Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
California Student/Resident Experiences and Rotation in Community Health
(CalSEARCH)
Request for Application (RFA) 14-5545
(Revised as of 3/13/15)

(Questions related to CalSEARCH RFA must be submitted in accordance with the instructions found on page 17 of the RFA. All questions must be received in writing no later than March 13, 2015).

Q1. Where can I find a copy of the recorded technical assistance webinar?


Q2. If our agency provides internship opportunities to Masters Degree Social Work, Marriage Family Therapists, and Doctor of Psychology (MSW/MFT/Psy. D) students will we be eligible to apply?

A2. Refer to p. 7 “Who Can Apply?” to determine if your organization meets the definition for “Award Category A: Workforce Education and Training (WET) CalSEARCH” as well as “Target Participants.”

Q3: Is this a recurring grant?

A3: Funding is specific to this year. Funding is established for WET CalSEARCH for the next four years. However, budget, grant requirements, etc. are subject to change from year to year.

Q4: What are the timelines?

A4: “Key Dates” can be found on p. 18 of the RFA.

Q5: When submitting an application is it for Category A and B or one or the other or for both funding categories?
A5: “Initiating an Application” found on p. 7 states one or more applications can be submitted. When utilizing CalREACH, the online application system, you will be required to select either Category A or B. However, you can submit more than one application.

Q6: Can individuals apply?

Q6: See p. 7 of the RFA. Individuals are not eligible to apply. If individuals are interested in serving in experiences/rotations, please stay engaged in updates, as awarded organizations will be announced and posted on http://oshpd.ca.gov/HWDD/CalSEARCH/.

Q7: My program is not in the designated counties eligible for funding according to my interpretation of the RFA. May I use the same concept/program infrastructure of CalSEARCH to create/develop my own program?

A7: The information on http://oshpd.ca.gov/HWDD/CalSEARCH/ is open and accessible to the public.

Q8: I have participated on a CalSEARCH Advisory Committee. May I apply for a grant?

A8: For information on CalSEARCH Advisory Committees, please see http://oshpd.ca.gov/HWDD/CalSEARCH/.

Yes, you may apply. Refer to p. 7 “Who Can Apply?” to determine if your organization meets the definition for “Award Category A: WET CalSEARCH” and “Award Category B: The California Endowment (TCE) CalSEARCH,” as well as “Target Participants.”

Q9: Do you have to be 18 years old? We would like our juniors to be interns, but some won’t turn 18 until November or December, and we were wondering if they would qualify? Would seventeen year olds qualify?

A9: Yes, the participants should be at least 18 years old. See p. 7 of the RFA, and review the “Who Can Apply?” section to determine if you can apply or not.

Q10: Do we have to have partner with a clinic?

A10: Although there are no specifications in the “Who Can Apply?” section, p. 22 of the RFA refers to a question about partnerships in the application, and p. 12 explains how your response to the question will be evaluated and scored. Also, review the Grant Agreement Deliverables for Category A and Category B on p. 13 of the RFA.
Q11: Can the grant support Community Health Workers/Promotores (CHW/P) who will have recently gotten a job with a county-run clinic in TCE Building Healthy Communities (BHC) location and provide them with training/experiences during their first year of employment?

A11: Without seeing your application in its entirety, we ask that you review the RFA carefully. The RFA addresses specific counties for Category B in the “Who Can Apply?” section on p. 7. However, we encourage you make a case for your approach in your application. Those proposals that are most competitive will clearly show how their program supports the intent of the RFA. For example, refer to p. 5 of the RFA, “TCE funding supports CHW/Ps in CalSEARCH by increasing clinical rotations and employment opportunities…” Make a case for how your program will increase clinical rotations and employment opportunities for CHW/Ps. Also, reference the Evaluation and Scoring Criteria (ESC) on p. 11-12 of the RFA, which provides information about how applications will be evaluated.

Q12: Our organization provides CHW/P training for public sector health agencies that employ and deploy CHW/Ps in county-run clinics. Is our organization eligible to apply for funding?

A12: Yes, you may apply if the counties are identified in the RFA. The RFA addresses specific counties in the Central Valley for Category B in the “Who Can Apply?” section on p. 7. Also, reference TCE BHC in the RFA http://www.calendow.org/communities/building-healthy-communities/ on p. 7.

Q13: Will the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) consider extending the deadline for counties since most of them have to go through their Board of Supervisors (BOS)?

A13. At this time, the deadline for applications is March 20, 2015 at 2pm. Specific language regarding resolutions, orders, motions, or other similar documents from a local governing body who authorizes execution for the grant agreement can be found on p. 15 of the RFA under Additional Terms and Agreement. Note that this documentation is not required for application, but must be provided for grantees when they submit their executed contract.

