



Learning and Action in Policy and Partnerships (LAPP)

DATA ACROSS SECTORS FOR HEALTH (DASH)

Frequently Asked Questions

Learning and Action in Policy and Partnerships (LAPP)

Leveraging COVID-19 Relief Funding to Advance Sustainable Data-Sharing Policies for Improving Health, Equity and Well-Being

Request for Proposals - Frequently Asked Questions

****Note**** Questions submitted to info@dashconnect.org using “LAPP Program” in the subject line, will be added to this LIVE Q&A and responses will be posted on Fridays.

Please note that these answers reflect content included in [the LAPP Brochure](#) and guidance within the online application at my.rwjf.org. All LAPP program resources are available online at dashconnect.org/lapp. If your question is not answered in either of those two places or below, please send it to info@dashconnect.org and include “LAPP Program” in the subject line.

DASH operates [three major funding programs, which are described here](#). These programs operate on different timelines and have different audiences and purposes and may be a better fit for your community interests.

LAPP BACKGROUND

1. Q: Is this a new funding program?

A: This is a second round of funding within the Learning and Action in Policy and Partnerships program.

2. Q: How many applications will be funded?

A: We will fund up to 5 awardees with \$80,000 for a 7 month grant. We expect to receive more high-quality applications than we will be able to fund, so we are also encouraging applicants to leverage their new membership in [the online community](#) to reach out to those similar projects or find where they have shared lessons learned or advice.

3. Q: How do you define sectors?

A: By sectors, we are referring to fields or people/organizations working in a specific area of expertise. For LAPP, we are interested in sectors relevant to community health improvement objectives with a focus on health care, public health and social services. Sectors could include: health care, public health, behavioral health, housing, human services, education, community development, criminal justice, public safety, etc.).

4. Q: How is LAPP defining "local" and "community-level"?

A: For the purposes of the LAPP project, “community-level” is broadly defined as a city, county, town, village, or neighborhood in which there is an existing or planned multi-sector data-sharing project in place that this opportunity will help to advance.

5. Q: Can you further define the policy change objectives for LAPP? Could it be policy implementation models that promote best practices?

A: What we most care about is that LAPP awardees ultimately use the award funding for efforts that enable communities to strengthen and leverage state partnerships in support of data-sharing efforts to improve health, well-being, and equity. Ideally, these efforts will inform statewide policy and systems change that drive sustainable outcomes aimed at directly improving the lives of those in the communities served. Applicants should consider a direct statement about how the state might use this opportunity to advance capacity to share and use multi-sector data in communities across the state in ways that center equity.

6. Q: What is considered a multi-sector partnership?

A: By sectors, we mean those organizational categories that have a specific focus or purpose. Examples include public health, health care, housing, education, transportation, civic engagement, community development, law enforcement, the private sector -- any set of organizations or industry that has an impact on individual and community health. When DASH talks about multi-sector partnerships, we mean to support collaborations that include participants from organizations from different sectors. We support multi-sector approaches because we believe that individuals and communities are better understood by incorporating and integrating information and data from multiple lenses -- and as a corrective to the idea that we should only be using clinical health care metrics when we think about health, well-being and equity. In 2020 and beyond, DASH is especially interested in collaborations that include public health, health care and at least one community-based social service sector. Multiple organizations or jurisdictions do not necessarily translate into multiple sectors.

ELIGIBILITY

7. Q: Can nonprofits with a national scope apply if they are seeking funding to advance work within a specific local community where we have existing partners (even though our organization may not have physical offices in that local or state community)?

A: Yes, so long as the applicant organization meets all other eligibility criteria as noted within the RFP.

- Applicants must be either public entities or nonprofit organizations that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and must not be private foundations.
- Applicants must be based in the United States or its territories.

8. Q: If our existing collaboration is funded by a state grant would that make us eligible?

A: State grant funding on its own is not sufficient evidence of a strong and active relationship between a community collaboration and its state government. Please refer to the LAPP Brochure for further information about selection criteria.

9. Q: Is there a cost sharing requirement?

A: No. There are no cost-sharing requirements for this project.

