



Request for Applications

A. Introduction

Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital (NVRH) and Umbrella, Inc. are granting subawards available under the NEK Prevention Center of Excellence Grant (NEK-PCE). Funding for this subaward comes from the grant #03420-08687 issued to NVRH from the State of Vermont. It is a federally funded award under the State Opioid Response Program, (SOR II) (CFDA93.788), funded through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). This subaward process is the responsibility of NVRH and is being coordinated by two Regional Program Managers.

Anticipated total funds available through NEK-PCE contracts and subawards: \$200,000

Applicants may request up to \$25,000. There is no lower limit on funding requests. Amounts requested should be proportional to the needs addressed/population impacted and realistic to expend in the project period.

This RFA was adapted from the Mount Ascutney Hospital Prevention Network Grant Request for Applications.

B. Important Dates

- Application Release Date: March 1, 2021
- Questions to be submitted by: March 5, 2021 by 5:00 PM
- Letter of Intent: March 8, 2021 by 5:00 PM
- Application Due Date: March 19, 2021 by 5:00 PM

Questions on this RFA should be submitted by email to PCE@NVRH.org with the subject line “Re: RFA Question.” Answers to emailed questions will be available for viewing by March 10 at nvrh.org/nek-pce/.

C. Program Description

Primary prevention is the proactive promotion of healthy lifestyles and norms that reduce the risks associated with substance use, and the promotion of protective factors that support the health and well-being of the population. Rather than starting with the identification of programs and strategies, the best way to prevent substance misuse is by first reviewing data to identify existing conditions that either promote risk (risk factor) or protect from risk (protective factor), assessing a community’s readiness and capacity to address the conditions, and then identifying best practice approaches referred to as strategies and programs. It is fundamental and essential to match and select strategies that align with a community’s receptivity to address substance misuse.

Primary prevention is considered “Universal” and tends to impact large groups. Secondary prevention aims to reduce the impact on those at higher than average risk for substance misuse, as well as those individuals currently experiencing problems related to misuse. Secondary prevention is considered “Selective” and tends to impact individuals, families, or small groups.

The goals of this Vermont Prevention Center of Excellence (PCE) grant opportunity are to reduce the use of the following substances in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont through evidence-based and promising primary and secondary prevention strategies:

- Underage drinking high risk alcohol consumption
- Marijuana and tobacco misuse
- Prescription drug including prescription opioid and stimulant misuse
- Illicit stimulant use (including cocaine) and illicit opioid use (including heroin)

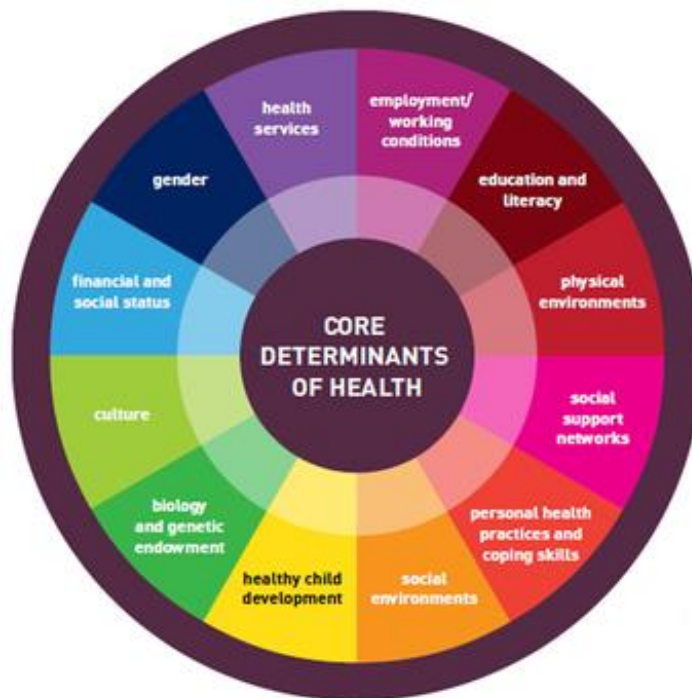
In addition to the substances listed above, this grant will serve to:

- Build substance use primary and secondary prevention capacity and infrastructure at the community, and regional levels.

Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, and those conditions shape health. The term SDoH has very broad implications, covering areas such as housing, employment, and education, among others. Prevention strategies, in practice, impact several key components of the SDoH model, including culture, healthy child development, social/physical environments, and social support networks, as indicated in the graphic below¹. Any social determinant of health may be addressed under this

¹ <https://www.colleaga.org/article/what-are-determinants-health>

RFA as long as the proposal is linked to substance misuse prevention of any substance at any age.

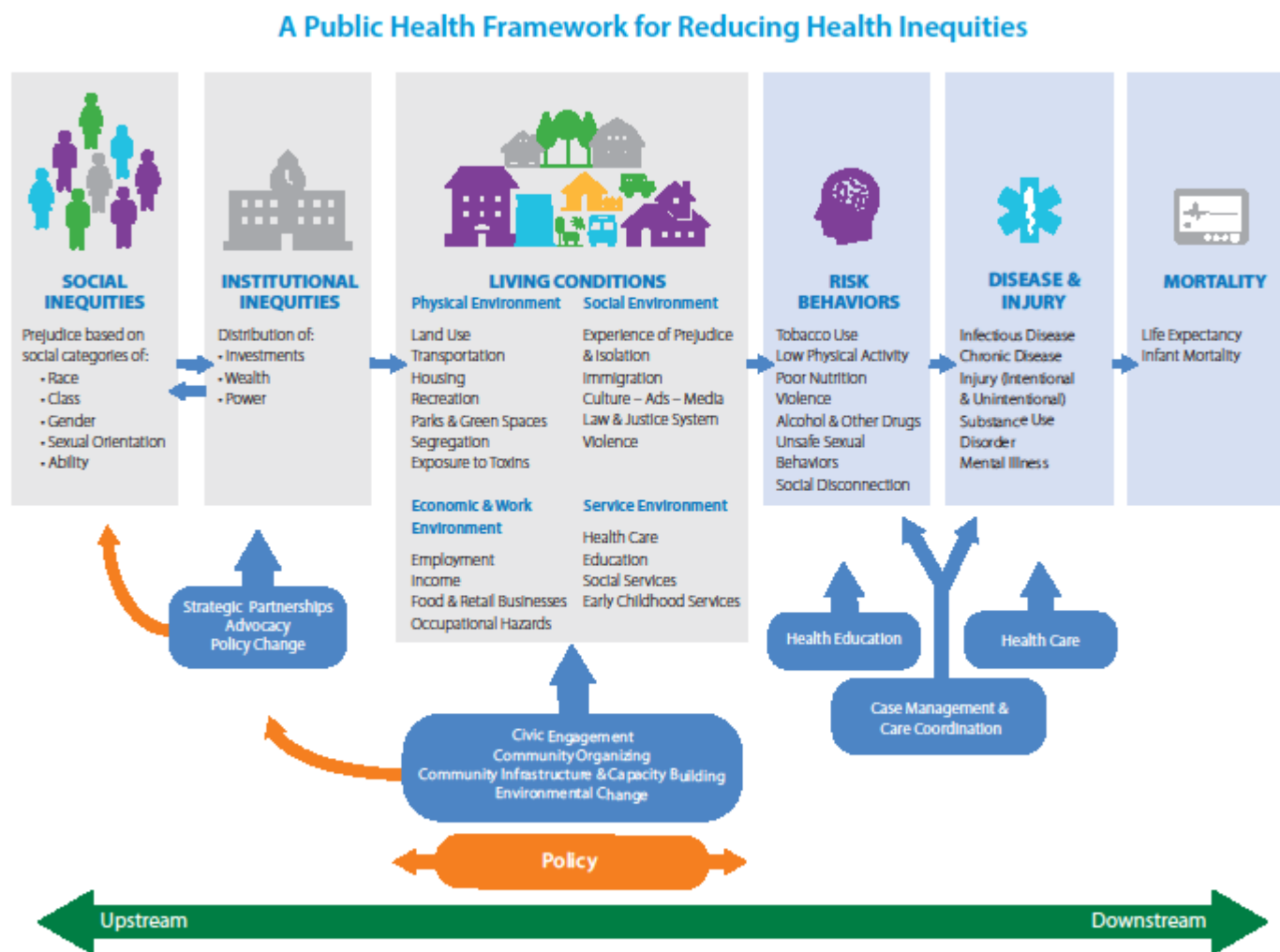


Just as we need food, shelter, and clothing, human beings also need strong and meaningful relationships and supportive, healthy environments to thrive. This RFA seeks innovative applications that increase the presence of the elements described above in our communities. (See Appendix A for examples.)

Achieving health equity requires that we focus on addressing health disparities. Applicants are encouraged to develop proposals designed to reduce health disparities impacting priority populations in our region, including:

- LGBTQ+ Vermonters, including children, youth, and young adults
- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)
- Communities with high poverty rates and schools with high rates of children qualifying for free or reduced price lunch
- Individuals who have experienced multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences, including children, youth and adults

The excerpt from Vermont's State Health Improvement - Plan 2019-2023 (SHIP) on the following page helps illustrate the connection between health disparities, the social determinants of health, and risks for substance use. The complete SHIP can be accessed at: [pdfhttps://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/ADM_State_Health_Improvement_Plan_2019-2023](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/ADM_State_Health_Improvement_Plan_2019-2023)



– Adapted from the Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative

D. Subaward Information

NEK PCE anticipates making subawards by no later than April 2, 2021. The project period for subawards is a maximum of 5.5 months, from April 2, 2021 through September 15, 2021. All funded projects must be completed and all funds expended by no later than **September 15, 2021**.

Applicants are limited to one application per entity, however fiscal agents may be attributed on multiple applications.