Q14: I work for a non-profit, community based mental health site. What kinds of letters of recommendation are you looking for? Would an example be partnership organizations/schools? The RFA does not specify.
A14: The RFA does not specify who should write your letters of recommendation. The only specification is that you have two letters of recommendation. Your letters of recommendation can be from partners if you choose. It is recommended that you review your proposal as a whole and consider how your letters of recommendation might support your proposal. Also, see p. 12 of the RFA scoring criteria related to Partnerships which references the letters of recommendation and how they will be considered in the scoring of your application.

Q15: We are interested in responding to the CalSEARCH RFA but are unclear about whether we are eligible. The description on page 7 reads: Per California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 9, 3200.253, Public Mental Health System is defined as publicly-funded mental health programs/services and entities that are administered, in whole or in part, by the State Departments or county.

We are a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization. We provide mental health services, mostly in school settings, that are funded by our county’s Behavioral Health Department. Are we, therefore, considered to be part of the PMHS system?

A15: Based on the information you provided, it appears that you are eligible, but because we have not seen your entire application, we encourage you to refer to p. 7 in the “Who Can Apply?” section to determine if your organization meets the definition for “Award Category A: WET CalSEARCH.” You may also want to look at the “Target Participants.” In understanding and interpreting the definition, it may also be useful to read what is not in the PMHS according to the regulation, which is also on p. 7.

Q16: Will local workforce investment boards be eligible for this grant opportunity?

A16: Yes, workforce investment boards can apply if they are partnering with the PMHS or if participants will be practicing and using the learning objectives in the PMHS for Award Category A, and proposals will be accepted from organizations within the 14 BHCs or one of the designated counties of the Central Valley (e.g. Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tulare, and Yolo) identified by the TCE for Award Category B. Also, see p. 7 of the RFA for more about “Who Can Apply.”

Q17: Under grant agreement deliverables it states that we must provide a 105 hour experience/training. Is there a particular breakdown that you are seeking? Does it matter how many of those hours are training or experiences (working in a clinic or clinical setting)? For example, can 60 of those hours be training and 45 of those hours be in a clinical setting? Is there a preferred ratio of training hour to clinical hours?

A17: The RFA does not provide a specific breakdown of the 105 hour experience/training, and there is no reference to ratio of training specified. Based on the example you provided, you may want to explain more about how you are planning and delivering training. Where will it take place, etc.? We encourage you make a case for
your approach in your application. Those proposals that are most competitive will clearly show how their program supports the intent of the RFA. For example, refer to p. 5 of the RFA, “TCE funding supports CHW/Ps in CalSEARCH by increasing clinical rotations and employment opportunities…” Make a case for how your program will increase clinical rotations and employment opportunities for CHW/Ps. Also, reference the Evaluation and Scoring Criteria (ESC) on p. 11-12 of the RFA, which provides information about how applications will be evaluated.

Q18: As far as the letters of recommendation are concerned, what would you like to them to address?

A18: The RFA does not specifically address the contents of the letters of recommendation, only that you should have 2 letters of recommendation. See p. 12 of the RFA scoring criteria related to Partnerships which references the letters of recommendation and how they will be considered in the scoring of your application.

Q19: Since I am on the advisory committee, am I allowed to write a letter of recommendation, or would that be a conflict of interest?

A19: There are no stipulations in the RFA about who can write letters of recommendation.

Q20: What is the definition of a community project?

A20: Refer to the learning objectives on the CalSEARCH webpage for additional information about the community project http://www.oshpd.ca.gov/HWDD/CalSEARCH/. Learning objective four details the community project.

Q21: When it says “resident” does this refer to medical resident trainees? And can Universities (e.g. UC) apply?

A21: Yes, the program is available to both students and residents. And, yes, universities can apply if they are partnering with the PMHS or if participants will be practicing and using the learning objectives in the PMHS for Award Category A, and proposals will be accepted from organizations within the 14 BHCs or one of the designated counties of the Central Valley (e.g. Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tulare, and Yolo) identified by the TCE for Award Category B. Also, see p. 7 of the RFA for more about “Who Can Apply

Q22: Do the character count limits include spaces?

A22: Yes, the character count does include spaces. The RFA contains a Technical Guide, but it does not mention spaces. From previous experience with CalREACH, we know spaces count as characters.
Q23: Do the trainees need to see patients/clients?

A23: The RFA does not specify if trainees will see patients/clients. For more information about the experience/rotation in Award Category A or the experience/training in Award Category B, see the learning objectives for both categories [http://www.oshpd.ca.gov/HWDD/CalSEARCH/](http://www.oshpd.ca.gov/HWDD/CalSEARCH/). Also review the evaluation and scoring criteria on p. 11-12 of the RFA to see how the learning objectives will be considered.