10. Q: Are state agencies eligible to apply?

A: Yes. To apply, applicants must be either public entities or nonprofit organizations that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and must not be private foundations. We are seeking applications from existing partnerships that include a local collaboration and state government. We anticipate that most applications will come from community organizations, as a representation of significant involvement of community partners. Local or state public entities are eligible to apply, and will need to clearly describe an active and meaningful partnership with community-based organizations.

11. Q: Our existing collaboration does not meet the requirement for having a specific community engagement process in place for involving persons with lived experience and/or community residents. Is it acceptable to begin this process now and still be eligible?

A: Our goal is that this funding will be used to ensure mechanisms to authentically share decision-making with community residents and people with lived experience in allocating COVID-19 related federal funding for purposes of this project. Note that sharing power requires more than gathering input (e.g., focus groups and surveys) and reserving a few token spots on workgroups or committees.

12. Q: Can you share more regarding the expectation concerning existing or planned data-sharing or data-integration efforts with state governments?

A: Besides the guidance available within the Eligibility and Selection Criteria in the LAPP Brochure, it may be helpful to recognize that the seven month duration of this next LAPP cohort is not long enough to create relationships that are not already in place within communities or between community entities and their state partners. Therefore, we are looking for evidence of an existing and leverageable relationship between the state and a multi-sector community collaboration, which will support your assertion that you can achieve your project goals in the seven months allotted. It is not necessary that data-sharing is already underway.

13. Q: I am part of a multi-sector collaboration. Which organization in our collaboration should apply?

A: The application can be submitted by any eligible organizational member of a collaboration. Ideally, it would come from the collaboration member most central to the management or implementation of the proposed work. The budget and project activities may reflect expanded roles for other organizations in the collaboration beyond the lead applicant.

14. Q: Can the same entity apply more than once, if each application represents a separate opportunity?

A: Multiple applications from the same entity are allowed. It is highly unlikely that one organization would receive two awards from the LAPP program in one application period.

15. Q: If you are a current or past DASH applicant or grantee, can you apply for LAPP funding?

A: Yes. Past application or receipt of DASH funding does not disqualify your application, though DASH is interested in learning from a diverse set of communities, and may prioritize those who have not yet received DASH funding.

STATE INVOLVEMENT

16. Q: When you say state government within the RFP, can this also apply to local city government partnerships?

For this round of LAPP, projects may focus on how a local government entity uses COVID-19 relief funding to advance data sharing or data integration. However, the state must also be engaged in the project to, at a minimum, use the local findings to inform state policies that integrate local data-sharing or data integration initiatives into system design. A letter from the state is required, even for projects focused on local COVID-19 relief funding.

17. Q: Is the involvement of a state agency required for award?

A: Yes. Please see the Brochure for a rationale and details of this requirement.

18. Q: What kind of commitment or involvement is expected from state agencies?

A. State partners are expected to be actively involved throughout the seven-month grant period, and committed to the partnership beyond the grant period.

19. Q: When you say "state," is there any specific agency you are referring to, such as a state Medicaid agency, Mental Health Authority, Housing agency, Child and Family Services, or other?

A: No. We are not being prescriptive about what state agency or department is partnering with communities on this multi-sector data sharing project. Any state agency or department that plays a role in data sharing to support health equity and health improvement can be involved, but should be relevant to the project. If the proposal is focused on state use of COVID-19 relief funding, the agency or department should have a role in decisions around how that funding will be used.

20. Q: What is the role of the state as we consider the scale of the work more broadly across multiple communities?

A: Applicants should consider a direct statement about how the state might use this opportunity to advance capacity in communities across the state.

21. Q: Can our project be focused on the whole state or should it be focused on a particular local community, city or county?

A: The intention of the LAPP program is to support collaborations between states and a constituent community, be it a neighborhood, city or even county.

APPLICATIONS

22. Q: Will a program officer be available to further answer questions from organizations considering to submit an application?

A: The DASH and CHCS program office staff are unable to respond to very specific questions on projects, such as “Is this a good idea?” or “Is this likely to be funded?” We will answer all generally applicable questions submitted to info@dashconnect.org before November 1, 2021, though some identifying details may be omitted in the public response within these LAP FAQs.

