

Skin Lightening Products Public Awareness and Education Competitive Grant

GRANT REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

October 2025

Skin Lightening Products Public Awareness and Education Competitive Grant

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Environmental Epidemiology Unit
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To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-4700.

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RFP Part 1: Overview

1.1 General Information

- **Announcement Title:** Skin Lightening Product Awareness and Education Grant
- **Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Program Website:**
[Skin Lightening Products Public Awareness and Education Grant - MN Dept. of Health \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/skin/grant.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/skin/grant.html)
- **Application Deadline:** 2:00 p.m. Central Standard Time, Monday, November 3, 2025.

1.2 Program Description

The purpose of the Skin Lightening Products Public Awareness and Education Grant is to increase public awareness and education activities to address issues of colorism, skin-lightening products, and chemical exposures from skin-lightening products. Grantee must use the funds to conduct public awareness and education activities that are culturally specific, and community based. This grant seeks to reach multiple communities of color in Minnesota who are impacted by the use of skin lightening products. MDH will administer this grant as directed by the MN Legislature (MN Session Law, Special Session HF3, Article 14, Section 4).

1.3 Funding and Project Dates

Funding

Funding will be allocated through a competitive process. If selected, you may only incur eligible expenditures when the grant agreement is fully executed, and the grant has reached its effective date, whichever is later.

Funding	Estimate
Estimated Amount to Grant	\$200,000
Estimated Number of Awards	1
Estimated Award Maximum	\$200,000

Grant funds are not transferrable to any other entity. Applicants that are aware of any upcoming mergers, acquisitions, or any other changes in their organization or legal standing, must disclose this information to MDH in their application, or as soon as they are aware of it.

Match Requirement

There are no match requirements for this competitive grant.

Project Dates

November 2025 – June 30, 2027

1.4 Eligible Applicants

Grantee must meet one of the following conditions in order to qualify for a grant:

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- Be a non-profit organization
- Be a community-based organization, which is a public or private non-profit organization that is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community and works to meet community needs.

Grantees must demonstrate experience and capacity to conduct public awareness and education activities that are culturally specific and community-based, and to reach multiple communities of color in Minnesota who are impacted by the use of skin lightening products.

Priority shall be given to organizations that have historically served ethnic communities at significant risk from these products.

1.5 Questions and Answers

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted by email to Jessie.Carr@state.mn.us.

Please submit questions no later than 4:30 p.m. Central Standard Time (CST), on October 22, 2025.

All answers will be posted on: October 23, 2025, at [Skin Lightening Products Public Awareness and Education Grant - MN Dept. of Health](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/skin/grant.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/skin/grant.html>).

To ensure the proper and fair evaluation of all applications, other communications regarding this RFP including verbal, telephone, written or internet initiated by or on behalf of any applicant to any employee of the Department, other than questions submitted to as outlined above, are prohibited. **Any violation of this prohibition may result in the disqualification of the applicant.**

RFP Part 2: Program Details

2.1 Priorities

Health Equity Priorities

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to ensure fairness, precision, equity, and consistency in competitive grant awards. This includes implementing diversity and inclusion in grant-making.

The [Policy on Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review \(PDF\)](https://mn.gov/admin/assets/08-02%20Grants%20Policy%20Revision%20September%202017%20final_tcm36-312046.pdf)

([https://mn.gov/admin/assets/08-](https://mn.gov/admin/assets/08-02%20Grants%20Policy%20Revision%20September%202017%20final_tcm36-312046.pdf)

[02%20Grants%20Policy%20Revision%20September%202017%20final_tcm36-312046.pdf](https://mn.gov/admin/assets/08-02%20Grants%20Policy%20Revision%20September%202017%20final_tcm36-312046.pdf))

establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities and/or disparities.

This grant will serve:

- Multiple communities of color in Minnesota who are impacted by the use of skin lightening products.