Q24: How often is reporting and what amount of time is estimated for reporting? We have a 2 person staff, so we have to consider capacity to complete required reporting before we can consider applying.

A24: While the final report is detailed, it is relatively brief. More information about work plans and final reports will be available during the post technical assistance webinar and information about the final report can be found on p. 14 of the RFA under the Grant Agreement Deliverables section.

Q25: How do you define Community Health Worker vs. Promotores? Does the applying program have to use these terms specifically, or does Health Coach/Healthy Ambassador also work? The objectives and curriculum is identical to the CHW/Promotores training.

A25: Review “Who Can Apply?” on p. 7. Without seeing your application in its entirety, we would not want to say anything that would discourage you from applying. OSHPD recognizes that Community Health Workers/Promotores go by many names. Also, we would encourage you to address how your Health Coach/Healthy Ambassadors are CHW/Ps. Check that you meet the criteria in who can apply and grant agreement deliverables, including the learning objectives.

Q26: Are graduate students in a counseling psychology program appropriate for this grant?

A26: Yes. Review “Who Can Apply?” on p. 7, as well as the Target Participants on p. 7. It may be useful to review the learning objectives, too. [http://www.oshpd.ca.gov/HWDD/CalSEARCH/](http://www.oshpd.ca.gov/HWDD/CalSEARCH/).

Q27: Are you looking for us to sustain paid internships after the grant period or would unpaid internships be okay?

A27: Yes, during the grant period, it is expected to be a paid internship. There is nothing in the RFA that speaks beyond the internship. However, there sustainability is part of the evaluation and scoring criteria, which can be found on p.12 of the RFA.

Q28: Do students need to be paid the full $1500 stipend or can it be less if that is more aligned with our pay rates at our agency?

A28: Yes, students must be paid the full $1500 stipend. See Budget Restrictions on p. 8 of the RFA and appendices on p. 28-30 for budgets for this grant opportunity. The
budgets precisely match the RFA, and they must be followed. Also, see p. 23 of the Technical Guide in the RFA.

Q29: Are Health Professions Shortage Areas (HPSA) part of the 14 healthy communities?

A29: Review “Who Can Apply?” on p. 7. Pay close attention to the location of the 14BHCs. Consider http://www.calendow.org/communties/building-health-communities/ And note that sometimes these areas do overlap, but we are following the stipulations of the RFA, which specifically identify the 14BHCs and specific counties within the Central Valley, not the HPSAs.

Q30: Is there a minimum number of participants for category B?

A30: Yes. Please see p. 9 Budget Restrictions. There you will see that the minimum number of participants is 3.

Q31: We are preparing an application for the WET category and have a budget question. Our proposed preceptors will be agency staff who are participating in the project as part of their normal job duties, so we would not typically pay a stipend above and beyond their wages. If we do not request $1,000/per student for the preceptors, can we request to use that funding for something else to benefit the project and clients served (e.g. paying for transportation for clients who need assistance)?

A31: Your budget must follow the appendices on p. 28-30 in the RFA exactly. Keep in mind the budget options serve a minimum of 3-10 students/residents. You can further support the project in–kind beyond grant funding. It may be helpful to review p. 10 of the RFA that outlines how funds can be used. Additionally, p. 9 of the RFA outlines the amount allocated for preceptors/mentors; it does not indicate how many preceptors/mentors will be assigned. We encourage you to make a case for your proposed approach in your application.

Q32: We are working on the grant application for RFA 14-5545, community health rotations. Our district office has reviewed our budget proposal and has questions that are not addressed in the RFA materials. What is the mechanism for paying stipends? If we are paying the stipends, how are we to account for payroll taxes? For example, on the $3,600 for preceptor payroll and benefit taxes come to approximately $605. Is the stipend reduced to account for that, or who is paying the taxes?

A32: The RFA does not specify the mechanism for how the stipend will be dispersed by your organization to preceptors/mentors but has specific budget requirements per p. 28-30 of the appendices in the RFA. For specifics of when OSHPD will deliver payment to organizations, see p. 16 under Payment Provisions in the RFA. Also, p. 9 of the RFA outlines the amount allocated for preceptors/mentors; it does not indicate how many preceptors/mentors will be assigned. And, it is the responsibility of the organization and/or individual who is receiving stipends to determine the taxable withholdings.
Q33: For the mentor/preceptor does it need to be different mentors for each CHW or is it ok for one mentor to have e.g. 3 mentees and just triple their time and receive 3 stipends throughout the project?

A33: Yes, that would be permissible. Since the RFA does not specify and those funds are exactly how the budget appears in the appendices on p. 28-30 of the RFA, it is to the discretion of the organization to assign the preceptor.