



V E N T U R A C O U N T Y

---

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**

A Department of Ventura County Health Care Agency

**COMMUNITY MINI-GRANTS PROGRAM**  
**Notification of Availability of Funding**

**APPLICATION GUIDELINES 2023**

ISSUED: February 23, 2023

DUE: April 4, 2023

Ventura County Behavioral Health  
Community Mini-Grant Application Summary

**Announcement/Purpose**

Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH), a department of the County of Ventura, invites grant applications from qualified applicants for mini-grants to fund community projects for the period of May 12, 2023 through June 30, 2024, in accordance with the terms, conditions and specifications contained herein in this notification of Community Mini-Grant funding availability. Grants may be awarded up to a maximum of \$30,000. Projects must address the needs of unserved and underserved populations. Applications will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on April 4, 2023 at VCBH, 1911 Williams Drive, Suite 200, Oxnard, CA 93036 (Administration Reception). Late applications will not be accepted.

**Timeline (subject to change)**

Application Packet is Released.....	February 23, 2023
Applicant Intent to Apply.....	April 4, 2023
Applicant Questions Due to VCBH.....	March 21, 2023
Applicant Question Responses Released.....	March 28, 2023
Applications Due by 5:00 p.m.....	April 4, 2023
Contractor Selection/Notification.....	April 17, 2023
Contracts Finalized.....	April 24, 2023
Operations Initiated by Contractor.....	May 12, 2023

**Intent to Apply**

Each applicant is responsible for indicating their intent to apply by April 4, 2023 via email to Maryza Seal, VCBH Contracts Manager, at [Maryza.Seal@ventura.org](mailto:Maryza.Seal@ventura.org). Please provide your name, phone number, email address, and organization name for which you are affiliated. **To be able to submit an application, your organization must indicate its intent to apply.** Any application addenda, Questions and Answers, or updated information will be made available through email distribution to the list of individuals that indicate their intent to apply and will also be posted on the VCBH website, on the News & Updates section located at: <https://www.vcbh.org/en/about-us/news-and-updates>.

**Applicant Application Questions**

Applicants are to review this notification of Community Mini-Grant funding availability to ensure applicants understand all requirements and have the information needed to complete and submit an application. Any questions related to this Community Mini-Grant program may be directed to the VCBH Contracts Manager, Maryza Seal, **via email** at [Maryza.Seal@ventura.org](mailto:Maryza.Seal@ventura.org) by March 21, 2023. No late questions will be accepted. The VCBH Contracts Manager is the only individual authorized to answer questions related to this Community Mini-Grant program.

## **INTRODUCTION AND GOAL OF THE COMMUNITY MINI-GRANT PROGRAM**

### ***Learning how the community is keeping people well.***

It is believed thousands of people in Ventura County are getting their wellness needs met through their natural networks of family, friends, faith groups, and community groups, and are not accessing local government for deeper-end mental health services. Ventura County's Community Mini-Grants Program recognizes these natural networks and provides funding for the contribution community makes in keeping people well. The goal is to learn from and build upon what these natural networks can provide through this program.

## **SIZE OF GRANTS**

Funding for this program is provided by the California Department of Mental Health, Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) and is contingent upon the state's fiscal distribution of MHSA funding to the County of Ventura. VCBH will award competitive grants to support community-based projects or programs that are helping to promote overall wellness among county residents. The Community Mini-Grants Program has \$300,000 to award. Requests can range from \$5,000 to \$30,000. Based on the competitive nature of this program and the limited funds available, it is strongly encouraged that requests made are commensurate to the project outlined in your timeline and budget.

## **EXAMPLES OF FUNDING**

VCBH anticipates making funding available for new contract providers to pilot engagement events or programs. The long-term goal is to for VCBH to develop more non-clinical contract providers and options through these Community Mini-Grants (e.g., drop-in centers, after school programs, indigenous/culturally informed interventions, etc.). Below, is the listing of categories and examples of projects or programs within those categories that work as non-traditional approaches to wellness (the examples in the categories below are only examples and applicants are not limited to these examples):

### 1. Community Engagement Events:

- A. For one-time events or activities, Community Mini-Grants can provide up to \$10,000 per event to connect with parents, caregivers and/or providers to increase awareness about a topic or resource available in the community.
- B. For one-time events or activities, Community Responsive Mini-Grants can also provide up to \$10,000 per event for:
  - i. Mental health awareness or early childhood development workshops.

