IMG Career Guidance and Support Program

GRANT REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Minnesota Department of Health
PO Box 64882
St. Paul, MN 55164-0882
MN_health.IMG@state.mn.us
www.health.state.mn.us

Updated 8/7/2019
To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-3838. Printed on recycled paper.
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RFP Part 1: Overview

1.1 General Information

- **Announcement Title**: International Medical Graduate Career Guidance and Support Grant Program
- **Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Program Website**: https://www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/ruralhealth/img/index.html
- **Application Deadline**: August 31, 2019

1.2 Program Description

Health care professionals who receive training in other countries face multiple barriers in transferring their credentials after relocating to the United States. These professionals would be at an advantage to serve minority and immigrant populations and help Minnesota foster strong healthy communities and address health inequities. To address these barriers and integrate this unique resource, the Minnesota Legislature allocated funding to create a program to assist these professionals. Minnesota Statutes Section 144.1911 authorizes the Commissioner of Health to award grants to eligible nonprofit organizations to provide career guidance and support services to immigrant international medical graduates seeking to enter the Minnesota health workforce. (An IIMG is an international medical graduate who was born outside the United States, now resides permanently in the United States, and who did not enter the United States on a J1 or similar nonimmigrant visa following acceptance into United States medical residency or fellowship program.)

1.3 Funding and Project Dates

**Funding**

Up to $750,000.00

Funding will be allocated through a competitive process. If selected, you may only incur eligible expenditures when the grant agreement is fully executed and the grant has reached its effective date.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated Amount to Grant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated Number of Awards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated Award Maximum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated Award Minimum</td>
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</table>

**Match Requirement**

This grant does not require matching funds.

**Project Dates**

The grant funding will cover 19 months of program services, estimated beginning November 1, 2019 and extending through June 30, 2021.

**1.4 Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants are nonprofit organizations that fulfill all of the following criteria:

1. Are located in Minnesota.
2. Have demonstrable experience working with immigrants/refugees in Minnesota.
3. Have a track record providing career guidance and support in health occupations, and preferably with immigrants and refugees.
4. Have experience partnering with educational and support service agencies to maximize resources.
5. Have experience in collaborating with Minnesota health professionals licensing boards.
6. Are culturally competent and understand health equity.

*Are culturally competent and understand health equity Collaboration*

Multi-organization collaboration is welcomed but not required. Selected grant recipients may be required to participate in health equity training.
1.5 Questions and Answers

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted by email to MN_health.IMG@state.mn.us. All answers will be posted within two business days at https://www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/ruralhealth/img/grant.html.

Please submit questions no later than 4:30 p.m. Central Time, on August 16, 2019.

To ensure the proper and fair evaluation of all applications, other communications regarding this RFP including verbal, telephone, written or internet initiated by or on behalf of any applicant to any employee of the Department, other than questions submitted to as outlined above, are prohibited. Any violation of this prohibition may result in the disqualification of the applicant.
RFP Part 2: Program Details

2.1 Priorities

Health Equity Priorities

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to ensure fairness, precision, equity and consistency in competitive grant awards. This includes implementing diversity and inclusion in grant-making. The Policy on Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities and/or disparities.

The goal of this grant program is to support and address barriers to residency for a minimum of 60 IMGs per organization.

This grant will serve IMGs who:

- Were born in various countries around world
- Now reside in Minnesota as US permanent residents or US Citizens
- Are committed to becoming certified to provide primary care services (family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, OB-GYN and Psychiatry) to Minnesota residents living in the rural areas or underserved areas of the state.

Grant outcomes will include:

- Number of IMGs served and demographic information (countries and languages of origin);
- Number of IMGs in training;
- Number of IMGs who successfully passed USMLE step 1;
- Number of IMGs who successfully passed USMLE step 2 (CS and CK);
- Number of IMGs who applied to residency;
- Number of IMGs who were interviewed for residency;
- Number of IMGs who secured residency positions;
- Number of IMGs who selected alternative careers; and
- Number of IMGs engaged in steps to obtain alternative careers.
2.2 Eligible Projects

Grant funds must be used for the following services for immigrant and refugee health professionals:

1. Educational and career assessment, navigation and guidance, including information on training and licensing requirements for physician and non-physician health care professions;
2. Trauma/PTSD support and life coaching to improve immigrant and refugee health professionals’ career planning success;
3. Support in becoming proficient in medical English;
4. Support in becoming proficient in the use of information technology, including computer skills and use of electronic health record technology; and
5. Support for immigrant international medical graduates in becoming certified by the Educational Commission on Foreign Medical Graduates; including help with preparation for required licensing examinations and financial assistance for fees.

Applicants must directly provide or arrange for the provision of the entire continuum of services listed above and document the ability to do so in their applications. Funds must be used to serve immigrant international health care professionals.

Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Fundraising
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services purchased with grant funds
- Lobbyists, political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds
- Support administrative costs not directly related to providing the above listed services to foreign-trained health care professionals

2.3 Grant Management Responsibilities

Grant Agreement

Each grantee must formally enter into a grant agreement. The grant agreement will address the conditions of the award, including implementation for the project. Once the grant agreement is signed, the grantee is expected to read and comply with all conditions of the grant agreement.
No work on grant activities can begin until a fully executed grant agreement is in place.

The funded applicant will be legally responsible for assuring implementation of the work plan and compliance with all applicable state requirements including worker’s compensation insurance, nondiscrimination, data privacy, budget compliance, and reporting.

**Accountability and Reporting Requirements**

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to monitor progress on state grants by requiring grantees to submit interim written progress reports until all grant funds have been expended and all of the terms in the grant agreement have been met. Written Progress Reports will be due quarterly.

The reporting schedule will be:

- December 31, 2019
- March 31, 2020
- June 30, 2020
- September 30, 2020
- December 31, 2020
- March 31, 2021
- June 30, 2021

**Grant Monitoring**

Minn. Stat. §16B.97 and Policy on Grant Monitoring require the following:

- One monitoring visit during the grant period on all state grants over $50,000
- Annual monitoring visits during the grant period on all grants over $250,000
- Conducting a financial reconciliation of grantee’s expenditures at least once during the grant period on grants over $50,000

The monitoring schedule will be:

- January 2020
- January 2021

**Technical Assistance**

The primary staff from selected grantees will be required to attend a mandatory monthly Career Guidance and Support Program best practices meeting, location to be determined.
Selected grant recipients will be required to participate in the annual interview process for IMGs applying to the Clinical Experience Bridge Program\(^1\).

**Grant Payments**

Per [State Policy on Grant Payments](#), reimbursement is the method for making grant payments. All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget. The State shall review each request for reimbursement against the approved grant budget, grant expenditures to-date and the latest grant progress report before approving payment. Grant payments shall not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless MDH has given the grantee a written extension.

The invoicing can be submitted monthly or quarterly.

### 2.4 Grant Provisions

**Conflicts of Interest**

MDH will take steps to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers per [Minn. Stat. §16B.98](#) and [Conflict of Interest Policy for State Grant-Making](#).

Applicants must provide a list of all entities with which it has relationships that create, or appear to create, a conflict of interest with the work contemplated by this RFP. The list must provide the name of the entity, the relationship, and a discussion of the conflict. Submit the list as an attachment to the application. If an applicant does not submit a list of conflicts of interest, MDH will assume that no conflicts of interest exist for that applicant.

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- a grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the Department due to competing duties or loyalties
- a grantee’s or applicant’s objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties

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\(^1\) In addition to the Career Guidance and Support Program, the IMG Assistance Program also offers clinical experience through the BRIIDGE program in partnership with the University of Minnesota. Eligible IMGs are encouraged to apply. The interview process takes place annually in the spring.
In cases where a conflict of interest is suspected, disclosed, or discovered, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to disqualification from eligibility for the grant award or termination of the grant agreement.

Public Data and Trade Secret Materials

All applications submitted in response to this RFP will become property of the State. In accordance with Minnesota Statute Section 13.599, all applications and their contents are private or nonpublic until the applications are opened.

Once the applications are opened, the name and address of each applicant and the amount requested is public. All other data in an application is private or nonpublic data until completion of the evaluation process, which is defined by statute as when MDH has completed negotiating the grant agreement with the selected applicant.

After MDH has completed the evaluation process, all remaining data in the applications is public with the exception of trade secret data as defined and classified in Minn. Stat. § 13.37, Subd. 1(b). A statement by an applicant that the application is copyrighted or otherwise protected does not prevent public access to the application or its contents. (Minn. Stat. § 13.599, subd. 3(a)).

If an applicant submits any information in an application that it believes to be trade secret information, as defined by Minnesota Statute Section 13.37, the applicant must:

- Clearly mark all trade secret materials in its application at the time it is submitted,
- Include a statement attached to its application justifying the trade secret designation for each item, and
- Defend any action seeking release of the materials it believes to be trade secret, and indemnify and hold harmless MDH and the State of Minnesota, its agents and employees, from any judgments or damages awarded against the State in favor of the party requesting the materials, and any and all costs connected with that defense.
- This indemnification survives MDH’s award of a grant agreement. In submitting an application in response to this RFP, the applicant agrees that this indemnification survives as long as the trade secret materials are in possession of MDH. The State will not consider the prices submitted by the responder to be proprietary or trade secret materials.