Applicants may request up to \$25,000. There is no lower limit on funding requests. Amounts requested are expected to be proportional to the needs addressed/population impacted.

E. Eligibility

The following organization types are eligible to apply for funding:

- Individual Schools
- Supervisory Unions
- Hospitals/Healthcare systems
- Nonprofits (examples include, but are not limited to: social service agencies, parent-child centers, regional planning commissions, and organizations that provide resources and programming to the public, such as libraries, arts organizations, etc.)
- Colleges and universities, including community colleges
- Municipalities
- Native American Indian Tribes recognized by the State of Vermont
- Faith-based organizations

Project activities must primarily impact the individuals or communities of one or more towns, listed below:

- ***St. Johnsbury service area:*** Barnet, Burke, Concord, Danville, East Haven, Granby, Groton, Guildhall, Kirby, Lunenburg, Lyndon, Maidstone, Newbury (including Wells River), Newark, Peacham, Ryegate, St. Johnsbury, Sheffield, Sutton, Topsham, Victory, Walden, Waterford, Wheelock
- ***Newport service area:*** Albany, Averill, Avery's Gore, Barton (including Orleans), Bloomfield, Brighton (including Island Pond), Brownington, Brunswick, Canaan, Charleston, Coventry, Derby, Ferdinand, Glover, Holland, Irasburg, Jay, Lemington, Lewis, Lowell, Morgan, Newport City, Newport Town, Norton, Troy, Warner's Grant, Warren's Gore, Westfield, Westmore

Additional eligibility requirements:

- Collaborative proposals are welcome, but one entity must submit as the lead agent.
- Individual persons are not eligible to apply.

F. Preparing and Submitting Your Application

- Organizations that intend to submit an application must submit a letter of intent by no later than 5:00 pm on March 8, 2021 by email to PCE@NVRH.org. The purpose of this letter of intent is to provide the Program Managers with a preview of likely applicants. Please include your contact information, how much you intend to apply for and two sentences about the proposed project.
- Applications must be submitted by email to PCE@NVRH.org no later than 5:00 pm on March 19, 2021. Applications may be submitted in PDF, Word and/or Excel formats.
- Anticipated award date: no later than April 2, 2021.
- Projects may start as early as April 5, 2021. **All projects must be completed and all funds expended by September 15, 2021.**
- Applications should be submitted using the form in Attachment 1 to this RFA.
- Applications demonstrating the use of a prevention framework or model will be given priority in the selection process. Use resources to prepare your application - see section G. below.

