REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Libraries for Health

*Supporting Community Networks
to Improve Mental Health and Wellness*

Table of Contents

`

Overview

St. David's Foundation is pleased to announce the Libraries for Health Initiative to address some of the most pressing health needs facing rural communities: depression, anxiety, and other types of mental health conditions. This initiative recognizes and elevates the opportunity for an anchor institution that is woven into our social infrastructure—a local public library—to purposefully support and tackle mental wellness. Further, it seeks to provide the requisite capacity-building skills and collaborative learning for libraries to be broadly successful in community mental wellness endeavors. Beyond traditional grantmaking, the Libraries for Health initiative will involve identifying new and innovative ways to bring health initiatives where they are needed most – particularly in rural and under-resourced communities.

This Request for Proposal (RFP) process seeks to **support public libraries as integral community hubs** and gathering spaces that offer access to resources for those who may be at risk for mental health conditions and who may experience the greatest barriers in receiving appropriate care. This funding opportunity builds on the Foundation's existing investments in the Thriving Rural Communities strategic goal area as well as other goal areas.

Total funding for this initiative is $1.5 million allocated over a two-year period. Up to $1 million will be utilized in the first year for grants made to awardees from a pool of potential public library applicants in Central Texas. The remaining balance will be utilized to engage additional grantee supports, including the services of a technical service advisor/intermediary.

About St. David's Foundation

St. David's Foundation is one of the largest health foundations in the United States, funding $80 million annually in a five-county area surrounding Austin, Texas (Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis and Williamson counties). Through a unique partnership with St. David's HealthCare, the Foundation reinvests proceeds from the hospital system back into the community, with a goal of advancing health equity and improving the health and well-being of our most underserved Central Texas neighbors. St. David's Foundation also operates the largest mobile dental program providing charity care in the country and offers the largest healthcare scholarship program in Texas. Through strategic grantmaking, the Foundation seeks to center people and communities in all that we support and partner with organizations that promote health and well-being across the following areas of opportunity:

- Resilient Children
- Healthy Women and Girls
- Older Adults Age in Place
- Thriving Rural Communities
- Clinics as Community Hubs for Health

To learn more about St. David's Foundation, please visit www.stdavidsfoundation.org.

`

Rationale for Libraries for Health Initiative

One of the most pressing health needs facing rural communities is addressing residents' **depression, anxiety, and other types of mental health conditions**. Considering COVID-19 and the heightened trauma experienced within our community, mental health support is now more urgent than ever. Prior interviews conducted with Central Texas Library staff corroborated these findings, with 24 of the 30 public libraries identifying mental wellness as a top issue. The most troubling evidence of the gravity of the situation are the elevated rates of suicide in rural communities. In 2019 in Texas, 14% of the state's 3,891 suicides occurred in rural areas, though only accounting for 11% of Texas residents. This translates to a [suicide rate](#) of 18.89 per 100,000 residents in rural Texas, compared to 12.77 per 100,000 in metropolitan areas.

One reason rural communities in Texas, and nationwide, struggle to meet their resident's mental health needs is the **known shortage of mental health care providers** in these areas. New initiatives are attempting to address this problem by incentivizing providers to practice in rural areas and expanding telehealth options. However, the results from efforts to expand the supply of mental health care providers will be seen in the long-term, and telehealth services are still constrained by a limited number of providers. This shortage of mental health providers is exacerbated by **access barriers to care** occurring not only in rural but also in suburban and urban communities: lack of reliable transportation, poor digital literacy skills, limited internet and technology access, reduced mobility and underlying co-morbidities such as weight gain, poor nutrition, poor sleep and smoking. These barriers, compounded by COVID-19, have increased stress, resulting in reported increases in anxiety and depression symptoms.