Grant outcomes will include:

- Increased public awareness about issues of colorism, skin-lightening products, and chemical exposures from skin-lightening products.
- Activities will be culturally specific and community based. Some examples include:
 - Community or personal actions
 - Community events
 - New media products or literature
 - Workshops or conferences
 - Public service announcements
 - Other public and stakeholder engagement activities
 - Print/electronic materials, programs, or campaigns
 - Development of educational materials about mercury, hydroquinone and/or steroids in skin lightening products
 - Evaluating existing outreach activities related to skin lightening products awareness and education

Long-term desired grant outcomes include:

- Increases in awareness of the health impacts associated with use of skin lightening products
- Increases in conversation within communities about the topic of colorism and skin lightening products and practice
- Decreases in use of skin lightening products
- Decreases in demand for skin lightening products by consumers

2.2 Eligible Projects

- Awareness and education may focus on any or all of the following:

- Potential exposure to mercury and other harmful chemicals from skin lightening products
- The dangers of chemical exposures through dermal absorption, inhalation, hand-to-mouth contact, and through contact with individuals who have used these skin lightening products
- The signs and symptoms of mercury poisoning
- The health effects of mercury poisoning, including the permanent effects on the central nervous system and kidneys
- The dangers of using these products or being exposed to these products during pregnancy and breastfeeding to the mother and to the infant
- Knowing how to identify products that contain mercury

Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Soliciting donations
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services
- Lobbyists, political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds

2.3 Grant Management Responsibilities

Grant Agreement

Each grantee must formally enter into a grant agreement. The grant agreement will address the conditions of the award, including implementation for the project. The grantee is expected to read the grant agreement, sign, and comply with all conditions of the grant agreement. Grantee should provide a copy of the grant agreement to all grantee staff working on the grant.

No work on grant activities can begin until a fully executed grant agreement is in place.

- A sample grant agreement is located [at Grant Resources \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/about/grants/resources.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/about/grants/resources.html).

Applicants should be aware of the terms and conditions of the standard grant agreement in preparing their applications. Much of the language reflected in the sample agreement is required by statute. If an applicant takes exception to any of the terms, conditions or language in the sample grant agreement, the applicant must indicate those exceptions, in writing, in their application in response to this RFP. Certain exceptions may result in an application being disqualified from further review and evaluation. Only those exceptions indicated in an application will be available for discussion or negotiation.

The funded applicant will be legally responsible for assuring implementation of the work plan and compliance with all applicable state requirements including worker's compensation insurance, nondiscrimination, data privacy, budget compliance, and reporting.

Grantee must formally enter into a grant agreement. The grant agreement will address the conditions of the award, including implementation for the project. Grantee should read the grant agreement, sign, and once signed, comply with all conditions of the grant agreement.

No work on grant activities can begin until a fully executed grant agreement is in place and the State's Authorized Representative has notified the Grantee that work may start.

The funded applicant will be legally responsible for assuring implementation of the work plan and compliance with all applicable state requirements including worker's compensation insurance, nondiscrimination, data privacy, budget compliance, and reporting.

Accountability and Reporting Requirements

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to monitor progress on state grants by requiring grantees to submit written progress reports at least annually until all grant funds have been expended and all of the terms in the grant agreement have been met.

Bi-annual Reports

Period 1: Inception of grant – 6/30/2026, due by the 15th day of the following month.

Period 2: 7/1/2026 – 12/31/2026, due by the 15th day of the following month

Period 3: 1/1/2027 - 6/30/2027, due by the 15th day of the following month

Grant Monitoring

Sample Language: [Minn. Stat. § 16B.97](#) and [Policy on Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review \(PDF\) \(https://mn.gov/admin/assets/08-02%20Grants%20Policy%20Revision%20September%202017%20final_tcm36-312046.pdf\)](#) require the following:

- One monitoring visit during the grant period on all state grants over \$50,000
- Conducting a financial reconciliation of grantee's expenditures at least once during the grant period on grants over \$50,000

The monitoring schedule: Monitoring will be determined by the MDH program manager and agreed upon by Grantee.

Grant Payments

Per [State Policy on Grant Payments \(PDF\) \(https://mn.gov/admin/assets/08-08%20Policy%20on%20Grant%20Payments%20FY21%20_tcm36-438962.pdf\)](#), reimbursement is the method for making grant payments. All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget. The State shall review each request for reimbursement against the approved grant budget, grant expenditures to-date and the latest grant progress report before approving payment. Grant payments shall not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless MDH has given the grantee a written extension.

The invoicing and payment schedule will be:

Invoices will be submitted monthly and by the 15th day of the following month.

Invoices must include breakdown of costs to include:

- Grantee name
- Address and Remit to Address
- Contact Name, phone, and email
- List of expenses

Invoices must be sent via email to jessie.carr@state.mn.us.

2.4 Grant Provisions

Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination Requirements for all Grantees

The grantee agrees to comply with applicable state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination.

Minnesota's nondiscrimination law is the Minnesota Human Rights Act (MHRA) ([Minn. Stat. § 363A](#); See e.g. [Minn. Stat. § 363A.02](#)). The MHRA is enforced by the [Minnesota Department of Human Rights](#) (<https://mn.gov/mdhr/>). Some, but not all, MHRA requirements are reflected below. All grantees are responsible for knowing and complying with nondiscrimination and other applicable laws.