G. Resources and Technical Support

The Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) consists of five steps and two guiding principles that offer prevention planners a comprehensive approach to understanding and addressing the substance misuse and related behavioral health problems facing their communities. Development of a strategic and sustainable plan to implement strategies with fidelity and evaluate for effectiveness can be accomplished by utilizing the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF), or any other data driven public health model. Please reference the [SPF Resource Guide](#).

The VT Prevention Model helps ensure a comprehensive implementation of prevention approaches across the community. ***Applicants should indicate in their application, which level of the Vermont Prevention Model their project falls within.*** Information about the VT Prevention Model is located here: [VT Prevention Model](#).

For more information regarding substance misuse prevention strategies, please review the following resources prior to preparing your grant application.

Information about risk and protective factors:

[NIDA](#)

[Youth Substance Use Prevention Infographic](#)

For prevention strategy ideas that are evidence-based, effective, or found to be promising practices please use the following websites (provided as guidance, not required):

- <https://www.blueprintsprograms.org/program-search/>
- <https://www.wsipp.wa.gov/BenefitCost>

- <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/charts/topics/substance-use-and-misuse>
- <http://www.promisingpractices.net/programs.asp>

Applicants are required to submit a needs statement that should be supported by data. Applicants can use any valid data source, including data your organization collects for programmatic purposes. Subgrantees will be asked to contribute to a regional data hub (Clear Impact) that will be established by the grantee (NVRH).

For data by Health Service Area or County levels:

- AHS Community Profiles:
http://humanservices.vermont.gov/ahs_community-profiles
- VT Department of Health Data Explorer:
<https://apps.health.vermont.gov/ias/querytool>
- VT Youth Risk Behavior Surveys:
[VT YRBS](#)
- Local Northeast Kingdom Data:
[NEK Substance Abuse and Misuse Data](#)

H. Application Review Information

Each submitted application will undergo an initial screening for compliance with RFA requirements. Applications found to be incomplete or out of compliance will not be sent forward for merit review.

Each application will be read by a panel of at least 2 reviewers, who will rank each application using a scoring rubric.

In making funding decisions, the PCE Program Managers will consider reviewer recommendations, as well as an interest in building a balanced subaward portfolio that reaches a variety of subpopulations and service areas. Reviewers may make partial funding recommendations. Program Managers reserve the right to request revisions on any application needing further clarification.

I. Award Expectations

The following expectations are applicable only if proposals are accepted for funding. The expectations are being provided here so that organizations can know what will be expected and realistically budget for time and effort of staff.

Prevention Center of Excellence funds are granted to NVRH through the Vermont Agency of Human Services, which requires that costs are incurred up front and then reimbursed at the end of a period, usually monthly or quarterly. This subaward opportunity allows for monthly invoicing.

Successful applicants will be asked to provide a copy of their most recent audit (if applicable) and a copy of their conflict of interest policy. These documents will be considered in shaping the monitoring plan for each subrecipient.

Monitoring methods will include, but are not limited to, review of monthly performance reports, comparison of invoiced costs to the approved budget, and phone check-ins. All subrecipients will be invited to the State of Vermont annual site visit with NVRH. Participation is optional, but highly encouraged.

Applicants should be aware of the following information:

- All materials created under subawards funded through this RFA that are intended for use with the public, such as surveys, prevention toolkits, or educational materials (including but not limited to posters, flyers, brochures, presentations, videos) will be made available for use under the terms of a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](#) and submitted with the appropriate semi-final or final performance report.
- All subrecipients will be expected to attend a 1.5-hour Results-Based Accountability workshop sponsored by NVRH. Applicants should include costs for personnel in their budget planning. The workshop will be virtual.
- Subrecipients will be expected to:
 - Share prevention messaging through channels such as Facebook, websites, and newsletters, as applicable. Messaging will be provided to Subrecipients by the NEK-PCE Marketing Staff.
 - Disseminate information about training opportunities when requested by the NEK-PCE Marketing Staff.

