

**STATE OF MAINE**  
*Permanent Commission on the Status of  
 Racial, Indigenous, and Tribal Populations*



**RFA# 202403074**

**Community Building Grant Funding Opportunity  
 for Community Based Organizations**

<b>RFA Coordinator</b>	<p><i>All communication regarding the RFA <u>must</u> be made through the RFA Coordinator identified below.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Name:</b> Hunter Cropsey, Acting Director of Operations</li> <li>➤ <b>Contact Information:</b> <a href="mailto:hunter.cropsey@maine.gov">hunter.cropsey@maine.gov</a></li> </ul>
<b>Informational Webinar</b>	<p><i>An informational session regarding this RFA will be held on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Date:</b> Wednesday, May 8th, 2024 (04/24/2024)</li> <li>➤ <b>Time:</b> 3:00p.m., local time</li> <li>➤ <b>Location:</b> ZOOM Meeting Link:  <a href="https://mainestate.zoom.us/j/86460954265">https://mainestate.zoom.us/j/86460954265;</a></li> <li>➤ Meeting ID: 864 6095 4265.</li> </ul>
<b>Submitted Questions</b>	<p><i>Questions <u>must</u> be received by the RFA Coordinator identified above by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Date:</b> May 15, 2024 (05/15/2024), no later than 11:59 p.m., local time</li> </ul>
<b>Application Submission Period</b>	<p><i>Applications <u>must</u> be received by the Division of Procurement Services by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Submission Deadline:</b> June 3rd, 2024 (06/03/2024), no later than 11:59 p.m., local time.</li> </ul> <p><i>Applications <u>must</u> be submitted electronically to <a href="mailto:Proposals@maine.gov">Proposals@maine.gov</a></i></p>

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## RFA TERMS/ACRONYMS WITH DEFINITIONS

The following terms and acronyms, as referenced in the RFA, shall have the meanings indicated below:

<u>Term/Acronym</u>	<u>Definition</u>
<b>Applicant</b>	Any organization or entity submitting an application for this RFA
<b>Community-Based Organization (CBO)</b>	An organization driven by and accountable to the community and/or population that it serves. A CBO has a physical presence in the community it serves and has clear processes to include community perspectives in determining the priority issues it addresses and the solutions pursued.
<b>Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan (MJRP)</b>	Federal funds that are dedicated towards improving “the lives of Maine people and families, help businesses, create good-paying jobs, and build an economy poised for future prosperity”.
<b>Permanent Commission/ the Department</b>	Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous, and Tribal Populations
<b>RFA</b>	Request for Application
<b>State</b>	State of Maine
<b>Social capital</b>	Social capital consists of the networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, enabling that society to function effectively. Synonyms for social capital include “social cohesion” or “community connections.”
<b>Social determinants (or “drivers”) of health (SDOH)</b>	Social determinants (or “drivers”) of health (SDOH) refer to the underlying conditions that shape disparities in health outcomes across populations. The US DHHS breaks SDOH into five primary categories: economic stability, educational access and quality, health care access and quality, neighborhood and built environment, and social and community context.
<b>USDHHS</b>	United States Department of Health and Human Services



## PART I OVERVIEW OF THE GRANT OPPORTUNITY

### A. Grant Background and Purpose

The Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous, and Tribal Populations (‘the Permanent Commission’ or ‘the Department’) is seeking applications to develop and implement a program or initiative that intentionally addresses at least one (1) SDOH and builds stronger community connections as defined in this Request for Applications (RFA) document. This document provides instructions for submitting applications, the procedure and criteria by which the awarded Applicant(s) will be selected, and the contractual terms which will govern the relationship between the State of Maine (State) and the awarded Applicant(s).

Established in 2019, the Permanent Commission is an independent state agency with the statutory mandate to “*promote, implement and coordinate programs that create and improve opportunities and incorporate the goal of eliminating disparities for historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous and tribal populations in the State*” ([5 MRSA §25001](#)).