- ii. Community groups/activities such as book clubs, cooking classes, neighborhood centers, family-based or parenting groups, civic or cultural organizations.
- iii. Exercise or relaxation activities such as weight training, yoga, hiking, meditation, martial arts, and sports teams.
- iv. Creative/expressive activities such as music, dance, writing, art, crafts, performance.
- v. Strategies or training that advances racial equity for individuals with Mental Health or Substance Use challenges.
- vi. Any other venue or experience that leaves the participant with a sense of belonging and well-being.

2. Time-Limited Pilot Programs:

A. Community Mini Grants can be used to support Time-Limited Programs for up to \$30,000. Time-Limited Pilot Programs must be time-limited in nature and need to establish a target population as well as how many children, families or providers will be served, and what the intended outcome will be. **Examples:** An 8-week art class for children and grandparents focusing on Latino culture or a 10-week parent training for LGBTQ youth. Other examples can include:

- i. Community groups/activities such as book clubs, cooking classes, neighborhood centers, family-based or parenting groups, civic or cultural organizations focused on well-being and community.
- ii. Exercise or relaxation activities such as weight training, yoga, hiking, meditation, martial arts, and sports teams.
- iii. Creative/expressive activities such as music, dance, writing, art, crafts, performance.
- iv. Training to provide and lead group discussions/activities among peers.
- v. Programs or groups that advances racial equity or awareness for individuals with Mental Health or Substance Use challenges.
- vi. Any other venue or experience that leaves the participant with a sense of belonging and well-being.

**WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY**

VCBH invites Community Mini-Grant Program applications from the following:

1. Nonprofit organizations that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code.
2. Non-incorporated groups with a 501(c)3 fiscal agent (these groups must partner with a qualified organization for fiscal management of the grant).
3. Faith-based organizations, that demonstrate that they operate a social service program or activity that is open to the public.
4. Government and education entities.

One application per project will be accepted, however, multiple applications within and between each category are allowed per provider.

**GENERAL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

**Requirements**

To be considered for a grant award:

1. Projects must serve unserved or underserved people from priority populations or regions in which health disparities are prevalent.
2. Projects/programs must be new.
3. Projects must use a community-based approach to wellness that clearly shows:
  - A. The project follows a peer-based approach.
  - B. Participants from the community are involved and have meaningful input in the development of the project.
  - C. The project promotes individual empowerment, resiliency, and self-determination for participants.
  - D. The project offers new approaches to community wellness.
4. Projects should include the recruitment of people from diverse sources.

The most competitive applications will:

1. Demonstrate the anticipated positive impact on overall wellness among

participants.

2. Leverage other resources, programs and partners to expand the project and/or demonstrate sustainability, if applicable.
3. Include the recruitment of people from diverse sources.
4. Include a reasonable project scope and budget.

**Restrictions**

Ventura County will not award grants to and/or for:

1. Replacing an existing program.
2. Organizations and programs designed for lobbying activities and/or to elect candidates to public office.
3. Fundraising.
4. Endowment funds.
5. Retirement of past debts or existing obligations.
6. Scholarships, fellowships, travel grants and technical or specialized research.
7. Organizations that discriminate on the basis of age, disability, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, race or religion.

**GRANT REPORTING GUIDELINES**

Grantees shall submit two project reports: (1) an interim report that is due halfway through the project's duration and (2) a final report that is due six weeks after conclusion of the project. The reports shall include:

1. Information on project completed to date.
2. Demographic information about the people served in the program or project (i.e., ethnicity, age, gender, primary language spoken, number of veterans served).
3. Description of program or project activities including what was learned and any new partnerships or collaborations gained as a result of the activities.
4. Any recommendations to the county on future support for community wellness programs.

5. An income and expense report detailing how funds were spent and a discussion of any discrepancies from the proposed budget.

Failure to submit reports on time will disqualify the grantee from future funding from VCBH, and/or lead to recoupment of any payments made to the provider for contractual non-compliance.