J. Contact Information

Submit all correspondence regarding this RFA according to the instructions in the following table:

| Email Address: | Subject Line | Send by Date: | Use this subject line to: |
|------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| NEK-PCE@NVRH.org | Re: PCE RFA Question | March 5 by 5 PM | Submit questions related to RFA |
| | Re: PCE LOI | March 8 by 5 PM | Submit brief LOI |

| | | | |
|--|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| | Re: PCE Application | March 19 by 5 PM | Submit application |
|--|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|

APPENDIX A

Prevention Strategy Examples

The following table is offered as strategy examples that align with RFA Section B - Description.
Applicants are not limited to these choices.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p><u>Increase Social-Emotional Learning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assess the capacity and need to address Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) of children ● Acquire and implement curriculum to address SEL needs of early childhood through high school youth ● Obtain Collaborative Problem Solving certification ● Implement the early MTSS model in an early childhood education center ● Establish mindfulness as a system-wide practice within a school or supervisory union | <p><u>Strengthen Protective Factors through Environmental and Policy Enhancements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enhance school policy and culture to create supportive environments for students and staff who identify as LGBTQ+, racial and ethnic minorities, neuro-diverse and/or as individuals with disabilities ● Increase Restorative Practices in schools, businesses, towns ● Build community capacity for substance-free events ● Develop and implement town policies that create healthy environments for children, families, and people in recovery |
| <p><u>Training, Assessment, and/or Strategic Planning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contract with Strategic Planning Consultant ● Launch task force to identify and address systemic issues that create barriers for low-income families, racial minorities, or other disadvantaged groups (e.g., zoning ordinances, hiring practices, etc.) ● Sponsor training session(s) for staff and/or community partners ● Conduct a survey to determine readiness to utilize identified program/curriculum (examples: SEARCH, GLSEN) ● Attend national or regional training (CADCA, National Prevention Network, Public Health Marijuana Summit) | <p><u>Amplify Youth/Young Adult Voice</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with Youth Councils or student empowerment groups to identify and implement youth-led projects/events ● Support Youth and LGBTQ+ groups through community education to increase youth feeling they matter to the community ● Encourage youth/young adult involvement in substance misuse prevention through peer networks, mentoring, etc. ● Support youth in building off a Getting to Y analysis to target a specific area for improvement within a school or town ● Involve community college students in creating online healthy lifestyle magazine targeted to young adults in the region |

Attachment 1

NEK PCE Subaward Application Form

The actionable timeframe of this grant is 5.5 months, all activities and expenditures must be completed by September 15, 2021. Please keep this timeframe in mind as you envision your project and structure your application.

Instructions: Applications should be 12pt Times New Roman, double spaced with one-inch margins. No paper submissions will be accepted: email documents in Word/Excel or PDF only. A Word version of the application form is available here: <https://nvrh.org/nek-pce>. The required budget template is also available in Excel on the same webpage.

Application Checklist: To be considered complete, applications must include the following sections:

- ☐ Cover sheet
- ☐ Proposal (Sections I-V)
- ☐ Work plan template (Section VI)
- ☐ Budget narrative and template (Section VII)
- ☐ Project evaluation (Section VIII)
- ☐ Resumes of staff designated as key personnel in Staffing Table – Project Team
- ☐ W-9, Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification (for applicant organization, or fiscal sponsor where applicable)
- ☐ Federally negotiated indirect cost rate (only if requesting rate different than 10% de minimis rate)
- ☐ Signature(s) of Official Authorized to Bind the Organization and Fiscal Agent Representative (if applicable)

Do not submit additional documents. They will not be considered and failure to follow instructions may result in rejection of your application.