The Permanent Commission recognizes that addressing social drivers of health (SDOH)<sup>1</sup> is critical to improving public health outcomes and that historic disparities in SDOH have led to disproportionate chronic health and disease impacts for racial, Indigenous, and tribal populations, which were amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic. Public health researchers have put considerable energy into improving SDOH outcomes for racial and ethnic minorities, yet these disparities persist.

To understand why, some researchers have turned their attention to the role that *social capital* plays in informing public health outcomes. Social capital is defined as the networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, enabling that society to function effectively. Social capital is strongest in communities that are cohesive and have strong networks of community connections. Research has shown that social capital is a critical ingredient to successfully addressing SDOH and reducing disparities within and among populations. The World Health Organization (WHO) has noted that social capital plays a key role bridging between SDOH and actual health outcomes.<sup>2, 3</sup> Studies from the last 30 years confirm that feelings of connectedness to a community are empirically related to reducing cardiovascular disease<sup>4</sup>, cancer,<sup>5</sup> and suicide rates<sup>6</sup> even when controlling for other economic factors. In practice, interventions intended to rebuild community cohesion—especially those that aim to empower historically marginalized communities—have been shown to improve self-rated health outcomes for impacted groups by re-establishing important social networks that reduce stress,

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<sup>1</sup> The National Association of Community Health Centers reports that “drivers”, as opposed to “determinants” is a more accessible and understandable term that communities prefer and emphasizes the ability for policy-makers, communities and individuals to affect change.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization. “A conceptual framework for action on the social determinants of health.” (2010).

<sup>3</sup> Hunter, Bradley D., Brad Neiger, and Joshua West. “The Importance of Addressing Social Determinants of Health at the Local Level: The Case for Social Capital.” *Health & Social Care in the Community* 19, no. 5 (2011): 522–30.

<sup>4</sup> Kawachi I., Colditz G.A., Ascherio A., Rimm E.B., Giovannucci E., Stampfer M.J. & Willett W.C. (1996) A prospective study of social networks in relation to total mortality and cardiovascular disease in men in the USA. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 50, 245–251.

<sup>5</sup> Kawachi I., Kennedy B.P., Lochner K. & Prothrow-Stith D. (1997) Social capital, income inequality, and mortality. *American Journal of Public Health* 87, 1491–1498.

<sup>6</sup> Helliwell J.F. (2007) Well-being and social capital: does suicide pose a puzzle? *Social Indicators Research* 81 (3), 455–496.

enhance feelings of connection, provide supportive spaces for advancing healthy lifestyles, and create bonds that can lead to beneficial changes in public policy to support those most at risk for health impacts.<sup>7</sup>

Utilizing one-time Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan (MJRP) funding dedicated to “*critical truth and reconciliation work that centers on community engagement and seeks to facilitate healing and create solutions for ongoing disparities exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health crisis,*” the Permanent Commission is launching a grant funding opportunity for Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that are addressing racial, ethnic, and tribal disparities exacerbated by the COVID-19 global pandemic. This grant will support CBOs in the development and implementation of a program or initiative that intentionally addresses at least one SDOH and builds stronger community connections in the process. More information about SDOH can be found on the USDHHS website.<sup>8</sup> The SDOH and their associated relevant factors are listed below:

1. **Economic stability:** employment, food insecurity, housing instability, poverty
2. **Educational access and quality:** early childhood development and education, enrollment in higher education, high school graduation, language and literacy
3. **Health care access and quality:** access to health services, access to primary care, health literacy
4. **Neighborhood and built environment:** access to foods that support healthy dietary patterns, crime and violence, environmental conditions, quality of housing
5. **Social and community context:** civil participation, discrimination, incarceration, social cohesion.

The Permanent Commission knows that the best solutions come from within communities and those most impacted by disparities. The Permanent Commission therefore encourages creative and innovative approaches to addressing SDOH and, simultaneously, building strong community connections that increase social capital. The Permanent Commission encourages applicants to consider ways to intentionally include individuals in their program or initiative who may experience additional barriers to engagement, such as people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ individuals, veterans, people experiencing unstable housing or homelessness, people living in rural communities, and people with experience of incarceration, substance use disorder, and/or poor mental health.

