

The Celia Lipton Farris and Victor W. Farris Foundation

Supporting Bold Leadership in Community Mental Health & Wellness

Summary

The Farris Foundation seeks to invest in organizations that focus on mental health and wellness, and are committed to creating equitable and accessible community systems of care.

The Foundation will support innovations that increase access to care, integrate mental health and wellness promotion with primary care and other human services, and support professional development. The capacity building grant program will support practical, “building block” projects that help behavioral healthcare organizations such as:

- Acquire the necessary knowledge, tools and resources to develop, implement and assess targeted improvements in their work.
- Expand best practices and models that lead to sustainability.
- Build program capacity through planning, training, collaborating and evaluating grants.

Applicants may request up to \$50,000 per year for two years totaling \$100,000.

Timeline – Spring Grant Cycle

2022 Activity	Date
Announcement	November 2021
Concept Proposals Due	January 17
Concept Proposal Decisions	February 28
Full Proposals Due	April 11
Grants Announced	End of June

Timeline – Fall Grant Cycle

2022 Activity	Date
Announcement	August 1
Concept Proposals Due	September 5
Concept Proposal Decisions	October 7
Full Proposals Due	November 4
Grants Announced	Early December

Background

We are at a tipping point. The pandemic has made everyone more aware of the importance of behavioral health and reminded us of the challenges ahead. Our systems of care, support, and prevention are broken and disconnected. Our caregivers are burned out and neglected. We are hungry for new approaches in behavioral health that disrupt the forces that are holding those problems in place.

The Foundation seeks to support projects that address pressing bottlenecks and blind spots in behavioral health. These are blind spots that are ignored by funders, government, and our own organizational and professional biases. We will pay particular attention to fresh ideas that can advance emerging trends in the field related to integration, access, and professional development. We are also eager to support new models of care, dialogue, and community-building that create spaces for the voices that are the least heard in communities.

Grants will support efforts that are both practical and visionary such as:

INTEGRATION - Accelerate the pace of integrating mental health care with other domains

- Increase the access and quality of behavioral health services in primary care through behavioral health integrated team-based care models
- Support efforts of organizations outside traditional health care organizations to promote behavioral health and wellness.
- Connect spiritual and/or contemplative practices to behavioral health and wellness.
- Use animals as a way to help people cope with and recover from some physical and mental health conditions.

ACCESS - Increase access to culturally competent care for the most vulnerable

- Promote prevention, early identification, screening, and community-based crisis programs that help people sooner and prevent problems later on.
- Use digital technology/telehealth to make care more convenient and make data more useful.
- increase recovery-oriented education, services and supports in the community
- Mobilize community health workers such as peer specialists or paraprofessionals to address behavioral health disparities.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - Emphasize the professional development and wellness of caregivers

- Support innovative efforts that build enduring programs, resources, and practices that promote workforce wellness, learning, and capacity.
- Align, develop, improve, or expand continuing education and training.
- Develop systematic coaching and supervision strategies.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants include direct providers of healthcare services and support organizations of direct providers targeting underserved individuals and families in low-income communities.

Lead applicants must have a core mission that focuses on behavioral health and a reputation for cross-sector collaboration. The Foundation will give priority to projects in the fields of addiction, trauma, depression, and other mental health disorders. The fields of developmental disabilities and traumatic brain injury are not a priority. Organizations that do not specialize in behavioral health are encouraged to work in collaboration with a community partner that does.

What will it fund?

Proposal elements and budget submissions may include, but are not limited to:

- Consultation, planning, feasibility research
- Professional or technical staffing expenses for defined start-up/transition period
- Provider education, training, case consultation, peer support
- Program coordination, outreach, monitoring, and evaluation
- New methods testing, explorations of new collaborations and partnerships, involving new allies, promoting cross-sector collaboration

The Foundation will support projects proposed by organizations at various levels of capacity. Some grants may support projects just getting started. Other grants will support more advanced partnerships and coalitions where they take coordinated action.

Grants will favor applicants who have done their homework and have deep insight about a particular challenge or opportunity. Projects must include action plans that build on existing momentum, respond to clearly defined needs and opportunities, and have identified measurable activities and outcomes.

What the Foundation Looks for in a Project

The Foundation seeks to learn from projects that push organizations to approach the more challenging questions of access, equity, and engagement. The Foundation will reward creativity, experimentation, and a pioneering spirit.

We are looking for proposals that communicate:

A sense of urgency. The project is timely, rooted in specific behavioral health and organizational challenges, and would be recognized by peer organizations as a top priority.

Readiness for strategic action. Clarity about the role the organization or organizations seek to play in advancing practice. The applicant will use the funding to take meaningful steps toward a long-term vision.

