



FY 2021 Navigator Outreach and Enrollment Grant Program Request for Proposals: Responses to Applicant Questions

May 14, 2020

Funding Areas and Grant Structure

Q: If an applicant submitted a letter under one funding area, but now realizes that they would be a better fit under a separate funding area, are applicants allowed to submit proposals under a different focus area than the one they submitted their letter for?

A: If you feel this applies to your agency, please send an email explaining why a different funding area would better suit your agency to navigatorgrants@mnsure.org.

Q: If a proposal includes paid partners (sub-grantees), will a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a sub-grantee suffice in lieu of a contract?

A: MNsure's legal team will review MOUs to determine if they are acceptable and advise if something more specific is required.

Q: Can you confirm that geographic grants do *not* require individual grantees to serve the entire state.

A: Correct. Individual grantees in the geographic funding area must identify a specific geographic service area of the grant, which would be a list of cities or counties within Minnesota. When selecting grants for this funding area, MNsure will seek to fund a network of grantees ensuring statewide access to navigator assistance.

Q: In the application, does lead agency mean the person that's responsible for preparing the grant or the owner/CEO of the single organization and what if they're the same person.

A: The lead agency is the public, tribal, for-profit or nonprofit submitting the grant proposal. Individuals are not eligible to respond to the request for proposals (RFP).

If there is only one organization seeking funding in the proposal, then that agency is the lead agency.

Q: Can you clarify what is considered a paid partnership vs. unpaid partnership vs mixed partnership?

A: The following examples may help clarify the different between the partnerships. There are three agencies that are planning to apply for a grant; Agency A, Business B, and Corporation C.

- Single organization grant structure: Agency A submits a grant proposal alone and requests \$50,000. Agency A is the lead agency.
- Paid partnership: Agency A, Business B and Corporation C submit a grant proposal together and request \$150,000 (\$60,000 for Agency A, \$45,000 for Business B and \$45,000 for Corporation C). Agency A is the lead agency and Business B and Corporation C are paid partners since they are also receiving grant funds.
- Unpaid partnership: Agency A, Business B and Corporation C submit a grant proposal together and request \$60,000 (\$60,000 for Agency A and no funding for Business B and Corporation C). Agency A is the lead agency and both Business B and Corporation C are unpaid partners since they are not receiving grant funds.
- Mixed partnership: Agency A, Business B and Corporation C submit a grant proposal together and request \$110,000 (\$60,000 for Agency A, \$50,000 for Business B and no funding for Corporation C). Agency A is the lead agency, Business B is a paid partner since they are receiving grant funds and Corporation C is an unpaid partner since they are not receiving grant funds.

Grant Work Plan and Reporting

Q: Talk about new expectations regarding new outcomes associated with education and outreach activities for the updated RFP.

A: There have been no changes in the RFP regarding the expectations associated with education and outreach activities. We recognize that the current public health crisis may impact agencies' objectives and strategies and anticipate that applicants will explain any impact in their proposal. However, this is an "outreach and enrollment" grant program and MNSure expects that grantees will need to adapt to the current environment and continue to find ways to reach and educate the public to encourage them to enroll in health insurance coverage.

Q: Given the current situation limiting face-to-face contact, do you still not want to hear about using social media as part of an applicant's outreach strategies?

A: We encourage proposals to include social media as part of your outreach "strategies." The restriction in the RFP is that social media posts should not be included in the "*projected number of outreach and education activities*" or "*projected number of individuals reached through outreach and education activities*" (emphasis added).

We exclude social media from the projected number because they quickly inflate the outreach and education numbers reported by grantees since agencies could make several social media posts a day potentially reaching thousands of individuals each time. In previous grant periods, we found including social media unintentionally devalued other types of outreach and education activities that required more grantee resources.

For a similar reason we ask that media activities not be included in the “projected number of individuals reached through outreach and education activities.” Media activities could include radio or newspaper interviews, editorials, letters to the editor, etc. However, we encourage media activities as a strategy for reaching and educating consumers and, because of the work involved, media activities can be included in the “projected number of outreach and education activities.”

Q: Regarding grantee reporting requirements, do you have a list of the specific client/client session information and other metrics that would be required to complete the reports?

