An Introduction to the Activation Fund

Informational Webinar
Agenda

• Introduction to The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts (“The Health Foundation”)
• Overview of the Activation Fund
• Timeline for 2020 Activation Fund
• Q&A Session
• Contact Information
Introduction to The Health Foundation

- Formally established in January 1999 from the sale of Central Massachusetts Health Care, Inc., a physician-owned, not-for-profit HMO
- Mission: To use its resources to improve the health of those who live or work in the Central Massachusetts region, with particular emphasis on vulnerable populations and unmet needs
Central Massachusetts Region

The Health Foundation's region consists of 81 cities and towns in and around Worcester County.
Grantmaking Approach

• The Health Foundation does not identify specific health issues as funding priorities

• Health is defined broadly:
  - “Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” – The World Health Organization

• Two grantmaking avenues, only one open for applications in 2020
  - Activation Fund - OPEN
  - Synergy Initiative - CLOSED
Activation Fund Grants by Health Issue 2000-2019
Total: $7,645,559

- Mental Health (11%) $859,152
- Children's Mental Health (9%) $697,471
- Substance Use Disorder (8%) $614,673
- Workforce Development (13%) $962,373
- Access (9%) $707,825
- Public Health/Health Promotion (9%) $692,875
- Youth Development (6%) $421,738
- Homelessness/Housing (7%) $522,594
- Healthy Eating (4%) $333,965
- Disability (4%) $301,296
- Other Issues* (20%) $1,531,597

* Other Issues: Aging; Assessments; Child Abuse; Community Development; Domestic Violence/Violence Prevention; Economic Self-Sufficiency; End of Life Issues; Environment; Fitness; Oral Health; and Prisoner Reentry

as of 9.20.19
Organizations Receiving an Activation Fund Grant 2000-2019
By Number of Grants Received
Total: $7,645,559

89 Different Organizations Received 130 Grants
Funding Exclusions

• In general, The Health Foundation will not support:
  - Projects outside of Central Massachusetts
  - Endowments
  - Capital campaigns
  - Fund drives or sponsorship of events
  - Scholarships
  - Retirement of operating deficits

• In addition, by law, The Health Foundation is not permitted to provide direct support to individuals for projects, scholarships, or health care, nor may it fund electoral activities or candidates for public office
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Overview of the Activation Fund

• Approximately 17% of The Health Foundation’s grantmaking portfolio
  - Typically, 5 to 11 projects have been funded in each Activation Fund grant cycle

• Grant period generally 12 months in duration

• Grants have averaged $58,000 historically
  - Average grant of $72,000 in 2019

• Historical range of $10,000 - $100,000 per grant
  - Roughly ⅓ of grants have been for $40,000 or less
  - Grants have been made to small grassroots organizations
Recent Activation Fund Applications

The application process is competitive, and more applications are invited than are funded. 24% (100/417) of Letters of Intent were invited to submit an application. 18% (74/417) of Letters of Intent were funded.

In 2019, 100% (11/11) of funded applicants consulted with The Health Foundation staff before submitting Letters of Intent.
How the Activation Fund works

The Activation Fund supports discrete projects addressing health in Central Massachusetts that activate:

- Creative and innovative approaches
- Strategic new partnerships
- Exploration of emerging challenges and opportunities
- Increased capacity and effectiveness

Activation Fund projects can sustain themselves after the grant period
Activation Fund Guidelines

• Intended to support discrete projects that *activate*:  
  - Creative and innovative approaches to alleviating community health concerns  
  - Partnerships to address health issues with new strategies  
  - Exploration of emerging health challenges and opportunities  
  - And/or community organizations’ movement to the next level of capacity and effectiveness, which can be sustained

• Projects do not require ongoing fundraising efforts to be sustained

• Co-funding by other organizations is welcome
2019 Activation Fund Grants (Total: $793,702)

- Abby's House - Community Partnerships Project
- Ascentria Community Services - Immigration Legal Assistance Program
- Community Legal Aid - Saving Housing Opportunities in Worcester
- Friendly House - Refrigerated Food Van
- GAAMHA - PBS Clinician
- LUK - Telehealth Implementation
- Neighbor To Neighbor - Our Neighbors Count! - 2020 U.S. Census Count
- Quaboag Valley CDC - Financial Fitness Club
- Quinsigamond Community College - Oral Health Career Pathway
- Seven Hills Foundation - ASPiRE! - Sustainable Farming
- SMOC - Creation of Sober Housing in Fitchburg
Successful Past Activation Fund Grants*

• **ClayWorks & ArtWorks Project (2018)**
  Quaboag Valley CDC
  • Paid for pottery wheels, signage, marketing, and initial staffing for the launch of a pottery studio as part of the redevelopment of a downtown building block to revitalize downtown Ware and create jobs and healthy activities.

*Additional details and examples available on The Health Foundation’s website: [http://www.hfcm.org/](http://www.hfcm.org/).*
Successful Past Activation Fund Grants*

• *Training Room Renovation (2017)*
  Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Project
  • Renovated a training room with new equipment to enable remote training for new and existing volunteers, staff and board, thereby increasing recruitment and retention of volunteers.

*Additional details and examples available on The Health Foundation’s website: [http://www.hfcm.org/](http://www.hfcm.org/).
Successful Past Activation Fund Grants*

• **Hudson-Sudbury Jail Diversion Program (2017)**
  Advocates, Inc.
  • Launched a partnership with the Hudson and Sudbury Police Departments to divert Hudson or Sudbury residents with mental health and/or substance abuse disorders from the criminal justice system to the behavioral health system for treatment.

• **Students for Higher: Rising Up for Autism (2015)**
  HMEA
  • Developed a pipeline of trained Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapists and respite workers to support children and families affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder.

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Consultations: Prior to April 17, 2020
Letters of Intent Due: April 30, 2020
Applications Invited: June 19, 2020
Applications Due: August 3, 2020
Grant Awards Notified: Sept. 18, 2020

Expected Grant Period: October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021
Recommended Next Steps

1. Review Activation Fund guidelines

2. Schedule early consultation(s) with staff
   • Potential applicants are asked to have meetings/calls prior to April 17, 2020 to discuss whether a project fits within the Activation Fund guidelines
   • Contact staff at info@hfcm.org

3. Prepare letter of intent
   • 3-page narrative and budget
     • See website for cover page and additional requirements
   • Draft letters of intent may be submitted for preliminary feedback before April 2020
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Q&A Session

• Please share your questions!
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For Activation Fund inquiries, please e-mail info@hfcm.org

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Thank you for attending this webinar!
Please respond to the brief survey that will be sent to you via e-mail.