Public libraries are core community hubs that offer access to resources for those who may be uniquely at risk for mental health conditions and who may experience the greatest barriers in receiving care. Yet, while public libraries have general awareness of these challenges and barriers, they have not proactively connected themselves to preventative mental health services or activated their programs and services as early mitigators for patrons' anxiety and depression due to a variety of reasons, including funding availability, staff capacity and expertise in mental wellness.

One proven approach to improve mental health care access is to lift some burden from licensed mental health care providers (licensed MHP) and train laypeople as lay mental health workers (lay MHW) to help manage low-severity mental health symptoms. Libraries for Health will validate capacity-building approaches that improve the abilities of public libraries to proactively deliver and evaluate community-centered mental health and wellness services and programs. This proposed intervention will provide non-clinical supports, practices and behavioral health pathways to help a community, through its library, shift from relying solely on referrals for mental health care.

Libraries for Health builds upon successes in other states and countries using community-based organizations and trained members of the public where there is limited access to clinical mental health care. It also leverages libraries' strengths as trusted community information hubs. The proposed approach will be adaptable to the different community contexts and their libraries' scales and capacities. For the patrons, it can offer more seamless, integrated handoffs to clinical care and, crucially, earlier access to preventative and mitigating mental health supports in a comfortable, familiar setting. This approach is also a natural extension of the awareness of and interest in trauma-informed care existing across the public library sector. And, through role-modeling and training, the lay mental health worker, in consultation with a licensed MHP, will help to strengthen existing library programs with proven psycho-educational supports. Libraries for Health uses an evidence- based approach to: a) confirm whether the intervention has an effect on the library patrons and library staff and b) explore how the intervention builds library capacity to respond to patron mental health needs.

`

Goal of Libraries for Health RFP

The Libraries for Health initiative's goal is to validate capacity-building approaches that will improve the abilities of libraries to proactively deliver and evaluate community-centered mental health and wellness services and programs. Beyond traditional grantmaking, the work will involve looking for new and innovative ways to bring health initiatives where they are needed most – especially small towns and rural communities. Due to their unique roles as trusted and accessible community hubs, public libraries are the ideal places to test ways to improve community mental health and wellness. Further, Libraries for Health has connectivity to other important goal areas of the Foundation. Data collected from this initiative will also inform work across our strategic grantmaking priorities and broader capacity-building strategies.

Funding Opportunity

Focus of RFP: As part of the overall Libraries for Health design, Phase 1 grants will be awarded to public libraries through a readiness-based RFP process to receive a lay mental health worker and licensed MHP services onsite. Awarded Libraries will not be responsible for the hiring and supervision of mental health staff. In addition, successful applicants will participate in training and cohort-learning opportunities to strengthen their programs and services with evidence-based mental wellness practices. Libraries will be selected based on their responses to the application questions about their organizational characteristics (e.g., readiness, alignment with Libraries for Health initiative principles) and Foundation goals for broad representation across counties and population health dimensions. Libraries that do not feel ready to apply, or those who apply and are not selected, will be invited to specific training events to help further their respective libraries' professional development and competencies.

As part of the award, libraries will:
- Receive training and coaching within a cohort-learning environment to encourage adaptation of proven practices to their circumstances. Topics may include: dimensions of and contributors to mental health; the patron mental wellness journey; de-escalating with empathy; signposting to mental health resources; strengthening programs to support mental wellness; and program evaluation.
- Opportunity to partner with a trained, onsite lay mental health worker who will receive ongoing coaching from a licensed MHP to provide non-clinical mental health care, informal screenings, nonmedical counseling, and instruction on when and how to refer adult patrons for more intensive care.
- Receive coaching and role-modeling from the lay mental health worker and licensed MHP in how to embed proven mental health supports into existing library programs.
- Participate in monthly webinars and other professional development – a systematic, virtual "learning and doing" program will help to expand library capabilities, including skills of collaboration, change leadership, evidenced-based improvement and implementation processes.
- Support the design of an equity-based mental health strategy.
- Receive an unrestricted Phase 1 Libraries for Health grant to engage actively in the learning and action collaborative (grant size will range from $7,500 to $25,000 for <u>each</u> of the two years during the award period).
- Have the opportunity to apply for additional funding in Phase 2 (Years Three and Four) to allow further implementation of the Libraries for Health methodology, assuming active participation in and application of approaches in Phase 1. Note: Subject to availability of funding, Phase 2 will begin via application in August 2023.