MDH reserves the right to reject a claim that any particular information in an application is trade secret information if it determines the applicant has not met the burden of establishing that the information constitutes a trade secret. MDH will not consider the budgets submitted by applicants to be proprietary or trade secret materials. Use of generic trade secret language encompassing substantial portions of the application or simple assertions of trade secret
without substantial explanation of the basis for that designation will be insufficient to warrant a trade secret designation.

If a grant is awarded to an applicant, MDH may use or disclose the trade secret data to the extent provided by law. Any decision by the State to disclose information determined to be trade secret information will be made consistent with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes chapter 13) and other relevant laws and regulations.

If certain information is found to constitute trade secret information, the remainder of the application will become public; in the event a data request is received for application information, only the trade secret data will be removed and remain nonpublic.

**Audits**

Per Minn. Stat. §16B.98 Subdivision 8, the grantee’s books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the granting agency and either the legislative auditor or the state auditor, as appropriate. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant agreement end date, receipt, and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

**Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination Requirements for all Grantees**

The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. Minn. Stat. §363A.02. The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.

The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Minnesota Rules, part 5000.3500

The grantee agrees to comply with the rules and relevant orders of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights issued pursuant to the Minnesota Human Rights Act.
2.5 Review and Selection Process

Review Process

Funding will be allocated through a competitive process with review by a committee representing content and community specialists with regional knowledge. The review committee will evaluate all eligible and complete applications received by the deadline. Late applications will not be considered or reviewed.

MDH will review all committee recommendations and is responsible for award decisions. The award decisions of MDH are final and not subject to appeal. Additionally:

- MDH reserves the right to withhold the distribution of funds in cases where proposals submitted do not meet the necessary criteria.
- The RFP does not obligate MDH to award a grant agreement or complete the project, and MDH reserves the right to cancel this RFP if it is considered to be in its best interest.
- MDH reserves the right to waive minor irregularities or request additional information to further clarify or validate information submitted in the application, provided the application, as submitted, substantially complies with the requirements of this RFP. There is, however, no guarantee MDH will look for information or clarification outside of the submitted written application. Therefore, it is important that all applicants ensure that all sections of their application are complete to avoid the possibility of failing an evaluation phase or having their score reduced for lack of information.

Timeline

Application due to MDH: August 31, 2019
Grant distribution announcement: Approximately September 27, 2019
Grant Agreements begin (est.): November 1, 2019

Project period: Nineteen (19) months
Selection Criteria and Weight

The review committee will be reviewing each applicant on a 100 point scale. A standardized scoring system will be used to determine the extent to which the applicant meets the selection criteria. Please see the review criteria detailed in Attachment B.

Grantee Past Performance and Due Diligence Review Process

- It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to consider a grant applicant's past performance before awarding subsequent grants to them.
- State policy requires states to conduct a financial review prior to a grant award made of $25,000 and higher to a nonprofit organization, in order to comply with Policy on the Financial Review of Nongovernmental Organizations

Notification

MDH anticipates notifying all applicants via email of funding decisions by September 27, 2019.
RFP Part 3: Application and Submission Instructions

3.1 Application Deadline

All applications must be received by MDH no later than 4:30 p.m. Central Time, on August 31, 2019. If applications are mailed or emailed, they must be received by MDH by the deadline.

Applications postmarked prior to this date but not received by MDH prior to the time deadline will be considered late. Late applications will not be accepted. It is the applicant’s sole responsibility to allow sufficient time to address all potential delays caused by any reason whatsoever. MDH will not be responsible for delays caused by mail, delivery, computer or technology problems.

3.2 Application Submission Instructions

Applications must be submitted by mail or email to:

Email address: MN_health.IMG@state.mn.us.

Mail:

IMG Assistance Program
Minnesota Department of Health
Office of Rural Health & Primary Care
P.O. Box 64882
St. Paul, Minnesota 55164-0882

Courier Address:
Minnesota Department of Health
Office of Rural Health & Primary Care
85 East 7th Place, Suite 220
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

3.3 Application Instructions

You must submit the following in order for the application to be considered complete:

A. Grant Application Form. (enclosed) Complete all items.

B. Accounting System and Financial Capability Questionnaire. (enclosed) This form is required from all applicants for funding over $50,000.

C. Program Financial Statement
   Applicants must include the most current financial statement of the program. This can be a recent 990 form, an audit, a balance sheet, or an income statement that at least shows annual revenue and expenses.
D. Project Description (10 pages maximum). Write a summary of the proposed career guidance and support program, which includes the following:

1. Objectives of Proposed Project. State the objectives for your project. Objectives are statements of short term or intermediate term outcomes related to improving the condition your proposal is intended to address. Objectives are tangible, specific, measurable and achievable. (Goals are long-range benefits that are broad in scope. A goal statement describes what will exist if the stated problem(s) are solved. Goal statements are optional.)

