

RFP for Community PFAS Outreach Grant

2. Organization info

Contact Information

Submitting Organization : The Hmong Institute
Street Address : 4402 Femrite Drive
City : Madison
County : WI
Zip Code : 53716
Email : maizong.vue@theHmongInstitute.org

Is your organization a Madison-based community group or non-profit with a Federal Tax ID number?

Yes

If yes, please list your Federal Tax ID Number

Federal Tax ID Number : 824232925

If no, please list the name of your fiscal sponsor and their Federal Tax ID Number

3. Application questions

Application Details

Name of Project/Program/Initiative : Mai Zong Vue
Amount requested : 10,000
Anticipated start date : October 1, 2023
Anticipated completion date : May 30, 2024

What does your proposal seek to accomplish? Include a description of your project(s), how funds will be spent, and information about if this is a new initiative/program/activity or if it is supplemental to an ongoing effort. Response limited to 500 words (10 points).

Wisconsin is home to the 3rd largest Hmong in America. Dane county is home to over 5000 Hmong according to the 2020 Census. The former Hmong refugees resettled in an industrial country that has a huge amount of human-made chemicals that are widespread in the environment and the Hmong don't know that high concentration of PFAS can affect their health. Hmong parents are busy putting food on the tables with limited language skills and knowledge of their new environment. Hmong parents do not know and realize that such man-made chemical such as PFAS is everywhere in their local community in this industrial country. In addition, as there exist no culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach and education about PFAS, they lack the awareness and knowledge of PFAS and how it may cause harm to their health.

Our project is designed to address systemic inequities of services that do not build in culturally and linguistically appropriate PFAS education for Hmong parents who speak limited English and cannot access a complex delivery system. Our goals are to increase awareness and knowledge of PFAS, including its impact on human health for Hmong 30-50 parents via 12 learning dialogues about PFAS and its harm to their health and 5 field trips to see the landfill, sewage and water system. We plan to teach them practical ways to minimize PFAS exposure to chemicals-- rivers and fishes that have mercury, how to dispose of their water and soil waste, cooking oil, automotive fluid, etc. This is a new health education project for 30-50 Hmong parents, twice per month for two hours, who currently enroll in Hmong Sisterhood Support Group, Hmoob Kaj Siab (a holistic-wrapped around day program) and/or in other program at The Hmong Institute. The ultimate goal is to develop a small group of PFAS ambassadors who can help foster community education-engagement about PFAS in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manners.

We seek \$10,000 for this project--\$4,800 is for planning, coordinating and facilitating 12 learning dialogues; \$2500 is for transportation (van rental) for 5 field trips; \$2400 is for snacks for 12 learning dialogues; and \$300 is for supplies (printing such as poster, etc.).

What experience does your organization have with serving underserved or marginalized communities? Please include the specific communities that you have worked with. Response limited to 100 words. (10 points)

We are a trusted non-profit agency serving the Hmong and other underserved communities in Dane County. We have a strong connection to the Hmong, Southeast Asian and Nepalese, which we can help raise PFAS awareness in these communities. We have been serving the underserved communities of Hmong, Nepalese, Laotian, and Cambodian in Dane County since 2018. Our experiences serving these underserved communities include health education, mental health services, senior activities, senior meals, bilingual case management services, field trips, food pantry, youth program, vaccinating and advocacy for these underserved communities, providers, policy makers, and individuals.

Please describe how the actions and activities you are planning will have an impact. This may include identifying systemic inequities and how your program plans to address or mitigate the impacts of those systems. Responses limited to 250 words (10 points).

The overall impacts from our culturally and linguistically appropriate learning dialogues and field trips will include an increased awareness and knowledge about PFAS and the harm it may have on Hmong families, and identify practical ways for 30-50 Hmong parents to minimize PFAS harm or exposure. PFAS education will be provided by a Hmong staff in a safe-trusted environment where language and culture are not going to be a barrier. Transportation will be provided by Hmong drivers. Refreshments, a cultural practice that shows respect for the audience, will be provided in dialogues. PFAS information will be presented in a circular (relationship based) manner, allowing parents to learn by holding a dialogue together and happening based on the participants' learning pace and comfort level, especially topics such as: what is PFAS, understand the health effects of PFAS, solid and water waste, ways they can reduce PFAS exposure, where is PFAS contamination in Madison and Dane County, learn how often they should eat fish from Dane County (fish advisories from WI DHS), environmental hazards, etc. Posters of the subjects discuss will be used to enhance participants' ability to digest the information.

The systemic inequities we are addressing in this project are: How PFAS information is being provided to Hmong parents in a culturally and linguistically appropriate ways that they can learn, process, and retain it. A Hmong bilingual staff and volunteers will ensure Hmong parents are engaged by asking parents to share daily life experience in relation to the topics at hand. It is important that Hmong parents understand the importance of learning small but practical ways to reduce PFAS related issues. Therefore, our effort is to help reduce the systemic inequities within the current health system that do not promote culturally and linguistically appropriate services for Wisconsinites who speak limited English and cannot navigate a complex health delivery system.

Please identify the geographic or identity groups, within Madison, on which your project will focus and how you identified this target audience/population? Responses limited to 250 words (10 points).

In Madison, we currently serve different ethnic groups—Hmong, Laotian, Cambodian, and Nepalese. We have over 350 families in our food pantry program; 115 seniors in our senior program, 50 families in our Hmong Language and Cultural Enrichment Program (HLCEP), 35 families in our diaper support program and have access to clan system and social media groups targeting the underserved communities we currently serve--Hmong, other Southeast Asian, and Nepalese families. As a small pilot program, our target audience will be 30-50 Hmong parents-- mainly Hmong women from our Hmong Sisterhood Women's Support Group, day-time participants from Hmoob Kaj Siab and/or other program parents at The Hmong Institute in Madison. The reason for targeting parents from the Hmong Sisterhood group is that they are younger parents who are the anchors in their families. They are eager to learn and share.

They will be great ambassadors for PFAS health education for the underserved communities. We hope to expand this pilot project to other ethnic groups like the Nepalese and Laotian in the near future.

Please describe your experience working with your target population in past projects. Response limited to 250 words (10 points).

The Hmong parents, women, in our Hmong Sisterhood Support Group have a huge learning curiosity, commitment for change, and fun-loving sisterhood relationships. Hmong elders who come to the day-time program also possess great love for learning new things in their new home so they can acculturate easily. With these, we have a great experience working with women-parents in the support group and at Hmoob Kaj Siab day program. Our most recent project, Hmong Women's Resilient COVID Project, went smoothly and timely as planned. This includes introducing the project idea to them, the women accepted the project, the group worked on their individual 4x4 piece of cloth (articulate their COVID experiences via drawing, painting, doing embroidery, etc.), staff videotaping their finished cloth, staff coordinated the video editing, staff sew the individual cloth into a big quilt story cloth accompany with a video about the project, and promoted the exhibit, which the first exhibit was displayed at the State Capitol from May to June. Our last project with elders at Hmoob Kaj Siab was the pre-Hmong New Year activities held last November. The elders volunteered to do a senior multi-cultural fashion show to demonstrate the diversity of customs between the different ethnic groups. They came to practice as scheduled (2 twice per week for three weeks) and did a fabulous fashion show for our guests (200+). The elders really enjoy sharing about their traditional customs and also performed on State Street for Asian Heritage month event.

4. Thank You!

Thank you for your application. You will be informed of our decision on August 25, 2023.