The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified.

The grantee agrees not to discriminate in public accommodations because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability.

The grantee agrees not to discriminate in public services because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, and status with regard to public assistance.

The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.

The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Minn. Rules, part [5000.3550](#).

Audits

Per [Minn. Stat. § 16B.98](#), subd. 8, the grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the granting agency and either the legislative auditor

or the state auditor, as appropriate. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant agreement end date, receipt, and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

Conflicts of Interest

MDH will take steps to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers per [Minn. Stat. § 16B.98](#) and the Office of Grants Management's Policy 08-01, "Conflict of Interest Policy for State Grant-Making."

Applicants must complete the Applicant Conflict of Interest Disclosure form

([Applicant/Recipient Conflict of Interest Form \(PDF\)](#))

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/about/grants/coiapplicant.pdf>) and submit it as part of the completed application. Failure to complete and submit this form will result in disqualification from the review process.

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- a grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice
- a grantees or applicant's objectivity in performing the grant work is or might be otherwise impaired
- a grantee or applicant has an unfair competitive advantage

Individual conflicts of interest occur when:

- an applicant, or any of its employees, uses their position to obtain special advantage, benefit, or access to MDH's time, services, facilities, equipment, supplies, prestige, or influence
- An applicant, or any of its employees, receives or accepts money, or anything else of value, from another state grantee or grant applicant with respect to the specific project covered by this RFP/project.
- An applicant, or any of its employees, has equity or a financial interest in, or partial or whole ownership of, a competing grant applicant organization.
- An applicant, or any of its employees, is an employee of MDH or is a relative of an employee of MDH.

In cases where a conflict of interest is perceived, disclosed, or discovered, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to disqualification from eligibility for the grant award or termination of the grant agreement.

Non-Transferability

Grant funds are not transferrable to any other entity. Applicants that are aware of any upcoming mergers, acquisitions, or any other changes in their organization or legal standing, must disclose this information to MDH in their application, or as soon as they are aware of it.

Public Data and Trade Secret Materials

All applications submitted in response to this RFP will become property of the State. In accordance with [Minn. Stat. § 13.599](#), all applications and their contents are private or nonpublic until the applications are opened.

Once the applications are opened, the name and address of each applicant and the amount requested is public. All other data in an application is private or nonpublic data until completion of the evaluation process, which is defined by statute as when MDH has completed negotiating the grant agreement with the selected applicant.

After MDH has completed the evaluation process, all remaining data in the applications is public with the exception of trade secret data as defined and classified in [Minn. Stat. § 13.37](#), subd. 1(b). A statement by an applicant that the application is copyrighted or otherwise protected does not prevent public access to the application or its contents. ([Minn. Stat. § 13.599](#), subd. 3(a)).

If an applicant submits any information in an application that it believes to be trade secret information, as defined by [Minn. Stat. § 13.37](#), the applicant must:

- Clearly mark all trade secret materials in its application at the time it is submitted,
- Include a statement attached to its application justifying the trade secret designation for each item, and
- Defend any action seeking release of the materials it believes to be trade secret and indemnify and hold harmless MDH and the State of Minnesota, its agents and employees, from any judgments or damages awarded against the State in favor of the party requesting the materials, and any and all costs connected with that defense.
- This indemnification survives MDH's award of a grant agreement. In submitting an application in response to this RFP, the applicant agrees that this indemnification survives as long as the trade secret materials are in possession of MDH. The State will not consider the prices submitted by the responder to be proprietary or trade secret materials.

MDH reserves the right to reject a claim that any particular information in an application is trade secret information if it determines the applicant has not met the burden of establishing that the information constitutes a trade secret. MDH will not consider the budgets submitted by applicants to be proprietary or trade secret materials. Use of generic trade secret language encompassing substantial portions of the application or simple assertions of trade secret without substantial explanation of the basis for that designation will be insufficient to warrant a trade secret designation.

If a grant is awarded to an applicant, MDH may use or disclose the trade secret data to the extent provided by law. Any decision by the State to disclose information determined to be trade secret information will be made consistent with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act ([Ch. 13 MN Statutes](#)) and other relevant laws and regulations.

If certain information is found to constitute trade secret information, the remainder of the application will become public; in the event a data request is received for application information, only the trade secret data will be removed and remain nonpublic.