2. Description of the program’s history, location, staff and faculty, administrative structure, organizational partnerships, and budget;
   a. Description of experience working with immigrants and refugees in Minnesota;
   b. Description of experience providing support to trauma survivors;
   c. Description of experience with providing career guidance and life coaching;

3. A clear statement of achievable objectives, a work plan and timetable, and a description of the roles and capabilities of responsible individuals and organizations.

4. The number of clients the project expects to assist, the basis for this number, plans to recruit IMGs, etc.;

5. Statement of need for state grant funds.

6. Discuss commitments or plans to deliver required services not directly provided by the applicant organization and include documentation of agreements and commitments from other entities to provide such services. If agreements have not been reached between organizations, discuss the status of securing such agreements.
E. Grant Budget

A. Grant Budget Form: required from all applicants. (enclosed)

B. Grant Budget Justification Narrative (3 pages max)

Applicants must attach a narrative describing the detail of the proposed grant budget, with sufficient detail for each requested year of the grant. Also, include detail of any non-state funds that will be used to support the IIMGs during the grant period. For each of the cost items on the budget form for which grant funds are requested, provide a rationale and details regarding how the budgeted cost items were calculated. Label this concise narrative “Budget Justification” and follow the order of the budget form in your narrative.

- **Personnel**
  - Describe all grant funds used to pay for program and administrative staff. Include a description of all salary and fringe to be paid out of grant funds.

- **Scholarships**
  - Include any grant funding to be used to fund training courses and licensure costs for foreign trained healthcare professionals.

- **Support Services**
  - Include any grant funding to be used for support services to help IIMGs obtain professional licensure. An example of support services include participant travel cost relating to training courses, medical residency applications, etc.

- **Supplies**
  - Include a description of any supplies necessary for the operation of the Career Guidance and Support Program.

- **Contracted Services**
  - Include any grant funding to be used for consultant fees, or any costs associated with training sites on this line.

- **Space Rental**
  - Include any grant funding to be used for space rental related to the operation of this grant program.

- **Other Expenses**
  - Whenever possible, include proposed expenditures in the categories listed above. If it is necessary to include expenditures in this general category, include a detailed description of the activities as they relate to the direct operation of the program. If possible, include a separate line-item budget and budget narrative.
Incomplete applications will be rejected and not evaluated.

Applications must include all required application materials, including attachments. Do not provide any materials that are not requested in this RFP, as such materials will not be considered nor evaluated. **MDH reserves the right to reject any application that does not meet these requirements.**

By submitting an application, each applicant warrants that the information provided is true, correct, and reliable for purposes of evaluation for potential grant award. The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the award, as well as subject the applicant to suspension or debarment proceedings and other remedies available by law.

**All costs incurred in responding to this RFP will be borne by the applicant.**
RFP Part 4: Attachments

- Attachment A: Application Submission Checklist
- Attachment B: Review Criteria
Attachment A: Submission Checklist

I. Required Forms:
   o Grant Application Form
   o Due Diligence Review and Financial Questionnaire
   o Grant Budget Form

II. Program Financial Statement
    Attach financial documentation specific to the residency program

III. Program Description (10 pages max)
    Attach a description of the program’s

IV. Grant Budget Justification Narrative (3 pages max)
    Attach this narrative detailing the individual lines of the budget
Attachment B: Review Criteria

All complete applications from eligible applicants will be scored on a 100-point scale. Below is a breakdown of that scale, and the component of the application where the information must be present

- **30 points: Program Description**
  - Is the program description complete? Does the description adequately explain the program’s administrative structure, organizational structure, and budget? How will individuals be recruited? Are the objectives feasible? How will the organization track outcomes and evaluate the effectiveness of the project?

- **30 points: Organizational capacity and relevant experience**
  - How will the organization’s past experience benefit participants. List any current initiatives that impact immigrants/refugees in Minnesota, especially IIMGs. What experience does the organization have with working with trauma survivors? What experience does the organization have in career guidance program? What experience does the organization have in working with health care licensing boards or educational institutions providing health care training? What is the organization’s capacity to serve the proposed number of individuals? What is the organization’s understanding of cultural competency and health equity and how is that understanding reflected in their work?

- **20 points: Partnerships**
  - An applicant does not have to provide all the services listed in this grant. However an applicant must arrange for any required services which it does not provide to be made available for participants. If an applicant does not provide a required service, how will it collaborate to ensure participants receive the necessary services? Who are the key partners in the proposed project? What are their roles, responsibilities and commitments? List any additional funders (public or private) who are supporting this project.

- **20 points: Proposed budget and proposed use of funds**
  - Is the proposed budget clear? Does the budget narrative give adequate detail in how funds will be accounted for and spent? Is the budget reasonable?