A: You can view a sample monthly report for current grantees (please note that these reporting requirements may change for FY 2021):

- [FY 2019 Geographic grantee monthly report](#) (PDF)
- [FY 2019 Population grantee monthly report](#) (PDF)

Q: Would grantees be required to attend health fairs/community events to promote their MNsure navigation services?

A: No, grantees are not required to attend fairs or community events. Some grantees include these events as part of their strategy for achieving their grant objectives. Occasionally, MNsure receives requests for a navigator presence at community events and will work with grantees to identify a partner available to participate.

Q: We are having a hard time estimating how many navigator-assisted successful enrollments and renewals we can expect in a year. Are you able to provide any guidance in this area – such as a general range of successful enrollments/renewals expected from organizations receiving capacity building grants?

MNsure is able to provide data from the last full grant year (July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019) for Geographic and Population grantees:

- Geographic grantees: Average of 2,860 successful applications/enrollments/renewals (5,177 for Twin Cities metro area grantees and 1,317 for grantees in Greater Minnesota)
- Population grantees: Average of 1,080 successful applications/enrollments/renewals (1,336 for Twin Cities metro area grantees and 695 for grantees in Greater Minnesota)

We do not have any data for capacity building grants since this is a new funding area. While MNsure requires capacity building applicants to set an objective around the number of successful applications and enrollments, we do not have the same performance expectations as for grantees in the geographic and population funding areas. The purpose of the capacity building funding area is to identify agencies with the *potential* to successfully serve an area or population and support the development of that potential.

Q: On the second tab of the Excel workplan document, it states, "The first two objectives must contain the exact wording provided." And yet, the first two objectives ask us to "insert objectives..." Can you please clarify this? Are there specific objectives we are

supposed to measure related to project management and financial management, or are we expected to define our own?

A: Thank you. Those instructions were included there in error and the workplan templates have been updated.

MNsure does not have pre-specified objectives for this area, but objectives around timely grant reporting, coordination of activities with MNsure and appropriate grant financial tracking would all be appropriate.

Q: Our organization has a question about the tab on the Work Plan template named “Grant Management Objectives and Strategies Work Plan Template.” Could you explain the reasoning behind the addition of grant management objectives to the population grantee workplan?

A: The purpose of the grant management tab on the work plan is for the applicant to demonstrate there is a reasonable plan in place to ensure the agency can fulfill the lead agency responsibilities outlined on pages 9-10 of the RFP, including submitting timely monthly progress and financial reports, as well as collaborating and coordinating with MNsure on a variety of activities.

Grant Budget

Q: Is there an allowed percentage of administrative/indirect costs?

A: Indirect costs will be capped at 10% unless an organization documents exemption from indirect-cost rules. In accordance with Minnesota Statute 16B.98, Subd. 1, grant recipients of state fund appropriations are required to minimize administrative costs. MNsure will negotiate appropriate limits so the state receives optimum benefit for grants funds (see pages 19 and 27 of the RFP).

Q: Does the 10% limit on indirect costs include paid partners?

A: The 10% limit applies to each agency budget in the grant, not the overall grant. For example, if one paid partner chooses not to claim indirect costs, another agency cannot claim a larger indirect cost percentage, even though the overall indirect cost claimed in the grant would still be 10% or less.

Letters of Support and Required Statements

Q: We have a letter of support from a county that asked our collaboration/alliance to start MNsure navigator outreach and enrollment in their locality. Since they aren't a paid or unpaid partner, is there any way this letter could still be included?

A: Although letters of support from other entities are not required, you can include them as part of the attachment in the Letters of Support application section.

Q: Does it matter if our forms were signed in March, back when we were originally planning to apply?

A: If the forms (Attachments A-F) were completed in March, there is no need to update the information unless there has been a change.

Q: Will MNsure accept electronic signatures on forms?

A: Yes.

Q: Will you still require a notarized signature on Attachment B, the “State of Minnesota Affidavit of Noncollusion”?

A: If you can provide a notarized signature, please do. If you cannot, please provide a non-notarized signature and we will ask you to update with a notarized signature at a later date.

Q: Regarding Attachment C, “Workforce Certification Information,” does it apply to single organization that has less than 20 employees and if no do you still want us to sign and upload all the docs even though does apply or affiliate them?

