people and other people of color, immigrants and refugees, English language learners, and others. These organizations developed and executed a tailored approach to outreach, education, vaccine registration, and individual follow-up within their service areas. In just a few short months, the entire apparatus helped get more than 11,000 residents fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Concurrently, the RRF convened the [Vaccine Communications Taskforce](#) (VCTF) to determine the most appropriate way to combat vaccine hesitancy. The VCTF launched a neighborhood-based communications campaign called [Guardians CLE](#), which elevated the voices of local residents with deep roots in neighborhoods hardest hit by the pandemic in talking to their neighbors, friends, and loved ones about vaccination. These local heroes—Cleveland's Guardians—serve as trusted community champions and sources of accurate information for those that remain vaccine hesitant. [A full list of Guardians can be found here.](#)

In fall 2021, the RRF was re-named the Funders Collaborative on COVID Recovery (FCCR). A public-private partnership that spans nearly 50 foundations, nonprofits, and government agencies, FCCR remains focused on helping Greater Cleveland residents cope with and recover from the pandemic. Among the collaborative's chief priorities is increasing vaccine uptake, especially among Greater Cleveland's highest risk populations.

### **Statement of Work**

So far there have been more than 120,000 cases and 2,200 deaths from COVID-19 in Cuyahoga County. Despite ongoing infections locally, the evidence remains clear: vaccination against the coronavirus drastically reduces the likelihood of symptomatic COVID-19 as well as the likelihood of severe disease and death in cases of so-called "breakthrough" infection. Still, only two-thirds of eligible Cuyahoga County residents and just 39% of Cleveland residents have received at least one dose of the vaccine. As of December 2021, some Cleveland census tracts have vaccination rates as low as 12%.

**FCCR is seeking proposals from nonprofit organizations aiming to catalyze vaccine uptake at a hyper-local level, with a special focus on neighborhoods where vaccination rates remain far below those of the surrounding area.**

Projects are to be based in one of three pre-determined regions in Cleveland: East, which includes East Cleveland; Central; and West. A map of these regions, along with potential key partners that have previously engaged with the FCCR on vaccination projects, [can be found here.](#)

The FCCR, through its Vaccine Workgroup, is soliciting proposals for initiatives that will undertake activities in one or more of the following pillars of work:



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## I. **Neighborhood-Based Communications** | Conducting high-intensity outreach and education

Activities should result in increasing residents' vaccine readiness and reducing residents' concern about, hesitancy toward, or resistance to vaccination. Communications initiatives can include but are not limited to: (1) the use of social media; (2) the distribution of hard copy collateral (flyers, posters, postcards, etc.); and (3) the deployment of Guardians (as described above) to targeted neighborhoods. [Guardians](#) can be matched by the neighborhoods they represent or other demographic information, such as:

- a. Community (to support religious, cultural, LGBTQ+, or other groups)
- b. Country of origin (to support immigrant, refugee, or other communities)
- c. Gender identity (to support women, men, trans people, or others)

## II. **Neighborhood-Based Access** | Removing physical, social, economic, or other barriers to vaccination

Activities should result in improving residents' ability to navigate (or making more convenient) the vaccination process. Access initiatives can include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Systems navigation/resource hotlines
- b. Registration assistance
- c. Transportation assistance

## III. **Vaccine Administration** | Launching new or utilizing existing place-based vaccine clinics or events

Vaccine clinics and events must be associated with a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) or other clinical provider who can administer shots to participants.

## **Proposed Schedule and Budget**

- The first round of the FCCR Vaccine Uptake Initiative will span eight (8) months, beginning in January 2022 and ending by August 2022.
- Proposals will be reviewed on a rolling basis and can be submitted until Friday, February 25, 2022.
- Proposed projects will be funded for a period of six (6) months.
- Nine (9) grant awards of up to \$50,000 are available.

