

ISHI Upstream Fund
INFORMATION SESSION I: Proposal Process & Criteria
December 19, 2019
Q&A

GENERAL

1. **In the criteria for Feasibility, what do you mean by the term “likelihood” of resources supporting success?**

The review committee will include housing advocates and experts, hospital stakeholders, city and state policymakers, local officials, and Boston residents impacted by housing instability. While this section is subjectively based on their lived experience and understanding of systems in Boston, policy experts can provide more insight for those specific proposals that want to advance legislative and local change. This section is worth 5%.

2. **Does your organization size play any role in the application process?**

We are not prioritizing certain organization sizes and want to understand community organizing needs at all levels. This helps funders and decision makers understand how organizing and collaboration works in the city. A small organization with limited capacity as a Lead Agency will not negatively impact an application. Our hope is that these resources will provide you with capacity to advance systems and policy efforts.

3. **What are your thoughts on research coalitions?**

If your organizing effort has a clear system and policy goal that is supported by a research coalition that supports community-led process, such as participatory action research, that would make an acceptable proposal.

4. **What exactly are the types of proposals you are looking for with policy outcomes?**

There are a wide range of policies around housing and asset building that we are willing to support within the four focus areas. We are looking for clear short-term and long-term outcomes, that have a feasible pathway to a system and policy change. We are open to hearing your ideas, and how community members will inform and be a part of your approach.

5. **How do you determine what phase of the grant you're in? Can we do both?**

Each applicant should choose which phase fits their organizing effort and should only apply for one phase. The online portal will only allow a Lead Agency to submit one application. It would not be useful to submit a similar application to both phases, with the same partners, using a different Lead Agency.

6. **Does this fund offer any technical assistance throughout the year for the grantees?**

Yes, there will be technical support including learning communities throughout the grant period.

PARTNERSHIPS

7. **Can partners be city entities such as City of Boston Housing Authority or Suffolk DA's office?**

Yes, this fund is focused on local organizing to advance policy and systems level change at the city and statewide level.

8. **Could a partner be a national affiliate, fighting change at the national level, fighting Trump cuts, changes to policy at the federal level?**

While a national partner is permissible, this fund is focused on local organizing to advance policy and systems level change at the city and statewide level. Local and regional partnerships would make for a competitive application.

9. **Do the three partners mean three in addition to the Lead Agency for a total of four partners or a Lead Agency plus two additional partners?**

A collaboration only requires three partnerships, the Lead Agency plus two additional partners.

10. **Do you prefer that this be new partnerships or can it be a long-standing set of existing partners?**

Both are important as long as they fit with your approach and make your proposal stronger. We would like to see organizations that have been working together and have a history of leading on organizing efforts, but new partnerships that makes sense to push certain policy change would also make for a strong proposal.

11. **Should one of the hospitals be one of the partners? Is it permissible for hospitals to be partners?**

No, hospitals are excluded from being partners.

12. **What happens if you're in a partnership with someone looking at the planning phase and advanced as two separate applications?**

We expect people to be partners in multiple applications, but you can only be the Lead Agency for one proposal. The online portal will only allow a Lead Agency to submit one application. It would not be useful to submit a similar application to both phases, with the same partners, using a different Lead Agency.

PRIORITY NEIGHBORHOODS

13. **Does Boston-based mean City of Boston or Metro-Boston?**

Lead agency should be located in the City of Boston, working and impacting the Boston community. At least one partner should work in and impact a priority neighborhood: East Boston, Mattapan, North Dorchester, and Roxbury.

14. **Is it favorable to include stakeholders throughout Boston or focus on a specific neighborhood or demographics? Would a proposal be most competitive if it targets only those highest risk neighborhoods?**

We are interested in funding a diverse range of proposals that advance policy and systems change and meet the goals of the initiative. Yes, focusing on a priority neighborhood, would make a competitive application.

15. **Does the application have to include one of the four neighborhoods, since other communities are at risk for displacement?**

Yes, you must include at least one of the four neighborhoods. We understand that many communities are at risk for displacement, but these were prioritized through a community engagement process. As an example, you can focus on the broader issue of tenant organizing across the city, and uplift some of the other neighborhoods such as you know Allston Brighton her or South End, but your organizing effort must be inclusive and have an intended impact in at least one of the priority neighborhoods.

16. **What were the criterion for determining the priority neighborhoods?**

The four priority neighborhoods through a Research and Discovery process outlined [here](#). This process engaged over 100 key stakeholders, housing experts and residents impacted by housing instability, all of whom made recommendations to an Advisory Committee. Some specific criteria measures included risk factors, such as data trends in poverty, housing cost-burden, employment and population over the last decade, as well as community assets, such as social cohesion, emerging organizing efforts and other opportunities to mobilize in communities. These neighborhoods are also inclusive of each hospital partners' target communities.

17. **What definition of North Dorchester are you using?**

We understand the boundaries of Dorchester can be defined differently, thus it is important to define the community as it suits your application.

PRIORITY POPULATIONS

18. **Is Upstream open to proposals that focus on the needs of specific marginalized communities?**

Yes, the following populations were prioritized through the ISHI process as marginalized or excluded from existing systems: families facing eviction; immigrants (undocumented and refugee); People of Color; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth; Black men (single men and single fathers); seniors; and persons with a criminal offender record. Because most policy and systems change have broad impact on populations, we decided to focus this fund on neighborhoods. However, within the online portal, we do ask if your approach is going to target any of those priority populations directly.

19. **Are women and single moms considering a priority population?**

They are not directly named, but Boston Children's and BMC are interested in families with children.

20. **Since it's called Upstream, does this mean only working with families who have not been evicted or lost housing? How would you count families that are doubled up?**

No, we have not defined instability as such. This includes anyone who is currently experiencing housing instability.

OTHER

21. **Are BMC and BCH also working with the JP Morgan Chase Advancing Cities Initiative?**

Yes, Boston Medical Center has taken the lead on submitting an application in partnership with other hospitals focused on place-based initiatives in the Uphams Corner neighborhood.