23. Q: Can you help me decide whether/how this opportunity would be a good fit for my organization or collaboration?

A: DASH is not able to respond to specific requests of this type when the opportunity is still in solicitation. Please carefully review the eligibility and selection criteria in the LAPP brochure, the Informational Webinar recording, and FAQs at www.dashconnect.org/lapp to determine whether this opportunity is a good fit for your organization and collaboration.

24. Q: Can I apply for both LAPP and other DASH program funding?

A: Yes, although you will still need to submit a separate application for each funding opportunity.

25. Q: Can a private technical solution provider who works with nonprofit communities co-apply with one of the nonprofit partners?

A: DASH seeks strong, active collaborative relationships from across multiple sectors working towards a common goal. A public entity or 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization can include a business as a partner in the collaborative endeavor, but the applicant must meet the eligibility requirements.

26. Q: I am part of a multi-sector collaboration. Which organization in our collaboration should apply?

A: The application can be submitted by any eligible organizational member of a collaboration. Ideally, it would come from the collaboration member most central to the management or implementation of the proposed work. The budget and project activities may reflect expanded roles for other organizations in the collaboration beyond the lead applicant.

27. Q: Can two organizations apply for funding if they would be working collaboratively on the same project? **A:** No, one organization should apply on behalf of the collaboration. The applicant may include fund for other partners as a contract in the budget.

28. Q: Can separate entities within the same state's government apply separately (two different projects within one state)?

A: Yes, as long as the other organization and collaborative project meet the LAPP eligibility criteria.

29. Q: Should a site visit from the DASH Program Office (PO) be included in the budget?

A: No. A “low-effort” site visit is a possible activity of a LAPP project. The DASH PO may request this, or the awardee may request it. If there is mutual interest, the DASH PO will assume any staff travel costs.

30. Q: I have applied for or received funding from DASH in the past. Am I eligible for this opportunity? A: Yes.

31. Q: Can I apply if I am currently funded by one of the All In Partner program offices (DASH, PHNCI, BUILD, CACHI, NJHI, CHF, etc.)?

A: Yes. All members of All In are encouraged to apply.

32. Q: What other financial materials may we send if we do not have two years of audited financials?

A: If an organization meets the eligibility criteria but does not have audited financial statements, please provide internal financial statements, and the DASH PO may follow up with additional questions. The requirement for two years of financial information is to understand the capacity of the applicant to lead the collaborative activity. You may wish to consider applying through a fiscal agent or with another member of the collaboration as the lead if that would represent your application.

33. Q: How can a state agency submit the required two years of audited financial statements per the RFP requirement?

A: If an applicant cannot provide two years of audited financial statements, they could provide their internal financial statements; the DASH PO may follow up with additional questions.

RWJF Online Application System

34. Q: I don't see the DASH LAPP grant listed as a current call for proposals when I log in to myrwjf.org.

A: The LAPP program is offered by the DASH Program Office, which is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. We use the RWJF automated online application system, but the DASH Request for Proposals will not appear on the RWJF Current Calls for Proposal list. You must click on the [application link](#) provided at www.dashconnect.org/lapp to access the solicitation. When you log in to the [RWJF portal](#) subsequently, it should appear at the top of the screen in “My Applications.”

35. Q: I just logged into RWJF to check this out and see I have an ID. Does this mean I started an application?

A: If you have ever made an application to RWJF before, or been included in one, you may have an ID. If you have started a proposal, you should have received an email from rwjf.org with the proposal ID. If you believe you have started an application we recommend you try to find it before starting another. If you run into any problems or questions, please e-mail info@dashconnect.org and include “LAPP Program” in the subject line, with as much detail as you can provide, and we will make sure that you don’t duplicate your effort.

36. Q: If we have an active application for another RWJF grant, can we still apply for this one?

A: DASH does not place any restrictions on applying while you have other active applications. If you have concerns about that particular RWJF grant, it may be worth reaching out to the program officer.