2.5 Review and Selection Process

Review Process

Funding will be allocated through a competitive process with review by a committee representing the MDH Environmental Surveillance and Assessment Section. The review committee will evaluate all eligible and complete applications received by the deadline.

MDH will review all committee recommendations and is responsible for award decisions. **The award decisions of MDH are final and not subject to appeal.** Additionally:

- MDH reserves the right to withhold the distribution of funds in cases where proposals submitted do not meet the necessary criteria.
- The RFP does not obligate MDH to award a grant agreement or complete the project, and MDH reserves the right to cancel this RFP if it is considered to be in its best interest.
- MDH reserves the right to waive minor irregularities or request additional information to further clarify or validate information submitted in the application, provided the application, as submitted, substantially complies with the requirements of this RFP. There is, however, no guarantee MDH will look for information or clarification outside of the submitted written application. Therefore, it is important that all applicants ensure that all sections of their application are complete to avoid the possibility of failing an evaluation phase or having their score reduced for lack of information.

Selection Criteria and Weight

The review committee will be reviewing each applicant on a 130-point scale. A standardized scoring system will be used to determine the extent to which the applicant meets the selection criteria.

The scoring factors and weight that applications will be judged are based on Appendix F: Grant Review Score Sheet

Grantee Past Performance and Due Diligence Review Process

- It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to consider a grant applicant's past performance before awarding subsequent grants to them.
- State policy requires states to conduct a pre-award risk assessment ([Due Diligence Review Form \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/about/grants/duediligence.pdf) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/about/grants/duediligence.pdf>) prior to a grant award. Additional information may be required for proposed budgets of \$50,000 and higher to a potential applicant in order to comply with [Policy on Preaward Risk Assessment](https://mn.gov/admin/government/grants/policies-statutes-forms/) (<https://mn.gov/admin/government/grants/policies-statutes-forms/>).

Notification

MDH anticipates notifying all applicants via email of funding decisions by November 17, 2025.

RFP Part 3: Application and Submission Instructions

3.1 Application Deadline

All applications must be received by MDH no later than 2:00 p.m. Central Time, on Monday, November 3, 2025.

Late applications will not be accepted. It is the applicant's sole responsibility to allow sufficient time to address all potential delays caused by any reason whatsoever. MDH will not be responsible for delays caused by mail, delivery, computer, or technology problems.

Acknowledgement of application receipt. MDH will "reply all" to the email address that submitted the application to acknowledge receipt of your application within one business day of the receipt of an application. If you do not receive an acknowledgment email within that time frame from when you submitted the application, it means MDH did not receive your application/documents. Please contact Anita Smith, Grants Coordinator at anita.smith@state.mn.us after that time frame for further instructions.

3.2 Application Submission Instructions

Applications must be submitted via email to:

Anita Smith

Grants Coordinator

Anita.smith@state.mn.us

3.3 Application Instructions

You must submit the following in order for the application to be considered complete:

- Project Narrative-Application (Appendix B)
- Work Plan (Appendix C)
- Budget Justification Form (Attachment A)
- Due Diligence (Appendix D)
- Conflict of Interest (Appendix E)

Use the checklist provided in Appendix A to make sure applications are complete. Incomplete applications will be rejected and not evaluated.

Applications must include all required application materials, including attachments. Do not provide any materials that are not requested in this RFP, as such materials will not be considered nor evaluated. **MDH reserves the right to reject any application that does not meet these requirements.**

By submitting an application, each applicant warrants that the information provided is true, correct, and reliable for purposes of evaluation for potential grant award. The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the award, as

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well as subject the applicant to suspension or debarment proceedings and other remedies available by law.

All costs incurred in responding to this RFP will be borne by the applicant.

RFP Part 4: Attachments

- Application Checklist (Appendix A)
- Project Narrative-Application (Appendix B)
- Work Plan (Appendix C)
- Budget Justification Form (Attachment A)
- Due Diligence (Appendix D)
 - Community Health Boards and Tribal Nations do not need to submit this form as part of their application.
- Conflict of Interest (Appendix E)
- Score sheet (Appendix F)

Appendix A: Application Checklist

Use this checklist to ensure that all the required items are included in the grant application. A complete application will include the following:

- ☐ Project Narrative (Appendix B)
- ☐ Work Plan (Appendix C)
- ☐ Budget Justification Form (Use of Attachment A *Budget*)
- ☐ Due Diligence Review Form (for grant requests from non-governmental organizations) (Appendix D)
- ☐ Conflict of Interest (Appendix E)

Any application that does not include all required items will be considered incomplete, will not be scored, and will not be eligible for funding.