### **HAVE QUESTIONS?**

Applicants are to review this notification of Community Mini-Grant funding availability to ensure applicants understand all requirements and have the information needed to complete and submit an application by the submittal deadline. From the release of this notification of Community Mini-Grant funding availability, applicants have four (4) weeks to identify and ask questions. Any questions related to this Community Mini-Grant program may be directed to the VCBH Contracts Manager, Maryza Seal, **via email** at [Maryza.Seal@ventura.org](mailto:Maryza.Seal@ventura.org) **by March 21, 2023**. No late questions will be accepted. The VCBH Contracts Manager is the only individual authorized to answer questions related to this Community Mini-Grant program.

Questions and Answers will be made available **by March 28, 2023** through email distribution to the list of individuals that indicate their intent to apply and will also be posted on the VCBH website on the News & Updates section, located at: <https://www.vcbh.org/en/about-us/news-and-updates>.

### **HOW TO APPLY**

The following five (5) items will be used to score applications. The maximum possible score for each required item is shown in parentheses. Grant proposals should be clear, well organized, and follow the structure outlined below. All five items must be completed to be considered for a grant.

1. **Cover Sheet (5 points)** - Failure to include a complete cover sheet on ATTACHMENT A will result in disqualification.
  - A. Name and address of applicant (or fiscal agent) applying and submission date
  - B. Project name
  - C. Amount requested
  - D. Contact name(s) and original signature(s)
  - E. Contact phone numbers, e-mails and fax

2. **Organization Overview: Who are you? (10 points)**

- A. A brief history of your agency/group; include your organization’s mission and goals. *(300 words)*
- B. Describe experiences or knowledge you have that would support this community wellness project. *(300 words)*

**3. Project Narrative: What do you want to do? (45 points)**

- A. Briefly describe your project, including who you are targeting, how you plan to do outreach, and the number of people you expect to participate. If you are requesting funds for a renewal project, include a brief update on the project. *(300-500 words)*
- B. Explain how your project will involve working with peers who have similar personal experiences around wellness. *(300 words)*
- C. Check TWO (2) of the following that best apply to your project. Write how your project addresses each of the two (2) that you checked below. Be sure to re-state the wording of the boxes you check in your description. *(300 words per box checked)*

- Explain how your project will work with the community, other groups or agencies and county service providers;
- Explain how your idea or approach will allow for the greater community to access not only your project, but other services or programs in the county that addresses wellness;
- Explain how your idea or approach will build individual empowerment, resiliency and self-determination for unserved or underserved Placer residents;
- Explain how your project will contribute to learning. For example, a new way of promoting community wellness, change in an existing approach, or introduction to a new community-driven project addressing wellness;
- Describe how your approach to community wellness can be used in the future by other community-based groups or agencies;
- Describe how your project will work within the community to achieve one or both of the following: build additional networks of support and contribute to further discussion around wellness within the community;
- Explain ways you plan to attract other resources, programs, and partners to expand your project;



- Explain how you plan to incorporate new approaches and settings for community wellness.

#### 4. Project Timeline (10 points)

- A. In a chart or simple list format, describe the project's main activities with a timeline. *Limited to three (3) pages*

#### 5. Project Budget (30 points) - Failure to include a complete proposed budget on ATTACHMENT B will result in disqualification.

- A. Detailed line-item budget with other sources of support.
- B. Up to 15% of requested funds may be used for indirect costs, including fiscal agent fees.

#### 6. Internal Review Services (IRS) 501 (c) (3) tax-exemption – Provide a copy of your IRS 501 (c) (3) tax-exemption designation letter.

#### 7. Board of Directors Information – Provide a listing of your Board of Directors that includes their names, titles, affiliation, and contact information.

#### 8. Organization-Wide Operating Budget – Provide a copy of your current fiscal year (July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023) organization-wide operating budget.

#### 9. Recent Audit, Financial Review, IRS Form 990 or Year-End Income and Expense Statements – Provide a copy of your recent audit, financial review, IRS 990 or year-end income and expenses statements signed by your Treasurer.

### **GRANT SUBMISSION FORMAT AND CHECKLIST**

To be considered responsive, applications should address all items identified in this notification of Community Mini-Grant funding availability. Applications should be prepared in such a way as to provide a straightforward and concise discussion of the applicant's ability to provide the services for which grant funding is sought.

Please note that some application questions require that the applicant provide a detailed response and/or attachments. Failure to provide a complete response will result in rejection of an application. Emphasis should be concentrated on conformance to the instructions, responsiveness to VCBH funding requirements, and on completeness/clarity of content.