The goals of this program are to:

1. Deepen the Permanent Commission's relationships with CBOs and community leaders whose goals and activities align with the Permanent Commission's statutory mandate;
2. Invest resources directly in the Maine communities most severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic;
3. Support CBOs in creating new and innovative community-led approaches to addressing the SDOH for their communities; and

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<sup>7</sup> Giordano G.N. & Lindstrom M. (2010) The impact of changes in different aspects of social capital and material conditions on self-rated health over time: a longitudinal cohort study. *Social Science and Medicine* 70, 700–710.

<sup>8</sup> <https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health/literature-summaries#block-sdohinfographics>

4. Increase social capital in historically marginalized communities by supporting community building activities within Maine.

## **B. General Provisions**

Below are general provisions that direct the RFA. Should you have any questions regarding general provisions or other content below, please request answers through the RFA Q&A process detailed on page 13

1. From the time this RFA is issued until award notification is made, all contact with the State regarding this RFA must be made through the RFA Coordinator identified on the cover page of this RFA. No other person/State employee is empowered to make binding statements regarding this RFA. Violation of this provision may lead to disqualification from the application process, at the State's discretion.
2. Issuance of the RFA does not commit the Department to issue an award or to pay expenses incurred by an Applicant in the preparation of a response to the RFA. This includes attendance at personal interviews or other meetings, where applicable.
3. All applications must adhere to the instructions and format requirements outlined in the RFA and all written supplements and amendments (such as the Summary of Questions and Answers), issued by the Department. Applications are to follow the format and respond to all questions and instructions specified in Part III of the RFA.
4. Applicants will take careful note that in evaluating an application submitted in response to this RFA, the Department will consider materials provided in the application, information obtained through interviews/presentations (if any), and internal Departmental information of previous contract history with the Applicant (if any). The Department also reserves the right to consider other reliable references and publicly available information in evaluating the Applicant's experience and capabilities.
5. The application must be signed by a person authorized to legally bind the Applicant and must contain a statement that the proposal and the pricing contained therein will remain valid and binding for a period of 180 days from the date and time of the bid opening.
6. The RFA and the awarded Applicant's proposal, including all appendices or attachments, will be the basis for the final contract, as determined by the Department.
7. Following announcement of an award decision, all submissions in response to this RFA will be public records, available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) ([1 M.R.S. § 401](#) et seq.).
8. The Department, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to recognize and waive minor informalities and irregularities found in applications received in response to the RFA.
9. All applicable laws, whether or not herein contained, shall be included by this reference. It shall be the Applicant's responsibility to determine the applicability and requirements of any such laws and to abide by them.

## **C. Eligibility to Submit Bids**

Given the program goals described above, applicants must demonstrate the following to be eligible for award consideration:

1. That the applicant organization meets the definition of a Community Based Organization (CBO) used in this RFA. A CBO is defined as *"an organization driven by and accountable to the community and/or population that it serves..., has a physical presence in the community it serves and has clear processes to include community perspectives in determining the priority issues it addresses and the solutions pursued."*
2. That the proposed project or initiative is designed to benefit communities located within Maine.

## **D. Awards**

The Permanent Commission anticipates making multiple awards as a result of this RFA process. The total grant funding for this program is \$300,000. Applicants may apply for a minimum of \$25,000 and a maximum of \$75,000 in funding to be used over their contract period. The Department anticipates issuing awards for a contract period beginning as early as June 2024 and ending by December 2025. Contracts may not exceed 18 months or extend beyond December 2025. Contract periods may vary based on time required for the Permanent Commission to fully execute a contract with each awarded Applicant. All grants awarded are for one-time funding. Funds cannot be distributed before projects have begun. Selected providers will be asked to submit monthly or quarterly invoices on work completed and costs incurred.