`

Eligibility Criteria

Libraries for Health seeks to collaborate and learn from each public library and thus there is no one "perfect" applicant. Instead, there are organizational characteristics that strengthen an applicant's case for participation. At the most basic level, applicants should be:
o   Located in one of the following counties: Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis and Williamson
o   Willing to work to close health equity gaps[1] in their service area's communities
o   Embrace being part of a cohort-learning environment and receive mentoring and coaching
o   Willing to set goals to strengthen the library's contributions to improve adult mental health
o   Excited to collaborate with lay mental health workers and licensed mental health providers
o   Devoted to meaningful engagement of patrons to support their journeys to improved mental wellness
o   Motivated to model approaches that address the root causes of barriers to mental health care
o   Willing to use public data and patron feedback to drive decision-making and share insights as appropriate
o   Open to trying new ways to enhance existing library programs to better support adult patrons' mental health
o   Eager to be part of an effective training, coaching and peer-mentoring process
o   Ready to adapt best practices that are relevant to its community's mental health and wellness
o   Has the capacity to fully participate in all aspects of Libraries for Health (including various forms of training during dedicated sessions) and actively apply learnings in between trainings to progress (in partnership with the licensed MHP and lay MHW)

Selection Criteria

Program Criteria
Grants will be given to public libraries located in Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis and Williamson counties who operate in good standing, based on IRS records. Note that branch libraries should not apply individually but instead as part of their system or district entity. Friends support groups, affiliated volunteer groups and library foundations are not eligible to apply.

Successful applicants will:
o   Have demonstrated support from their governing official or board chair via a letter of support
o   Demonstrate organizational interest and readiness to undertake the work
o   Commit to actively supporting the delivery of mental health community services to its patrons
o   Enthusiastically host the lay MHW by ensuring appropriate physical space and internet connectivity in order to provide mental health services to patrons
o   Commit to identifying and testing opportunities to strengthen its programs and services based on coaching and role-modeling from licensed MHP and lay MHW
o   Participate in evaluation activities conducted by a Foundation approved consultant to collect and submit general data including, but not limited to, number of patrons reached, patron feedback, and other basic impact information
o   Participate in monthly webinars and other cohort-learning opportunities

---

[1] Health equity is achieved when you can no longer predict how healthy a person is – or will be – by their race, ethnicity, gender or zip code. Across all the St. David's Foundation goals and principles, we are guided by a commitment to achieve health equity.
`

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated on organizational characteristics and demonstrated readiness to undertake and fully participate the Libraries for Health capacity-building activities. A rubric will be used to assess organizational readiness. Grants will be awarded based on the overall application completeness, organizational characteristics and assigned service area as designated by the Texas State Libraries and Archives Commission. If a library is not accredited or a member, a justifiable estimate of service area should be provided.

Awardee Expectations

Pledge

Subject to the availability of funds, if awarded a Libraries for Health grant, the following terms and conditions shall apply:

Compliance:

1. Awarded libraries shall remain in compliance with IRS nonprofit requirements and general ethics practices
2. Awarded libraries shall inform St. David's Foundation by contacting Abena Asante, Senior Program Officer at aasante@stdavidsfoundation.org regarding any changes to staff contact information related to the work being conducted under this grant, including but not limited to program leads and grants/development contacts for reporting.

Funding and Use of Funds:

1. Awarded libraries shall receive grant funding for Year One in a single installment upon execution of the grant agreement. Payment shall be sent within 30 days of award notice. Year Two grant funding will be released based on active participation in Libraries for Health activities as stated in the prior Program Criteria and the Awardee Expectation sections.