#### **Application Formatting Instructions**

1. Times New Roman or Arial font

2. 12-point font with one-inch margins on 8.5" x 11" paper
3. Include page numbers on each page
4. Each section (numbers 1 through 9 in the "How to Apply" section) and all attachments should be clearly labeled
5. Adhere to page limits in each specified section
6. Binder clip applications

In order to facilitate the evaluation and comparison of all submitted applications, applicant proposals should be submitted in the format described in this notification of Community Mini-Grant funding availability. Format instructions must be adhered to; all requirements and requests for information in the application must be responded to; all requested data must be supplied. Please provide six (6) copies of your application. Failure to comply with these requirements will be cause for rejection.

Please use the ATTACHMENT C MINI-GRANT APPLICATION CHECKLIST to ensure submission of a complete application. If any item shown in ATTACHMENT C is not included in your application, your application will be found incomplete and will be denied.

### **SUBMITTING YOUR PROPOSAL**

Completed hard copy grant applications should be submitted to Maryza Seal, VCBH Contracts Manager, VCBH, 1911 Williams Drive, Suite 200, Oxnard, CA 93036 (Administration Office Reception), no later than 5:00 p.m., April 4, 2023. An electronic copy of your proposal is also due to Maryza Seal, VCBH Contracts Manager, at [Maryza.Seal@ventura.org](mailto:Maryza.Seal@ventura.org), by 5:00 p.m., April 4, 2023.

Applicants are allowed to submit more than one application within and between each category. If an applicant submits more than one application, each application shall be marked "Alternate Application 1", "Alternate Application 2", etc. Each application shall be submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions in this notification of Community Mini-Grants funding availability.

Bidders are responsible for making certain their applications are received on or before the application submittal deadline. The receiving time in at the VCBH Administration Office Reception will be the governing time for acceptability of applications---no late submittals will be allowed.

### **MODIFICATION OF PROPOSALS**

If an applicant wishes to make modifications to their grant application that has already been submitted to VCBH, they must withdraw the application to make the modifications. All modifications must be made and submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions of this notification of Community Mini-Grants funding availability. **It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that modified proposals are resubmitted to VCBH before the**

**submittal deadline.** Proposals cannot be changed or modified after the submittal deadline.

**ADDENDA**

VCBH will issue written addenda to make changes, additions, or deletions to this notification of Community Mini-Grant funding availability. Addenda will be sent to all known applicants that complete an intent to apply and said addenda will be made via email distribution and on the VCBH Website, News & Updates section located at <https://www.vcbh.org/en/about-us/news-and-updates>. It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that VCBH has their correct contact name, organization name, address, phone, and email information on file.

**REVIEW PROCESS**

A selection panel convened by VCBH will review grant applications and make funding recommendations to the Department. Applications will be scored based on the grant proposal guidelines and applicant’s demonstration of a community-based approach to promote Prevention and Early Intervention and overall wellness. All funding decisions relating to this proposal process are final; there is no appeals process. Funding awards will be announced by April 17, 2023.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

If during the evaluation process, VCBH is unable to determine an applicant's ability to perform, VCBH has the option of requesting any additional information that VCBH deems necessary to determine the applicant’s ability. The applicant will be notified and permitted three (3) business days to comply with any such request.

**GRANT AWARD, INSURANCE, AND PAYMENT TERMS**

If awarded a grant, grant awardees will be required to complete a Purchase Order Agreement with VCBH in advance of receiving the grant funds. Grant awardees will be required to provide certificates of insurance that are commensurate to the proposed services that will be provided. Customary payment terms are net 45 days for work performed.

**VENTURA COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**

**Community Mini-Grants Application**

**ATTACHMENTS**

**Attachment "A"**

**COVER SHEET**

***Applicants must use this Cover Sheet form to submit an application.***

Name of Applicant (Agency) or Fiscal Agent:	
Mailing Address:	
Physical Address:	
Business Phone:	Fax:
Contact Email:	Website
Executive Director (of fiscal agent if relevant):	Applicant's Federal ID#:
Applicant's Operating Budget:	Date Agency Founded:
Contact Person:	Contact Phone:

Program/Project Name:	
Grant Amount Requested:	

To be signed by board member of the Applicant/Agency:

