

The Catalyst Fund Guidelines

Program Goal

Through The Catalyst Fund, the BCBSMA Foundation will provide small grants to support capacity building in health care organizations and community-based agencies with health care programs. The Catalyst Fund grants will assist with one-time expenses needed to strengthen an organization's ability to fulfill its mission. The Catalyst Fund grant program is entirely supported by contributions from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts associates.

Context

Nonprofit organizations and community health centers that serve the health care needs of uninsured and low-income residents of Massachusetts are finding it more difficult than ever to meet the day-to-day needs of the community and the staff. Launching new initiatives to strengthen their infrastructure, or taking time to plan for the future or ensure sustainability seems like a luxury during economically stressful times.

Organizations are now forced to be more reactive rather than proactive. The Catalyst Fund is intended to help organizations pay for some of the activities that can move them forward, position them for future opportunities and help to spark innovation.

Key Program Elements and Eligibility Criteria

The Catalyst Fund provides one-time grant awards of \$1,000 to \$3,500 for capacity-building expenses to Massachusetts community health centers, clinics, mobile health units, and community-based organizations. Examples of activities that could be supported include:

- Community outreach for health insurance enrollment, health prevention activities or health care education convening.
- Hiring a grant writer.
- Technology enhancement: website development, purchasing a laptop or personal computer and software.
- Medical equipment.
- Community meetings to engage stakeholders and constituents.
- Leadership development opportunities.
- Strategic planning activities.
- Board development and staff training.

Requests for other types of capacity-building activities will be considered. However, these grants are not intended to cover recurring general operating funds, such as salaries, overhead or membership dues.

Grants will only be made to Massachusetts-based organizations **that serve the health care needs of uninsured and low-income residents** of the state. No grants will be made to individuals, for-profit entities, hospitals or public agencies. No grants will be made to community-based organizations to support social service programs.

Preference is given to organizations and health centers with limited resources.

Grant Amount

Grants range from \$1,000 to \$3,500 depending upon the size and scope of the proposed project.

Application Procedures

Applications for a Catalyst Fund grant can be received at any time. There are no deadlines. Applications are reviewed at the end of every month, except June and July, and grants are made every six to seven weeks. Four to seven Catalyst Fund grants will be made each month, depending upon the size of each award.

Certain applications may meet the eligibility criteria, but do not receive an award in a given month due to the availability of funds. These applications will be held for consideration the following month unless otherwise indicated by the applicant. Organizations can only submit one application for one project per month.

Applicants whose requests are denied because they do not meet eligibility requirements will be notified within one month of submitting the application. Declined applicants may re-apply at a later date with a different request.

Receipt of all applications will be acknowledged within five business days of their arrival.

Applicants should submit five copies of The Catalyst Fund application. Applicants can re-create the application, but should not substitute the application merely with a letter. Organizations that are applying to the BCBSMA Foundation are required to submit one set of the following attachments:

- ❑ A brief statement of the organization's mission and current key programs;
- ❑ A current 501(c)(3) IRS tax status documentation letter. If you plan to use a fiscal agent, please attach a copy of that organization's IRS ruling, as well as a brief letter stating their commitment to receive the funds as the fiscal agent;
- ❑ A copy of the organization's current operating budget, showing planned and actual income and expenses year-to-date, as well as the organization's most recent year's financial statement.
- ❑ A list of the organization's board of directors.

Any organization that recently submitted a full proposal for a larger BCBSMA Foundation grant will have already provided the above information. That information is kept on file and there is no need to submit these attachments unless you have more current information to share.

Grant award recipients will receive a letter and grant agreement from the BCBSMA foundation. Funds will be released upon receipt of the signed agreement from the chief executive officer or other duly authorized representative of the organization. Applicants who receive a grant from The Catalyst Fund are prohibited from submitting another application within a twelve-month period.

The Catalyst Fund application is available to download from the BCBSMA Foundation web site (www.BlueCrossFoundation.org) in the Grants Center or by contacting the Foundation at 617-246-3744.