2. Funding allocations are subject to change, contingent upon availability of funding.

3. A library shall spend the entire award for implementation of the grant objectives as outlined in this pledge. All funds must be spent within one year of grant agreement execution.

4. The library shall comply with the requirements stated in all of the Agreements in connection with this grant and will not redirect funds or sub-contract with any organization that requires the payment of indirect costs on these funds.

5. Funds shall not be used as "grants" or "loans" to other organizations, or to carry on propaganda, or otherwise to attempt, to influence legislation of any kind by any governmental body or by means of a public vote. Influencing legislation includes directly contacting a legislator or any other governmental official or employee for the purpose of influencing specific legislation, encouraging persons to take action for or against specific legislation, or attempting to affect the opinions of the general public regarding the subject of a ballot initiative, referendum, or similar initiative. This paragraph will be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of Internal Revenue Code section 4945(d)(1).

6. The library shall allocate grant funding in a manner consistent with the terms of this grant agreement and the required scope of work for this project. St. David's Foundation or designee may visit, monitor, and/or conduct an audit of the local library records at any time. If the Foundation or designee should determine that further

`

expenditure of funds would not produce beneficial results, the library will refund the balance of funds remaining and terminate its participation in the program. The library understands and agrees that the Foundation has no obligation to provide funds other than those granted pursuant to the Application. If the Foundation's funding situation changes or the Libraries for Health initiative strategy is changed, in whole or in part, the Foundation may in turn cancel this agreement in whole or in part. Grant funds are subject to review by the Foundation and should be tracked separate from operations.

Staff and Leadership Participation:

Identify a project supervisor per system or district entity overseeing all participating library branches who will oversee the project and act as the primary contact for the Foundation. An alternate must also be named who will be familiar with the project, able to support the local staff and report to the Foundation in the absence of the primary supervisor.

The project supervisor and/or alternate shall:
- Participate in all project orientations/trainings or other project convening
- Work with the Foundation to develop work plans, set performance goals, and collect and report data as necessary
- Submit all required reports accurately
- Orient the alternate project supervisor, to ensure that they are well-versed in the project and available in the event that the project supervisor is unavailable (on vacation, ill, re- assigned, re-located, etc.).

Participation and Reporting:

- Use the award funds to fully participate in the training and other forms of capacity-building, as well as support and adopt approaches that support patrons' mental health through services and programs.
- Participate in grant performance monitoring activities with St. David's Foundation or designee. This may include data collection, budget reporting and other reporting requirements with deadlines
- Participate in all orientation and training sessions.
- Work cooperatively with the other libraries engaged in Libraries for Health, including participating in webinars or conference calls for designated front line library staff, supervisors and volunteers.
- Accurately complete required St. David's Foundation financial and narrative reports pertaining to this grant according to deadlines set by the Foundation. A final participant count and basic impact information will be due to the Foundation upon completion of the program.
- Have the CEO (or his/her assigned alternate):
  o Review and approve a library's evaluation data and report materials prior to submission to the Foundation or designee
  o Support solution generation and implementation to Libraries for Health challenges
  o Lead re-direction when necessary to ensure participation

Communications:

- Refer all inquiries about Libraries for Health to the Foundation communications contact
- Provide press clippings, photos, feedback and success stories from this program to Libraries for Health.
- Utilize St. David's Foundation's customizable photo release to keep on file with its grant documentation when collecting photographs and testimonials
- Accommodate site visits by Foundation or evaluation representatives

`

Confidentiality, Privacy and Data Use:

- Ensure compliance with any HIPPA or privacy guidelines as provided by the licensed MHP
- Respect patron confidentially through library staff and volunteers' behaviors and language
- Communicate in advance with the Libraries for Health evaluation partner about any other mental health research, services or program evaluation opportunity. The library shall share any documents/information received from any external contact and discuss the opportunity and need for Libraries for Health involvement or coordination.