To ensure funding is used to serve a broad spread of populations, the Permanent Commission will consider populations served (including geography) alongside application materials when determining which programs to award. Organizations that serve similar populations in a similar geography are encouraged to collaborate and submit a single application.

Applicants may apply as:

1. One (1) organization representing itself; or
2. One (1) organization, as the lead, with additional entities as partners that are subcontractors to the lead organization.

The Permanent Commission reserves the right to eliminate the lowest scoring application(s), approve or deny any funding requests, and/or make awards at amounts less than requested.

## **E. Appeal of Contract Awards**

Any person aggrieved by the award decision that results from the RFA may appeal the decision to the Director of the Bureau of General Services in the manner prescribed in [5 M.R.S.A. § 1825-E](#) and [18-554 Code of Maine Rules Chapter 120](#). The appeal must be in writing and filed with the Director of the Bureau of General Services, 9 State House Station, Augusta, Maine, 04333-0009 within 15 calendar days of receipt of notification of conditional contract award.

## **F. Contract Administration and Conditions**

1. The awarded Applicants will be required to execute a State of Maine Service Contract with the appropriate riders as determined by the Department.
2. Allocation of funds is final upon successful negotiation and execution of the contract, subject to the review and approval of the State Procurement Review Committee. Contracts are not considered fully executed and valid until approved by the State Procurement Review Committee and funds are encumbered. No contract will be approved based on an RFA which has an effective date less than fourteen (14) calendar days after award notification to Applicants. (Referenced in the regulations of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, [Chapter 110, § 3\(B\)\(i\)](#)). This provision means that a contract cannot be effective until at least 14 calendar days after award notification.
3. Following the award, a Contract Administrator from the Department will be appointed to assist with the development and administration of the contract and to act as administrator during the entire contract period. Department staff will be available after the award to consult with the awarded Applicants in the finalization of the contract.
4. In providing services and performing under the contract, the awarded Applicant must act as an independent contractor and not as an agent of the State of Maine.



## PART II      ACTIVITIES AND REQUIREMENTS

### A. Requirements

Successful applications must meet the following requirements:

1. Demonstrate organizational and project alignment with the statutory goals of the Permanent Commission (5 MRSA §25001).
2. Design and implement at least one project or initiative in Maine that centers at least one SDOH and improves community connections.
3. Include quantitative and qualitative data collection regarding participant engagement and experience to help the CBO and Permanent Commission better understand barriers experienced by marginalized populations related to the selected SDOH and community connections. Please note: methods for collecting data can be refined during the project in discussion with the Permanent Commission. Data will be housed with the CBO, and de-identified findings will be shared with the Permanent Commission.
4. Plan to participate in a quarterly community of practice meeting led by the Permanent Commission, to be determined during contract negotiations.
5. Plan to participate in routine contract management check-ins with the Permanent Commission, to be determined during contract negotiations.

### B. Allowable/ Non-Allowable Use of Funds

Allowable uses of funds may include but are not limited to:

1. Staffing and/or consultant costs associated with the proposed project, including but not limited to:
  - a. Staff/consultant time related to planning, execution, evaluation, and reporting on the proposed project,
  - b. Professional development that is directly related to enhancing the project,
  - c. Community outreach and engagement.
2. External communications (storytelling, marketing/PR, website, social media, radio),
3. Costs to reduce barriers for community member participation in the proposed project, including but not limited to: participation stipends, travel reimbursement, childcare at events, light snacks at events, interpretation services, and other services that address specific barriers preventing community members from participating in events and activities.
4. Material costs associated with the proposed project, such as space rentals, speaker or facilitator costs, and activity costs.
5. Indirect costs not to exceed 10% of the overall proposed project cost.
6. Additional costs proposed by CBOs specifically approved by the Permanent Commission.