37. Q: What are the requirements in terms of an abstract, proposal, and budget?

A: The application requirements are listed in the LAPP Brochure. The best way to understand what is required from the application is by creating an account at my.rwjf.org and exploring the application itself. The link is available at www.dashconnect.org/lapp

USE OF FUNDING

38. Q: What are the allowable uses of funding? Are there any types of expenses that cannot be funded using this grant?

A: The funding is to be used to support coordinated local or state government and community partnerships as they leverage COVID-19 relief funds to advance policies for data-sharing and data-integration efforts, improve a culture of health and advance equity, and, importantly, inform state policy development. Please refer to the brochure for a non-exhaustive list of activities that the award and TA could support. The approved and disallowed uses of grant funding are detailed in the “Budget Preparation Guidelines” document available in the “Resources” menu within the RWJF online application system.

39. Q: What response is required for the question about “Technical Assistance: Needs and Interests”?

A: With this question, the DASH/CHCS team is seeking some sense of the interests or needs of potential grantees for technical support. This answer will not be scored and is solely for Program Office information gathering.

40. Q: Can the funds be used for data system programming staff time?

A: Yes, staff time is an allowable use of funds. We recommend you tie the use of the budget for programmer time to the demonstrated objectives of your work plan in your application, as well as explain how the funds would be a supplement to regular programming staff time.

41. Q: Will DASH fund the purchase of a data platform if the community collaboration has a solid work plan?

A: Use of funds to purchase technology is an eligible use of the award, and we have funded similar work before. In our experience, a particular technology implementation is not the answer but more of a tool for systems change. A compelling proposal would explain why this activity would generate a change in the community, and how this tool would accelerate your progress and create value for the field.

42. Q: Can funds be used for consultants and contractors?

A: A potential activity that LAPP funds can support includes engaging individual consultants or other collaborative experts to address a problem or an opportunity (legal, collaboration, governance, etc.). In fact, the short-term nature of the LAPP program suggests that consultants and contractors with specific technical knowledge or experience are appropriate uses of funds. Please note that the most relevant, experienced and cost-effective sources of contract expertise may be other community organizations that have already addressed the particular challenge or opportunity to be addressed.

43. Q: Can funds be used for temporary staff persons?

A: Yes, that is an acceptable use of funds. You would also want to address how the impact of that temporary position will build your community collaboration's longer-term capacity for collaboration and data sharing. Please see the Brochure, which includes a non-exhaustive list of uses of funds.

44. Q: Can we use LAPP funds for evaluation?

A: LAPP leverages DASH funds to learn important lessons about what works and doesn't work for multi-sector collaborative data sharing. A robust evaluation focused on understanding successful and unsuccessful work in this field is a welcome component of any application. If the application is focused primarily on evaluation, then the initiative being evaluated should be especially significant in terms of lessons, replicability or impact.

45. Q: Would a for-profit data and analytics partner be an eligible expense?

A: Yes. For more details on allowable expenses, please consult the guidance available within the online RWJF application system, under "Resources."

ALL IN MEMBERSHIP

46. Q: How do I join All In?

A: If you're new to All In, the first step to join is to sign up for [the online community](#) and create an individual member profile.

47. Q: Is there a cost or fee to becoming an All In member?

A: No, there is no financial cost to joining All In, but members are encouraged to participate in discussions, attend webinars, and use and contribute resources to generate a rich community of practice to advance this field.

48. Q: Is there a limit to the number of people in an organization or collaboration that can or should join All In?

A: It is a requirement for the applicant organization to become a member of [All In](#). We encourage other members of the collaborative to join. All In is a broad learning collaborative that can help connect you to resources and other support for this work.

LAPP AWARD AND ACTIVITIES

49. Q: Can you speak more to participation and reporting requirements?

A: Grantees will participate in short, periodic check-in calls with the PO staff, be invited to engage in discussions on the All In platform, and may be asked to host a low-effort, in-person or virtual meeting with PO staff. The meeting is for the PO staff to witness activities and/or milestones alongside the awardee, and not an elaborate presentation. PO staff will be available for additional consultation if requested.

Upon completion of the grant, awardees will be expected to submit a concluding report, which will include lessons learned that others could benefit from, and when appropriate to share products of their project. Awardees should also expect to participate in an exit interview to discuss their contract successes and challenges.

50. Q: Is there a specific data system, electronic tool or technical model preferred?

A: There is no specific tool, model or approach preferred or required, as DASH recognizes that tools are responsive or relevant to the local context.