All files submitted should adhere to these naming conventions:

[abbreviated organization name][document title], for example:

NEK PCE proposal.doc

NEK PCE budget.xls

NEK PCE W9.pdf

ORG MSmith resume.doc

Files may be submitted separately or as one combined PDF.

NEK PCE Subaward Application Form

Cover Sheet (Applicant information):

| | |
|--|--|
| Entity Name (must match IRS Form W-9, Request for Taxpayer ID): | |
| Fiscal year end date: | |
| Contact Person Name and position in organization: | |
| Contact Person Email: | |
| Name and Title of Individual Authorized to Bind the Organization, if different from Contact Person: | |
| Title of Project: | |
| This project involves work directly with children / youth: | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>If you checked that your project works directly with children/youth, please describe the process you will use for background checks*:</p> <p><i>*By signing the submitted application, your organization attests that it will follow the procedures described above in relation to background checks for all work related to this application.</i></p> | |

Applicant Proposal:**I. Experience Managing Grants (150 words):**

Please describe your organization's level of experience managing grants, including federal dollars awarded directly from the government or through the state of Vermont. Level of experience managing grants/federal funds will not be used for or against applicants during the award selection process. This information will be used to design the monitoring plan if you are selected for funding.

Please list all current federal and state of Vermont funding for the proposed project. **Note:** Word count does not include information shared in the table below.

| Funding Agency | Amount | Award Period | Funded Activities |
|----------------|--------|--------------|-------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

II. Needs Statement: (350 words):

What needs have you identified that will be addressed in your project and how was this need identified (i.e., what data describes the need)? Describe the population and service area to be addressed. Please indicate if your project will focus on primary or secondary prevention strategies to address one or more of the following: substance use/misuse, risk/protective factors, or build prevention capacity.

III. Project Description (1,000 words)

What is your project? What is already in place within your community and among your partners that will help set up this project for success? How will it help build strong and meaningful relationships and supportive, healthy environments and/or address the concepts of SDoH and/or reduce health disparities as described in section B? How will your project engage other partners and/or people in the community, particularly those most impacted by the community conditions described in your needs statement? Explain how your project would eventually have an impact on the long-term goals of reducing the misuse of substances such as alcohol, marijuana, tobacco, prescription and illicit opioids, and other drugs.

IV. Organizational Capacity (200 words)

Please demonstrate how your organization will be able to take on this project with current capacity. If this project will be a collaboration between multiple partners, please describe how work will be managed and coordinated. If you are using a fiscal agent, please describe your organization's

NEK PCE Subaward Application Form

relationship to the fiscal agent and how you will work together to monitor grant and budget expectations.

Staffing Chart – Project Team

Please list all individuals covered by the budget or included as in-kind personnel resources. Resumes of all individuals designated as key personnel must be submitted with your application. Any changes to key personnel during the project period require prior approval of the Prevention Center of Excellence Grant Managers.

| Name, Title, and Organization (if not employed by the applicant) | Key Personnel? Yes/No | Proposed Role on Subaward Activities |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

V. Flexibility in the COVID Environment (200 words):

Please tell us about how you adapted your programming during the COVID shutdown. How would you use creativity and flexibility to continue your planned project if another shutdown or similar disruption occurred? The grantee is expected to adhere to applicable COVID-19 health and safety guidance issued or supported by the Vermont Department of Health.

VI. Workplan

Please provide a workplan which will detail the strategies and associated activities of your proposed project. The NEK -PCE grant project seeks to use the Results Based Accountability (RBA) method for determining program success. This framework posits that success can be effectively measured by using three guiding questions;

- How much did you do?
- How well did you do it?
- Is anybody better off?

Please use the table below to indicate your strategies and activities as well as who is responsible for each activity and when you anticipate the activity will take place. Please also include a description of how you plan to measure your success, keeping in mind the three guiding questions described above. An example is provided below. You may add additional rows as needed to this template.