## **Proposal Requirements**

In your response to this Request for Proposals, please include the following elements in the coordinating sections of the inquiry form:

### *Project Summary (Max 5,000 Characters)*

- Identify which of the three, pre-determined regions you intend to serve with this initiative. A map of the regions [can be found here](#) [or see *Proposal Resources*, below]. Identify the agencies within that region that will form the Team executing the initiative. Teams must include at minimum:
  - A lead organization to serve as fiscal agent and project coordinator
  - If focusing on vaccine administration, an FQHC or other clinical provider to provide vaccines to participants
  - If focusing on neighborhood-based communications, one or more [members of the Guardians CLE](#) campaign
- Details of each participating organization's experience relevant to this project (e.g., track record in community engagement; expertise in health care access; history of in attracting residents to pop-up vaccine clinics; history of managing communications campaigns; etc.)



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- A project plan which includes:
  - Details of activities to be undertaken, the organization(s) responsible for performing each activity, and the timeline for each activity
  - A communications plan in coordination with the *Guardians CLE* campaign [for campaign contact information, see *Proposal Resources*, below]

## *Budget Summary (Max 750 Characters)*

- A proposed budget

## *Target Population (Max 2,000 Characters)*

- Total population estimates and COVID-19 vaccination rates for focus neighborhood(s) or census tract(s)  
*\*\*These data can be found [here](#) or in the “Proposal Resource” section below\*\**
- Please describe the demographic makeup of the population or community that your initiative will impact
- Please estimate all of the following outputs (and any others you wish to propose). Note that a final report on these outputs will be required for all grant recipients.
  - Number of people vaccinated by neighborhood
  - Number of clinics or events launched and/or supported by the proposed initiative
  - Numbers of people engaged by communications and outreach efforts, such as:
    - Phone calls
    - Door-to-door canvassing
    - Social media reach
    - Flyers, posters, postcards, etc.

## *Additional Information (Max 2,000 Characters)*

- Any additional information that might be helpful in describing the proposed initiative

## **Proposal Resources**

For data regarding COVID-19 vaccination rates, [follow this link](#).

For research regarding best-practices and evidence-based interventions, [follow this link](#).

To identify project partners or get help with vaccine provider and communications coordination, please contact the following:

- FQHCs or other health care providers: Kirstin Craciun, Better Health Partnership, [kcraciun@metrohealth.org](mailto:kcraciun@metrohealth.org)
- Guardians CLE campaign: Mariely Luengo, Shark & Minnow, [marielyluengo@gmail.com](mailto:marielyluengo@gmail.com)

## **How to Apply**

The Funders Collaborative on COVID Recovery will review proposals on a rolling basis through January and February, with first grant awards announced during the week of January 17, 2022. Proposals may be submitted until **12:00 PM ET, Friday, February 25, 2022** via the Cleveland Foundation grants portal available here: <https://www.iphiview.com/tcf/>

**All applicants must use the following Project Title: Vaccine Uptake Initiative RFP: [LEAD ORGANIZATION NAME].** When asked: “Are you applying to a specific fund?” please select “Funders Collaborative on COVID Recovery”.

A full grant application will be required if the initial proposal is accepted. The FCCR Vaccine Workgroup may also request a virtual meeting with the lead organization and other identified team members to gather more information.



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Two informational meetings will take place via Zoom where prospective applicants can learn more about this RFP and potential project partners. These meetings are optional, and participation (or not) will have no bearing on the FCCR's consideration of proposals.

- Tuesday, January 4, 2022, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
- Friday, January 7, 2022, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

To participate, please contact Adam Nation, Mt. Sinai Health Foundation program officer, at [Adam.Nation@mtsinaifoundation.org](mailto:Adam.Nation@mtsinaifoundation.org) and indicate which, if either, informational meeting(s) you would like to attend.

***\*\*Please note: Other than what is described in this RFP, the FCCR is not soliciting applications for general work related to the large-scale community impacts of COVID-19 at this time\*\****