*Please Note: Approval of all proposed activities will be at the discretion of the Permanent Commission. Applicants who intend to apply for activities not listed above may submit questions through the RFA Q&A process for clarification, though final determination will be made upon evaluation of the submitted applications.*

The following are **not** allowable uses:

1. Duplicating or supplanting funding received from other federal or State resources;
2. Debt restructuring and/or bad debt;
3. Defense and prosecution of criminal and civil proceedings, and claims;
4. Donations and contributions;
5. Personal entertainment;
6. Alcoholic beverages;

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7. Fines and penalties;
8. Goods or services for personal use;
9. Interest expenses;
10. Lobbying.

## **B. Reports**

Awarded applicants will be required to adhere to all Permanent Commission reporting requirements outlined in the contract resulting from this RFA process. Reporting requirements will be determined during contract negotiations but are likely to include interim progress reports and a final report that details activities conducted, outcomes observed, feedback from participants, and lessons learned.

## PART III KEY PROCESS EVENTS

### A. Informational Webinar

The Department will host one (1) Informational Webinar via Zoom for all applicants, following release of this RFA. The purpose of this webinar will be to orient potential applicants to the RFA and submission process, including:

1. A general introduction to the RFA and goals,
2. A review of application components and general requirements,
3. A review of the submission process and deadlines,
4. A review of the scoring process,
5. Recommendations for submitting questions,
6. An opportunity to ask questions regarding this RFA.

Scheduling information for the Informational Webinar will be publicly posted on the Permanent Commission's Web Page under [News and Updates](#) as well as on its [Public Calendar](#). A recording of this webinar will be posted on the Division of Procurement Services [Grant RFPs and RFAs](#) website.

### B. Submission of Questions

1. **General Instructions:** It is the responsibility of all Applicants and other interested parties to examine the entire RFA and to seek clarification, in writing, if they do not understand any information or instructions.
  - a. Applicants and other interested parties should use **Appendix A** (Submitted Questions Form) for submission of questions. The form is to be submitted as a WORD document.
  - b. The Submitted Questions Form must be submitted, by e-mail, and received by the RFA Coordinator identified on the cover page of the RFA as soon as possible but no later than the date and time specified on the RFA cover page.
  - c. Submitted Questions must include the RFA Number and Title in the subject line of the e-mail. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete/on time e-mail transmission and receipt.
2. **Question & Answer Summary:** Responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and posted on the State's Division of Procurement Services [Grant RFPs and RFAs](#) website. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain a copy of the Question & Answer Summary. Only those answers issued in writing on this website will be considered binding.

### C. Amendments

All amendments released in regard to this RFA will be posted on the Division of Procurement Services [Grant RFPs and RFAs](#) website. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain amendments. Only those amendments posted on this website are considered binding.

### D. Application Submission

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1. **Applications Due:** Applications must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. local time, on the date listed on the cover page of the RFA.
  - a. Any emails containing original application submissions or any additional or revised application files, received after the 11:59 p.m. deadline, will be rejected without exception.
  
2. **Delivery Instructions:** Applications must be submitted electronically to the State of Maine Division of Procurement Services at [proposals@maine.gov](mailto:proposals@maine.gov).
  - a. Only applications received by e-mail will be considered. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete e-mail transmission and receipt.
    - i. Application submission e-mails that are successfully received by the [proposals@maine.gov](mailto:proposals@maine.gov) inbox will receive an automatic reply stating as such.
  - b. E-mails containing links to file sharing sites or online file repositories will not be accepted as submissions. Only e-mail application submissions that have the requested files attached will be accepted.
  - c. Encrypted e-mails received which require opening attachments and logging into a proprietary system will not be accepted as submissions. It is the Applicant's responsibility to check with its organization's information technology team to ensure that security settings will not encrypt its application submission.
  - d. File size limits are 25MB per e-mail. Applicants may submit files across multiple e-mails, as necessary, due to file size concerns. All e-mails and files must be received by the due date and time as described above.
  - e. Applicants are to insert the following into the subject line of their e-mail submission: **"RFA# 202403074 Application Submission – [Applicant's Name]"**.
  