Workplan Example:

| Strategy: Advocate for substance free town events | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|------------|
| Activities: | Who is responsible? | By when? |
| Partner with key Stakeholders | Staff and identified key stakeholders | April 2021 |
| Research sample ordinances and municipal policies | Staff/town staff | May 2021 |

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| | | |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Meet with Select Board chair to assess level of support | Staff/Select Board | May 2021 |
| Develop and administer surveys to gauge public support. Analyze results. | Staff/community partners | June 2021-July 2021 |
| Develop a presentation and present to Select Board | Staff/Select Board | August 2021 |
| How will you measure success? number of survey respondents, survey results, number of Select Board meetings attended, number of presentations to Select Board, number of substance free town events established through policy | | |

Workplan Template:

| Strategy 1: | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------|
| Activities: | Who is responsible? | By when? |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| How will you measure success? | | |
| Strategy 2: | | |
| Activities: | Who is responsible? | By when? |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| How will you measure success? | | |
| Strategy 3: | | |
| | | |
| Activities: | Who is responsible? | By when? |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| How will you measure success? | | |

VII. Budget (500 words)

In this section include a brief narrative of how the budget will be expended. **Please note:**

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- **Budgets are expected to conform to the federal [cost principles in 2 CFR 200.400 – 200.475](#).** Unallowable costs should not be included in your budget.
- No more than \$1,000 may be requested for furniture or other capital expenses.
- Federal funds must be used to supplement existing state and local funds for project activities and must not replace funds that have been appropriated for the same purpose. There are strict federal rules against the use of federal funds to supplant current funding of an existing project.
- Subaward recipients are not required to obtain a financial match from another source, but if you will be using other funds to help achieve project goals, please include the source and amount in your budget narrative and note whether those funds are already secured or if the request is still pending. If still pending, explain briefly what changes in budget/scope would be required if you do not receive those additional funds.

Budget Template (use of this template is required): An Excel version of this template is available at: <https://nvrh.org/nek-pce>.

| Topic | Description | Request |
|--|---|---------|
| Staffing | | \$ |
| Benefits (include the overall percentage) | | \$ |
| Consultants (legal fees for policy research, trainers, etc.) | | \$ |
| Materials & Supplies (printing, curriculum, training materials, etc.) | | \$ |
| Travel | | \$ |
| Other (fees for conferences, trainings etc.) | | \$ |
| Indirect ____% | Limited to de minimis rate of 10% unless another rate has been federally negotiated | \$ |
| Total: | Should equal the amount you are applying for | \$ |

VIII. Project Evaluation (200 words)

Results-Based Accountability (RBA) is an intentional way of thinking and taking action used by communities to improve the lives of children, families and the community as a whole. RBA is also used by agencies to improve the performance of their programs.

RBA will be used to evaluate all projects funded as part of the PCE grant. Training and technical assistance in RBA will be provided to all successful applicants. Level of RBA training and experience will not be used for or against applicants during award selection process. The following questions are intended to assess RBA training and support needs.

Please indicate your organization's level of training in RBA:

- ☐ One or more staff has completed formal RBA training (e.g., 4-part series offered by Benchmarks for a Better Vermont, RBA conference and coaching offered to previous Prevention Network Grant subrecipients)
- ☐ One or more staff has attended 1-2 hour overview training with an RBA trainer
- ☐ One or more staff has completed the RBA Professional Certification Program offered online by Clear Impact
- ☐ Other: please explain

Please explain how your organization uses RBA currently OR if you do not use RBA, please explain the evaluation process that you currently use.

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Attestation:

Prevention funds are granted to NVRH through the Vermont Agency of Human Services (AHS), which requires that costs are incurred up front and then reimbursed at the end of a period, usually monthly or quarterly. *This subaward opportunity allows for monthly invoicing.*

By signing below, your organization understands that these grants are required to comply with the AHS cost reimbursement model and you will need to incur costs up front. NVRH will reimburse error-free invoices for allowable expenditures, submitted by the due date specified in the award document, within 30 days.

Signature of applicant official authorized to bind the organization:

By:

Name (please print): _____

Signature

Title

Date: _____

Signature of fiscal agent representative (if applicable):

By:

Name (please print): _____

Signature

Title

Date: _____