



## Special Initiatives Grants

### Program Overview

The Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA) Foundation will provide a limited number of one-year grants up to \$50,000 to Massachusetts organizations undertaking activities that expand access to health care for low-income and vulnerable people and impact Massachusetts by:

- developing innovative programs that expand access to coverage and care;
- advancing knowledge and information in support of low-income health issues, and laying the foundation for evidence-based results for health care delivery, public and subsidized coverage, and behavioral health services;
- promoting efforts that validate the impact of social services, such as housing and food security, on health status;
- evaluating programs, or engaging in a variety of other activities that are aligned with the Foundation's strategic priorities to promote access to quality care and coverage, behavioral health services, and social equity and health for low-income and vulnerable residents of the Commonwealth.

### Funding Guidelines and Criteria:

The Foundation will award one-year, non-renewable grants of up to \$50,000, with proposals accepted and reviewed three times a year. This grant program does not require a Letter of Inquiry. The Foundation reserves the right to make grant awards in amounts less than \$50,000. Successful proposals will:

- Focus on access to health care and coverage for low-income and vulnerable consumers. Programs that can indicate opportunities for cost savings for consumers are desirable.
- Describe a program that doesn't specifically conform to the requirements of other Foundation program focus areas, yet has merit because it aligns with the Foundation's mission and strategic focus areas of 1) coverage and care, 2) behavioral health, and 3) social equity and health.
- Articulate a pilot, incubator idea, or demonstration project that supports the Foundation's mission and the strategic priorities stated above.
- Describe an evaluation, assessment or measurement initiative that advances knowledge about a health care issue aligned with the Foundation's strategic focus areas and mission.
- Clearly describe a deliverable or tangible outcome in twelve (12) months.
- Promote a linkage between grantmaking and policy initiatives.

The Foundation will not consider requests to support the following:

- direct medical and clinical care
- access issues pertaining to specific diseases or conditions
- health care issues solely focused on a specific demographic (e.g. children, women, seniors, etc.)
- organizational restructuring or workflow improvements
- salaries for new positions with no evidence of sustainability beyond the grant period
- event or conference sponsorships.

### Eligible Applicants and Selection Process

In reviewing proposals for Special Initiatives grants, the Foundation will only consider those organizations that primarily serve low-income and vulnerable people, particularly individuals receiving MassHealth or other subsidized health insurance. The Foundation does not fund for-profit companies, religious organizations, nor individuals. No more than three grants will be awarded in each grant cycle.

- A program’s potential for scaling or replication will be taken into consideration.
- The proposal should describe a framework or process for determining measures of success.
- The request should describe other potential funding sources, committed grants, and pending requests.

### Deadlines and Submission Requirements

Full proposals must be submitted through the Foundation’s online portal according to the schedule below. Applicants will be notified about the status of their proposal after each Board meeting.

Requirement	Proposal Due Date	Notification of Awards
Submit full proposal through online portal; <b>no Letter of Inquiry (LOI) required.</b>	February 21, 2020	April 22, 2020
	April 24, 2020	June 17, 2020
	August 21, 2020	October 27, 2020

### Additional Attachments

Organizations will be required to develop and submit the following attachments:

- I. **Project Budget Worksheet:** Utilizing the budget worksheet available on the portal, describe how the funding would be allocated to cover expenses, including resources critical to conducting the analysis.
- II. **Organization Budget:** Upload your organization’s board or department-approved budget for the most recent full year.
- III. **Letters of Support:** Upload a minimum of three letters of support that illustrate your organization’s capacity for making a measurable impact on the issue to be addressed by the program, with prioritization from the key stakeholders and partners that the organization plans to work with for effective program implementation.

### Questions

Applicants are welcome to contact Foundation staff with any questions as they develop their proposals. For proposal development questions, please contact:

Jacque Anderson, Senior Director of Grantmaking  
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617-246-5434

Sarah Merrefield, Senior Program Officer  
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For technical and logistical questions related to accessing the online grantmaking portal, please contact: Evelyn Monteiro, Grants Management Administrator; [Evelyn.Monteiro@bcbsma.com](mailto:Evelyn.Monteiro@bcbsma.com); 617.246.4850