3. **Submission Contents**
  - a. Application submissions must include the Applicant's completed **Application Form** (found in Part V of the RFA) and all required information and attachments as stated in the form.
  - b. The Application Form must be submitted as a single, typed, PDF file.
  - c. Applicants are not to provide additional attachments beyond those specified in the RFA or Application Form for the purpose of extending their response. Materials not requested will not be considered part of the application and will not be evaluated.

## PART IV APPLICATION EVALUATION AND SELECTION

### A. Evaluation Process – General Information

1. An evaluation team will judge the merits of the proposals received in accordance with the criteria defined in the RFA.
2. Officials responsible for making decisions on the award selection will ensure that the selection process accords equal opportunity and appropriate consideration to all who are capable of meeting the specifications. The goals of the evaluation process are to ensure fairness and objectivity in review of the applications and to ensure that all contracts are awarded to the Applicants that provide the best value to the State of Maine.
3. The Department reserves the right to communicate and/or schedule interviews/presentations with Applicants, if needed, to obtain clarification of information contained in the applications received. The Department may revise the scores assigned in the initial evaluation to reflect those communications and/or interviews/presentations. Changes to applications, including updating or adding information, will not be permitted during any interview/presentation process and, therefore, Applicants must submit proposals that present their rates and other requested information as clearly and completely as possible.
4. Failure to respond to questions and instructions throughout the RFA may result in the application being disqualified as non-responsive or receiving a reduced score. The Department has sole discretion to determine whether a variance from the RFA specifications will result either in disqualification or reduction in scoring of a proposal.
5. The Bidder's proposal must follow the outline used below, including the numbering, section, and subsection headings. For convenience, the Permanent Commission has provided an Application Form in Part V.

### B. Scoring Process

1. The Permanent Commission seeks clear and succinct responses that include all details relevant to understanding proposed programs.
2. The Grant Review Team will use a consensus approach to evaluate and score all sections listed below. Members of the review team will not score sections individually but, instead, will arrive at consensus regarding point assignment for each section.

### C. Scoring Weights

The score will be based on a 100-point scale and will measure the degree to which each application meets the following criteria.

Scoring Criteria	Points Available
Section I - Eligibility	Pass/Fail
Section II - Proposed Activities	35
Section III - Applicant Experience	20
Section IV - Project Plan	20
Section V – Budget	25

<b>Total</b>	<b>100 points</b>
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**D. Scoring Rubric**

The Grant Review Team will utilize the following scoring rubric to assess eligibility and score the applicant’s proposed activities, experience, project plan, and budget.

Section	Content	Scoring Criteria
<b>Eligibility</b>  <b>Pass/Fail</b>	<p><b>This section should include (in narrative format):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A description of the community the organization serves, with as much specificity as possible. Examples of relevant demographics include race, ethnicity, tribal membership, gender, geography by Maine county, and age range.</li> <li>➤ A description of how the organization meets the definition of a “community-based organization” as used in this document.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Passing requires demonstrating:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ That the applicant understands and is able to clearly describe the community it serves.</li> <li>➤ That the community served is located within Maine.</li> <li>➤ That the applicant is an organization: (a) Driven by and accountable to the community and/or population that it serves, (b) Has a physical presence in the community it serves, and (c) Has clear processes to include community perspectives in determining the priority issues it addresses.</li> </ul>
<b>Proposed Activities</b>  <b>(up to 35 points)</b>	<p><b>This section should include (in narrative format):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ An overall description of the project, including specific project goals, activities that will be undertaken to meet those goals, and a clear connection between the project and the Permanent Commission's mission.</li> <li>➤ An explanation of how the project goals and activities connect with at least one SDOH factor and support an increase in community connections.</li> <li>➤ An explanation of which communities will be targeted in outreach for inclusion in</li> </ul>	<p><b>The highest scores in this category (35 Points) will demonstrate that the project or initiative:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Advances the Permanent Commission’s statutory mandate to “promote, implement and coordinate programs that create and improve opportunities and incorporate the goal of eliminating disparities for historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous and tribal populations in the State”.</li> <li>➤ Includes goals and activities that address at least one of the SDOH factor (Part I, A).</li> <li>➤ Includes creative goals and activities that support increased feelings of connection to a community by participants.</li> <li>➤ Intentionally includes individuals who may experience additional barriers to engagement, such as: people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ individuals, veterans, people experiencing unstable housing/homelessness, people in</li> </ul>