Appendix B: Project Narrative

The project narrative and work plan describes your organization and details what you intend to accomplish through the grant program. Successful grant applications will include the following information.

Organization Contact Information

Organization's Legal Name:

Organization is a community-based organization: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Organization is a non-profit: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Organization is a local public health entity: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Contact Name and Title:

Mailing Address:

Street Address (if different from mailing address):

Phone:

Email:

Website:

SECTION 1: Organizational Capacity (typed 2-page limit)

1. Summary of organization's history, mission, and values.
2. Description of the administrative structure of the organization, including a list of staff who will conduct the project and their training and expertise
3. Description of past and/or current education programs and services provided by the organization.
4. Describe key elements that show organizational capacity to implement a skin lightening products public awareness and education program, including:
 - a. Previous experience implementing skin lightening products awareness and education initiatives
 - b. Capacity to serve the targeted population
 - c. Capacity to apply learnings from evaluation in order to strengthen the project
 - d. Describe any anticipated start-up time that might be involved
5. Projects may collaborate with other organizations, businesses, or entities to achieve project goals, but collaboration is not required. If there is a collaboration, provide description and purpose of collaborators.

SECTION 2: Project Narrative (typed 4-page limit)

1. Description of the geographic area in Minnesota in which you propose to conduct a skin lightening products public awareness and education project.
2. Identify target population and describe the need for a skin lightening products public awareness and education project.
3. Summary of the project and how the project enhances awareness and education about skin lightening products over the next two years.

4. Statement of the proposed goals and outcomes of the project.
5. Describe public awareness and education activities that are culturally specific, community-based, and focus on any or all of the following:
 - Potential exposure to mercury and other harmful chemicals from skin lightening products
 - The dangers of chemical exposures through dermal absorption, inhalation, hand-to-mouth contact, and through contact with individuals who have used these skin lightening products
 - The signs and symptoms of mercury poisoning
 - The health effects of mercury poisoning, including the permanent effects on the central nervous system and kidneys
 - The dangers of using these products or being exposed to these products during pregnancy and breastfeeding to the mother and to the infant
 - Knowing how to identify products that contain mercury
6. Describe any innovative approaches to raise public awareness and education. Examples of innovative approaches include:
 - Community engagement
 - Audio
 - Audiovisual
 - Graphics
 - Translation
 - Social media
 - Other creative approaches
7. Describe scientific and credible sources of where you will collect your information from.
8. Plans for documenting project outcomes (for example: collecting pictures at an event, issuing a press release, collecting participant stories, copies of developed materials, analytics from social media and web, headcount at events, etc.).
9. Summary of how the project will be evaluated; how success will be measured, recorded, and reported. **Grant applications that do not evaluate their project will not be considered.**

SECTION 3: Work Plan (no page limit)

Use the provided Appendix C: Work Plan template to note program objectives, the activities by which you will achieve those objectives, a timeline for activities, and associated evaluation activities. The work plan should be feasible, and objectives should be measurable. The work plan will be reviewed, revised and approved by MDH and the final work plan will be incorporated in the contract.

SECTION 4: Budget and Budget Justification (no page limit)

- Budget includes an accurate, itemized projection of costs for each task, deliverable, and product.
- Complete the following budget forms:
 - Due Diligence Review Form
 - Budget Justification Form

SECTION 5: Equity and Diversity in Grant Making

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Per Office of Grants Management (OGM) Policy 08-02, “Competitive grant review criteria and standardized scoring systems must include and identify how a state agency’s grant process will implement diversity in grant-making... The scoring system must include weighted criteria that identifies verifiable and measurable diversity, equity, and inclusion in grant-making outcomes and/or grantee performance.” Please refer to [OGM Policy 08-02 \(PDF\) \(https://mn.gov/admin/assets/08-02%20Grants%20Policy%20Revision%20September%202017%20final_tcm36-312046.pdf\)](https://mn.gov/admin/assets/08-02%20Grants%20Policy%20Revision%20September%202017%20final_tcm36-312046.pdf) to read the full policy including procedure steps, definitions, and scope.

- Description of how this grant addresses unmet needs or includes a needs assessment to identify needs is included.
- Skin lightening products impact many communities of color. Applications may demonstrate service to diverse populations beyond racial and ethnic communities, such as:
 - LGBTQI communities
 - Disability status
 - Veterans
 - People living in poverty
 - Children

Appendix C: Work Plan Template

NOVEMBER 2025 – JUNE 2027

Please provide a detailed work plan for the project. Projects may begin once a grant agreement has been executed. Include planning, implementation, and evaluation time. Copy and paste to add as many goals, objectives, and activities as necessary.