The Board of Directors approves this application to Ventura County Behavioral Health for a grant.	
Signature:	Print name:
Title:	Date:

To be signed by fiscal agent (if any):

As fiscal agent for the proposed applicant, we are responsible for maintaining full discretion and control over the grant funds received for the program/project stated herein.	
Signature:	Print name:
Title:	Date:

## Attachment "B"

### BUDGET

**Applicants must use this Budget form to submit an application. If your program/project crosses fiscal years, please allocate the cost across the fiscal years in the appropriate column below. A fiscal year is July 1st to June 30th.**

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Project name: \_\_\_\_\_

Total project budget: \_\_\_\_\_ Project Fiscal Year:  FY 22-23  FY 23-24

Amount requested from Ventura County Behavioral Health: \_\_\_\_\_

Other sources of project/program support (including cash, in-kind, other):

Source	Secured	Pending	Amount
1.			\$
2.			\$
3.			\$
4.			\$
<b>Total revenue from all sources for this program/project*</b>			\$

\*Include proposed funds from Ventura County Behavioral Health.

Proposed Budget	FY 22-23 Ventura County Behavioral Health	FY 23-24 Ventura County Behavioral Health	Other Sources of Funding	Total Project Budget
<b>Personnel Expenses</b>				
Salaries				
Benefits				
<b>Personnel Subtotal</b>				
<b>Operating Expenses</b>				
Facility Rental				
Program Supplies				
Office Supplies				
Mileage/Transportation				
Print & Copy				
Communications				
Others (please list):				
<b>Operating Subtotal</b>				
Indirect Costs (up to 15%)				
<b>Total Project Budget</b>				

## ATTACHMENT "C"

### COMMUNITY MINI-GRANT APPLICATION CHECKLIST

The following required documents must be included in your submission (check all items that are being submitted):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Attachment A: Cover Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/>	Organization Overview: Who you are?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project Narrative: What do you want to do?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project Timeline
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attachment B: Project Budget
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copy of IRS 501(c) (3) tax-exemption designation letter
<input type="checkbox"/>	List of Board of Directors
<input type="checkbox"/>	An organization-wide operating budget for the current fiscal year
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copy of most recent audit, financial review, IRS Form 990 or year-end income and expense statement signed by your Treasurer

## ATTACHMENT "D"

### DEFINITIONS

**Community.** A group of individuals who know each other well enough that they already act together or can imagine acting together and supporting each other.

**Collaboration.** "Community Collaboration" means a process by which clients and/or families receiving services, other community members, agencies, organizations, and businesses work together to share information and resources in order to fulfill a shared vision and goals. (CCR Title 9, § 3200.060)

**Empowerment.** Teaching individuals to do things for themselves instead of others doing for them. To increase individuals' sense of self-efficacy, the belief in their ability to make goals and accomplish them.

**Non-traditional mental health approaches.** Activities not specifically designed for mental health promotion, but that through peer interaction may enhance or replace traditional mental health approaches in various ways. (Refer to Examples of Funding on page 3)

**Peer-based approach.** A service or program that is designed and implemented by, for, and from those with similarly lived experiences. Program need is identified by the peer group, and peers are involved at all levels including program design, operation, and staffing. Program/Project

- New – Organizations seeking funding for the development of a new program/project as defined in the application narrative.

**Resilience.** The personal qualities of optimism and hope, and the personal traits of good problem-solving skills that lead individuals to live, work and learn with a sense of mastery and competence.

**Self-determination.** People have the freedom to determine their own course of action and to take responsibility for the results of that action. People and their expressed needs come first. Services are provided based on the individuals' own goals and decision making.

**Underserved.** Persons and/or family members who have received or are currently receiving traditional mental health service and those services have not, or are not, effectively meeting their needs.

**Unserved.** Persons who are unlikely or unable to seek help from any traditional mental health or social service.

**Wellness.** A dynamic state of physical, mental, and social well-being; a way of life which equips the individual to realize the full potential of his/her capabilities and to overcome and compensate for weaknesses; a lifestyle which recognizes the importance of nutrition, physical fitness, stress reduction, and self-responsibility. Wellness has been viewed as the result of four key factors over which an individual has varying degrees of control:



human biology, environment, health care organization (system), and lifestyle. (Source: Community Services and Supports Three-Year Program and Expenditure Plan Requirements)