	<p>activities, including specific efforts that may be made to increase engagement by individuals who may experience additional barriers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ An evaluation plan that demonstrates how the organization plans to measure and report on whether the planned activities met the goals.</li> </ul>	<p>rural communities, and/or people with experience of incarceration, substance use disorder, poor mental health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Includes information gathering and evaluation plans that share the stories and lived experiences of community members, while respecting privacy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Applicant Experience</b>  (up to 20 points)</p>	<p><b>This section should include (in narrative format):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ An explanation about how the organization is qualified and suited to undertake this project, including providing a brief summary of up to three examples of community building activities.</li> <li>➤ Explain the role and experience of any partner organizations.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The highest scores in this category (20 Points) will demonstrate that the applicant organization:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Has deep connections within their community.</li> <li>➤ Has experience in community building activities.</li> <li>➤ Has experience of outreach and inclusion of individuals who experience barriers to engagement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Project Plan</b>  (up to 20 points)</p>	<p><b>This section should include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A list of proposed activities with timelines (to the extent these can be estimated).</li> <li>➤ Identification of any unknowns or dependencies.</li> <li>➤ Identification of a core project team and description of their roles and responsibilities as it relates to the project</li> </ul>	<p><b>The highest scores in this category (20 Points) will demonstrate:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ An understanding of the steps needed to execute a community centered project, including planning, execution, and evaluation and reporting.</li> <li>➤ Well outlined and realistic timelines for each phase of the project.</li> <li>➤ Clear identification of where there are unknowns or dependencies.</li> <li>➤ A project team with clear roles/ responsibilities.</li> <li>➤ Include time within the plan for at least one project team member to attend quarterly community of practice meetings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Budget</b>  (up to 25 points)</p>	<p><b>This section should include (In chart provided):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ An overall estimated budget, broken down with as much detail as possible, that includes estimated costs for staff time and any other anticipated program or project</li> </ul>	<p><b>The highest scores in this category (25 Points) will demonstrate:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A budget that clearly aligns with the overall project proposal and plan (and accounts for the time needed to attend quarterly community of practice meetings).</li> <li>➤ Clear articulation of what funds will be used throughout the life of the project.</li> </ul>

	costs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provides realistic estimates of staff time and resources needed to execute the project.</li> <li>➤ Aligns with the allowable and unallowable expenses listed above (Part II, B).</li> </ul>
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>100 points</b>

**E. Selection and Award**

1. Applicants receiving a total score of eighty (80) points or higher will be considered for either full or partial funding. After scoring, the Grant Review Team will consider geographic spread and populations served among those applications that score 80 points or higher to prioritize which applicants will receive an award. For example, if three organizations have project proposals focused on newly arrived immigrant populations in Southern Maine and score 80 points or higher, the Permanent Commission may only make an award to the strongest proposal in order to ensure funds are available to support projects in other communities and/or other geographic regions in the State.
2. Notification of conditional award selection or non-selection will be made in writing by the Permanent Commission.
3. Issuance of this RFA in no way constitutes a commitment by the State to award a contract, to pay costs incurred in the preparation of a response to the RFA, or to pay costs incurred in procuring or contracting for services, supplies, physical space, personnel, or any other costs incurred by the Applicant.
4. The Permanent Commission reserves the right to reject any and all applications or to make multiple awards.



## **PART V APPLICATION FORM**

**Applicants must use the Application Form embedded below to submit their application in response to this RFA.**

**The Application Form may be obtained in a PDF format by double clicking on the document icon below.**