A **goal** is a desired result you want to achieve and is typically broad and long-term.

An **objective** is a measurable, tangible, mid to short term action that must be taken to achieve the overall goal.

An **activity** further breaks down the objective in a precise plan of action.

Goal 1

Insert Goal 1 here.

Objective 1.1

Insert Objective 1.1 here.

Activity Description	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Party
Insert an activity for Goal 1, Objective 1.1	Insert an estimated complete date for activity here.	Insert responsible party for this activity here.
Add as many rows as you need	Insert an estimated complete date for activity here.	Insert responsible party for this activity here.

Objective 1.2

Insert Objective 1.2 here.

Activity Description	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Party
Insert an activity for Goal 1, Objective 1.2	Insert an estimated complete date for activity here.	Insert responsible party for this activity here.
Insert as many rows as needed	Insert an estimated complete date for activity here.	Insert responsible party for this activity here.

Objective 1.3

Insert Objective 1.3 here.

Activity Description	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Party
Insert an activity for Goal 1, Objective 1.3	Insert an estimated complete date for activity here.	Insert responsible party for this activity here.
Insert as many rows as needed	Insert an estimated complete date for activity here.	Insert responsible party for this activity here.

Goal 2

Insert Goal 2 here.

Objective 2.1

Insert Objective 2.1 here.

Activity Description	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Party
Insert an activity for Goal 2, Objective 2.1	Insert an estimated complete date for activity here.	Insert responsible party for this activity here.
Insert as many rows as needed	Insert an estimated complete date for activity here.	Insert responsible party for this activity here.

Objective 2.2

Insert Objective 2.2 here.

Activity Description	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Party
Insert an activity for Goal 2, Objective 2.2	Insert an estimated complete date for activity here.	Insert responsible party for this activity here.
Insert as many rows as needed	Insert an estimated complete date for activity here.	Insert responsible party for this activity here.

Appendix D: Budget Justification Form

Instructions

Applicants will need to complete a Budget Justification Form for each of the years listed below.

- November 2025 to June 30, 2026
- July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027

The categories listed below (salary/fringe, contractual services, travel, supplies/expenses, other, and indirect) describe the costs that may be included in each category and correspond to the sections in the Budget Justification Form.

Salary and Fringe

For each proposed funded position, indicate the title, the full time equivalent (FTE) on this grant (see example below), the expected rate of pay, and the total amount applicant expects to pay the position for the year. Grant funds can be used for salary and fringe benefits for staff members directly involved in applicant's proposed activities.

Salaries should be supported by some method of time tracking in order to be included in the Salary and Fringe line. Any salary and fringe expenses not supported by time tracking documentation and not approved by MDH are unallowable and may not be charged to this grant.

Full time equivalent (FTE): The percentage of time a person will work on this grant project. Each position that will work on this grant should show the following information:

EXAMPLE 1 (more often seen among non-profits):

Youth Coordinator

\$25/hourly rate
x 300 hours
\$7,500 salary

Multiply salary by your agency's fringe rate:

\$7,500 salary
x 23% fringe rate (use your agency fringe rate, 23% is just an example)
\$1,725 fringe amount

Now add the salary and the fringe amount together:

\$7,500 annual salary
+\$1,725 fringe
\$9,225/annual salary and fringe total

EXAMPLE 2 (more often seen among local public health):

SKIN LIGHTENING PRODUCTS PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION GRANT

Public Health Nurse:

\$30.40/hourly rate
x2,080/annual hours (or whatever your agency annual standard is)
\$63,232 annual salary

Multiply annual salary by your agency's fringe rate:

\$63,232 annual salary
x 23% fringe rate (use your agency fringe rate, 23% is just an example)
\$14,543 fringe amount

Provide the breakdown of what your fringe rate includes:

6.20% - FICA
1.45% - Medicare
3.00% - Retirement
12.35% - Insurance
23.00% - total Fringe rate

Now add the annual salary and the fringe amount together:

\$63,232 annual salary
+\$14,543 fringe
\$77,775/annual salary and fringe total

Multiply the annual salary and fringe total by the FTE being charged to this grant:

\$77,775 annual salary and fringe total
X .50 FTE assigned to grant
\$38,888 total to be charged to grant for this position

Contractual Services

Applicants may use their award to contract for services directly related to the goals of the grant program. The application must identify any subcontracts that will occur as part of carrying out the duties of this grant program in the proposed budget. The use of contractual services is subject to State review and may change based on final work plan and budget negotiations with selected grantees.