A: The Workforce Certification Information document includes an option (Box C) for companies to select that they have not employed more than 40 full-time employees. All agencies submitting a proposal for the Geographic or Population funding area are required to submit this document because their contract could exceed \$100,000.

Q: Regarding Attachment D, “Certification Regarding Lobbying,” is this document asking us if we affiliate or support any political association?

A: No, the document defines the activities more specifically than “affiliate” or “support.” Applicants must certify that no *funds* provided by MNsure through the grant agreement will be used to support lobbying activities. A definition of what is considered lobbying and who is a lobbyist is available from the [Minnesota Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board website](#).

Q: Regarding Attachment F, “Trade Secret/Confidential Data Notification,” what do you consider trade secret if you're only single organization that provides navigator services only?

A: Under Minnesota statutes, after MNsure has completed the evaluation process, the proposals are wholly public data unless they contain trade secret information as defined by Minnesota Statutes section 13.37 subdivision 1(b).

An applicant who is claiming or marking data submitted as trade secret or confidential should provide specific analysis as to why, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13, the applicant believes the data to be not public or trade secret. MNsure is not bound by an applicant's explanation or designation of information as trade secret or confidential: MNsure reviews each designation of trade secret information by an applicant independently and on a case by case

basis, and MNSure must make the final determination as to whether data meet the legal definition of trade secret information (e.g., advisory opinion [05-024](#)).

Please note that claiming information is “proprietary” is not sufficient to meet the definition of trade secret information (see advisory opinion [03-017](#)).

General Interest

Q: Will MNSure have another request for proposals (RFP) for navigator agencies who want to assist consumers with the insulin safety net program?

A: No, the new insulin safety net program will not be another RFP. Navigator agencies that wish to participate in the insulin safety net program will need to execute an amendment to their current navigator contract. More information on the insulin safety net program will be available later in May.

Q: When will this second webinar be posted to the website?

A: The webinar presentation and script are available on the [Assister Funding Opportunities](#) webpage under the “Webinars” heading.

Q: What is the response time for emailed questions?

A: Responses to all questions received by the May 13 deadline have been included in this document.

Q: If MNSure already has a number of organizations that were successful in applying and getting grants and these organizations have a very high chance of getting it back or are going to be given an extension, is there any need for an organization like ours to spend many hours applying for the grant? Or do you have new grants or spots for organization like ours who never got the grant?

A: The current Navigator Outreach and Enrollment Grant program concludes on June 30, 2020. The FY 2021 Navigator Outreach and Enrollment Grant Request for Proposals is a new round of grants and current grantees must apply and compete for an award along with all other applicants.

The review committee will score applicants based on the merits of each proposal (see pages 32-33 of the RFP). For the geographic and population funding areas in particular, MNSure will provide the committee with data on an agency’s past performance, including certified staff history, application and enrollment statistics, and per enrollee payment history, to help evaluate whether the agency can achieve the objectives and strategies in their work plan.

Based on the letters of intent submitted, we anticipate a large number of grant proposals will be submitted in response to this solicitation. To be competitive, we recommend an agency evaluate their past performance, their current activities and future potential and select the funding area most appropriate for their situation. For example, agencies that currently have low application and enrollment numbers (as measured by per enrollee payments), or undeveloped case

management practices, minimum community outreach experience, or lack financial management capacity will not be as competitive in the geographic and population funding areas.

This year, MNSure added the capacity building funding area recognizing that there are agencies that have the potential to be successful applicants for the geographic or population funding area in the future, but do not currently have enough navigator experience or activities to submit a competitive proposal in those areas.

Q: Does working another state as marketplace agent (ACA) will help us increase our score experience?

A: The relevance of experience as an assister with another state health insurance exchange, or the federal marketplace, will depend on the funding area. To achieve the goals of the geographic and population funding area, MNSure is seeking agencies with experience as a MNSure-contracted partner and as MNSure-certified assisters. For the capacity building funding area, experience working as an assister with another state health insurance exchange or the federal marketplace should be included in the “Relevant Experience and Activities” section of the application.

Q: What is the process to get examples of past successful applications and how long does it take?

A: To request examples of past successful applications, you will need to submit a data request. The data request form is available on mnsure.org and can be emailed to datarequests@mnsure.org. Data requests are processed in the order that they are received.

Note: Some questions have been edited for clarity or to maintain the confidentiality of the potential respondent.