Clear goals and objectives. The project has a strong outcomes and results orientation.

A learning orientation. The project addresses interesting questions about the challenges of the work that are useful to others.

Racial and gender equity. The project makes an explicit effort to address racial and gender equity.

Peer-involvement. Projects are created by or in direct collaboration with people who are labeled with mental health issues or those most impacted by trauma and harmful systems.

Holistic. Frameworks for healing ideally address the whole person (mind, body, and spirit) as well as the broader context in which the person lives.

Eligibility Criteria

1. **Nonprofit organizations.** Applicants must be U.S. based non-profit organizations with approved IRS 501(c)(3) status or fiscal agents with a 501(c)(3) status. Collaborations may include organizations that do not have a 501(c)(3) designation.
2. **Target communities.** Provide services or collaborate with organizations in one the following communities:
 - Greater Buffalo, New York
 - Northern New Jersey
 - Northern counties, Maine
 - Palm Beach County & Broward County, Florida
 - Northwest region, North Carolina

- Santa Fe and Bernalillo Counties, New Mexico

3. **Behavioral health mission.** Lead applicants must have a core mission that focuses on behavioral health. The Fund will give priority to projects in the fields of addiction, trauma, and depression. Fields of long-term care, developmental disabilities, and traumatic brain injury are less of a priority. Organizations that do not specialize in behavioral health are encouraged to work in collaboration with a community partner that does.
4. **Local leadership.** Applicants that are based outside the target communities are encouraged to apply with a community partner.
5. **Match requirement.** There is no funding match requirement, but financial and in-kind contributions toward the project budget, and evidence of interest and support from other funders will strengthen the case for support.
6. **Organizational size.** The Foundation will favor requests that have potential to benefit the most staff and clients in a system, network, or community. Very large organizations are not a priority. We encourage small organizations to apply in coalition with other community partners. An individual organization may be included in multiple funding applications if it is part of more than one proposed collaborative project.

Use of Funds

The Foundation will award grants up to \$50,000 per year to implement projects. If proposed over multiple years, projects will be expected to have annual benchmarks, which will be confirmed at the time of the initial grant, and will be conditions for each successive year of funding.

Allowable costs. Funds may be used for personnel, meetings, supplies, project-related travel, and contractors or consultants. The Foundation prefers to support staffing and program expenses over equipment, although equipment needed to directly support the implementation of a project can be included as a cost component.

Indirect costs. The Foundation will support indirect costs provided they are fully justified.

Exclusions

- Academic research or writing
- General operating expenses
- Capital campaigns or improvements
- Conferences or one-time workshops
- Political lobbying
- Marketing
- Policy campaigns addressing reimbursement policies, regulation of licensure/certification, or state workforce monitoring.
- Revenue/billing of professionals while participating in training

Award Information

- Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Envisioned.** The intent of the Foundation is to award a number of grants to selected proposals. Applicants may request \$50,000 per year for two years to support projects.
- Notification of Award Recipients.** Winning institutions will be notified no later than July or December 2022 depending on the grant cycle. The list of grant recipients will be published on www.farrisfdn.org.
- Grantee Expectations**

Recipients of the Fund should expect and plan on the following:

- Peer Exchange:** The Foundation hopes that grantees can learn from each other. Grantees should expect to join calls or webinars with other grantees. The Foundation hopes that in the future it will be able to support possible in-person convenings for peer exchanges (travel funding will be provided).

2. **Grant Reporting:** Grantees will be asked to provide short, mid grant updates as well as a final written report.
3. **Long-Term Tracking:** Grantees may be asked to fill out a survey or participate in follow-up calls after the project period.

How to Apply

The Fund will accept letters of inquiry for grants up to \$50,000. The Foundation will be making continuation grants for up to two years total based on progress.

Letters of inquiry are due by 5:00 PM Eastern time on January 17, 2022.

Please use our **Online Application System** to register your organization (if you already have an account in our current system because of the last initiative, please log in to that one, you do not need to register again), and fill out the LOI form (**Access Code: farris**). No other forms of submission will be accepted.

Read the program description and online forms carefully to ensure your potential request is a sound fit with the fund and assess your readiness to apply at this time.

The Foundation will invite a limited number of full proposal applications for each proposal deadline.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Can a regional or national organization apply to replicate or pilot projects in one or more of the target communities?

We are open to all forms of collaboration as long as an organization in the target community leads or initiates the proposal and project, and the proposed has a set of long-term objectives.

If my request was denied in the Spring cycle, can I apply again in the Fall?

No, you will have to wait until the following year to re-apply.

Thank you for your interest in this grant opportunity