Applications must include:

- description of services to be contracted;
- anticipated contractor/consultant's name (if known) or selection process to be used;
- length of time the services will be provided; and,
- total amount to be paid to contractor.

Travel

List the expected travel costs for staff working on the grant, including mileage, parking, hotel, and meals. Grant funds cannot be used for travel outside of Minnesota without prior written approval from MDH.

Mileage will be reimbursed at the IRS rate at the time the request for reimbursement is made.

Supplies and Expenses

Briefly explain the expected costs for items and services the applicant will purchase to complete the activities of the grant program. Grant funds may not be used to purchase any individual piece of equipment that costs more than \$5,000, or for major capital improvements to property.

Items purchased for use under this grant as well as other programs and activities must be prorated to reflect fair share of the expense to each program. For example, a computer is purchased for one staff person who works .5 FTE on this grant and .5 FTE on other programs. The cost for that computer should be paid for at 50% by this grant and by 50% by the other program.

Other

Include in this section any expenses the applicant expects to have for other items that do not fit in any other category. Grant funds cannot be used for capital purchases, permanent improvements; cash assistance paid directly to individuals; or any cost not directly related to the grant.

Indirect Costs

Indirect costs are expenses of doing business that cannot be directly attributed to a specific grant program or budget line item. These costs are often allocated across an entire agency/organization and may include administrative, executive and/or supervisory salaries and fringe, rent, facilities maintenance, insurance premiums, or others.

If the applicant will be using a federally negotiated indirect cost rate, you will need to submit with your application your most current federally approved indirect rate. Organizations without a federally negotiated indirect cost rate may allocate up to 15% of their direct expenses in the budget for indirect costs, per MDH policy for State funds.

Budget Justification Form

Applicants must submit a budget narrative and budget summary that provides an overview of how funds will be used during the grant (November 2025 – June 30, 2027). **Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the Microsoft Excel template (*Attachment A: Budget Template (Excel)*) provided on the Skin Lightening Products RFP webpage.** Most Minnesota libraries – including all metro county libraries and libraries in Rochester, Duluth, Mille Lacs, Moorhead and Owatonna – provide free access to Microsoft Excel. Applicants who are unable to use the Microsoft Excel template provided on the website may submit their budget in another format that provides the same information below. There are four tabs/sheets in the Excel budget template:

1. Budget Template Instructions
2. MDH Policy and Guidance on Indirect Costs
3. Year 1 Budget Narrative (applicants must complete this sheet)
4. Year 2 Budget Narrative (applicants must complete this sheet)
5. Budget Summary (auto-fills once applicants complete Tabs 3, 4, and 5)

Appendix F: Grant Review Score Sheet

SKIN LIGHTENING PRODUCTS PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

Applicant Name:

Applicant Address:

Reviewer Name/Code:

Project Title:

MDH Program Area: Environmental Epidemiology Unit, Environmental Health

MDH Program Contact: Jessie Carr, 651-201-5662, jessie.carr@state.mn.us

A numerical scoring system will be used to evaluate eligible applications. Scores will be used to develop final recommendations.

Applicants are encouraged to score their own application using the evaluation scoresheet before submitting their application. This step is not required but may help ensure applications address the criteria evaluators will use to score applications.

GRANT AUTHORIZATION PRIORITY (___/10 points)

Has the applicant's organization historically served ethnic communities at significant risk from these products?

☐ Yes (5 pts) ☐ No (0 pts)

Grant applications that demonstrate the organization has historically served ethnic communities at significant risk from these products will have 5 points added to their total score.

Has the applicant's organization historically had access to state grant funding?

☐ Yes (0 pts) ☐ No (5 pts)

Grant applicants that have not historically had access to state grant funding will have 5 points added to their total score.

Rating Table

Score	Score description
5	Outstanding level of quality; significantly exceeds all aspects of the minimum requirements; high probability of success; no significant weaknesses.
4	Substantial response; meets in all aspects and in some cases exceeds, the minimum requirements; good probability of success; no significant weaknesses.
3	Generally meets minimum requirements; probability of success; significant weaknesses, but correctable.

SKIN LIGHTENING PRODUCTS PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION GRANT

Score	Score description
2	Lack of essential information; low probability for success; significant weaknesses, but correctable.
1	Fails to meet minimum requirements; little likelihood of success; needs major revision to make it acceptable.

SECTION 1: Organizational Capacity (20 points possible)			
Score		Multiplier	Total
	Summary of organization's history, mission, and values.	.2	
	Description of the organization, including a list of staff who will conduct the project and their training and expertise.	.4	
	Description of past and/or current education and outreach programs and services provided by the organization(s).	1	
	Previous experience implementing skin lightening products awareness and education initiatives.	.8	
	Capacity to serve the targeted population.	.4	
	Capacity to apply learnings from evaluation in order to strengthen the project.	1	
	Timeline includes any anticipated start-up time that might be involved.	.2	
	Description of collaborators and purpose.	.5	
	SECTION 1 TOTAL		
<i>Note: Collaboration was not a requirement, so applicants could score >20 points on this section.</i> SECTION 1 Notes:			

Section 2 and 3: Project Narrative and Work Plan (60 points possible)			
SCORE		Multiplier	Total

SKIN LIGHTENING PRODUCTS PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION GRANT

Section 2 and 3: Project Narrative and Work Plan (60 points possible)			
	Geographic area in Minnesota to conduct a skin lightening products public awareness and education project is clearly identified.	.2	
	Identified target population and description of the need for a skin lightening products public awareness and education project.	.8	
	Identified who in the supply chain will be a targeted: Consumer, retailer, supplier, and/or manufacturer.	.5	
	Sufficient detail of the project and how the project enhances awareness and education about skin lightening products over the next two years.	1.5	
	Proposed goals and outcomes of the project align with the scope of the work.	1.5	
	<p>Does the application provide public awareness and education activities that are culturally specific, community-based, and focus on any or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Potential exposure to mercury and other harmful chemicals from skin lightening products ○ The dangers of chemical exposures through dermal absorption, inhalation, hand-to-mouth contact, and through contact with individuals who have used these skin lightening products ○ The signs and symptoms of mercury poisoning ○ The health effects of mercury poisoning, including the permanent effects on the central nervous system and kidneys ○ The dangers of using these products or being exposed to these products during pregnancy and breastfeeding to the mother and to the infant ○ Knowing how to identify products that contain mercury <p> <input type="checkbox"/> No (0 points) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, 1-3 areas (2 points) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, 4-5 areas (6 points) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, 6-7 areas (10 points) </p>	No multiplier	

Section 2 and 3: Project Narrative and Work Plan (60 points possible)			
	<p>The project utilizes innovative approaches to raise public awareness and education. Examples of innovative approaches include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement • Audio • Audiovisual • Graphics • Translation • Social media • Other creative approaches 	1.2	
	Scientific and credible sources are identified of where health and disposal information will be collected.	1.5	
	Clear plan to document project outcomes (examples: collecting pictures at events, press releases, collecting participant stories, copies of developed materials, analytics from social media and web, headcount at events, etc.).	1	
	<p>Clearly states how the project will be evaluated and how success will be measured, recorded, and reported.</p> <p>Grant applications that do not evaluate their project will not be considered.</p>	1.8	
	SECTION 2 TOTAL		
SECTION 2 Notes:			

Section 4: Budget and Budget Justification (30 points possible)			
SCORE		Multiplier	Total
	Budget includes an accurate, itemized projection of costs for each task, deliverable, and product.	.5	
	Clear and sufficient details of cost for each work task identified in the work plan.	1.5	

Section 4: Budget and Budget Justification (30 points possible)			
	Sufficient documentation to indicate that the work can be completed within the proposed time period and budget.	1.5	
	The budget consistent with the proposed objectives.	1	
	Budget justification provides adequate detail in how funds will be accounted for and spent.	.5	
	SECTION 4 TOTAL		
SECTION 4 Notes:			

Section 5: Equity and Diversity in Grant Making (10 points possible)			
Per Office of Grants Management (OGM) Policy 08-02, “Competitive grant review criteria and standardized scoring systems must include and identify how a state agency’s grant process will implement diversity in grant-making... The scoring system must include weighted criteria that identifies verifiable and measurable diversity, equity, and inclusion in grant-making outcomes and/or grantee performance.” Please refer to OGM Policy 08-02 to read the full policy including procedure steps, definitions, and scope.			
SCORE	Description of how this grant addresses unmet needs or includes a needs assessment to identify needs is included.	Multiplier	Total
		1.5	
	Skin lightening products impacts all communities of color. Application demonstrates service to diverse populations beyond racial and ethnic communities, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LGBTQI communities ▪ Disability status ▪ Veterans ▪ People living in poverty ▪ Children 	.5	
	SECTION 5 TOTAL		
SECTION 5 Notes:			