Timeline

RFP Issue Date: August 2, 2021: **Apply Online here:**
https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_581?SA=SNA&FID=35353

RFP Information Session: August 4, 2021, 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Central Time. Attendance optional. Session will be recorded and available to anyone registered. Register here:
https://stdavidsfoundation.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwodeytqDIuGNT9lr_J1_wfZ5TNUiKFGhhg

RFP Response Date (by electronic submission): **September 7, 2021 by 5 p.m. Central Time.**
The Senior Program Officer reserves the right to accept late applications.

Review and Negotiations: September 2021

Notice of Decision: Late October 2021

Questions & Contacts

Programmatic and General RFP Questions: Questions regarding the intent of this RFP, applicant eligibility or technical questions/issues may be directed to the RFP information inbox, please email:
RFP@stdavidsfoundation.org

How to Apply

Proposals must be submitted online by 5 p.m. Central Time on September 7, 2021. The Senior Program Officer reserves the right to accept late applications. Contact RFP@stdavidsfoundation.org with any technical issues.

Application Link: https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_581?SA=SNA&FID=35353

`

Application Questions for Reference

Required proposal information. The application questions are provided for reference only; applications must be completed and submitted using the application link, here: https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_581?SA=SNA&FID=35353

Helpful Information:

Please be sure to read each question carefully, paying close attention to the kind of information you are asked to provide. Answer each open-ended question precisely, using evidence and examples as appropriate. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Responses will be used to help application reviewers understand your experience and community context and to help inform the design of Libraries for Health training and practices.

Since reviewers will only have the explanations that you provide, the more specific you can be the better. Your overall application will help the Foundation and the evaluators map and assess where you are in your organization's capacity and readiness for change. Both internal and external reviewers including those from the library field will assess your responses. Please note that we may contact you for additional information.

For questions 1 – 2, select the response that best currently describes your library:

1) *Which statement best describes the common vision for community health and wellness that your library service area is working towards?*
   o   Not yet started: We have not begun to develop a vision for our community.
   o   Starting: A number of different groups have visions for their work, but we have not come together yet to create a common vision.
   o   Gaining Skill: Our community has begun to develop a common vision.
   o   Sustaining: Our community shares a clear, overarching vision that feels concrete and motivating, and we develop and implement programs and policies to achieve our common vision.
   o   Spreading and scaling: Many communities in our region have a clear, motivating vision and have demonstrated success in achieving the vision on their own. We are working together to develop a common vision for our region.

2) *Which statement best describes your level of experience in collaborating with multiple organizations (such as nonprofits, schools, churches, business, local government, clinics) to improve community health? (St. David's Foundation invites both newcomers and seasoned collaborators equitably).*
   o   No experience: In the past five years, we have not engaged partners to improve health
   o   Somewhat experienced: In the past five years, we have worked with one to two partners to improve health.
   o   Experienced: In the past five years, we have worked with three to four partners to improve health.
   o   Very experienced: In the past five years, we have worked with at least five partners across sectors (e.g., healthcare, education, social services, public health, etc.) to improve health.

3) In your local community, do you believe that poor mental health and substance use disorders are growing problems? Describe why or why not and how this is known.
[200 words]

4) What characteristics of your staff and/or organization make you well-positioned to support the mental health needs of your community?
[200 words]

`

5) Please provide a brief overview of your successful efforts in designing any type of program(s) based on the needs and interests of patrons. [250 words]

6) Briefly describe an example of a program that has been designed to address your patrons' needs, particularly contributing to improved "wellbeing" of a vulnerable population. Be sure to describe the program development process, success criteria, and information you used. [250 words]

7) Describe one or more of your library programs that could be further strengthened by embedding mental health supports (e.g., strategies, tips). For libraries with more than one location, while you will apply as a system, feel free to describe programs unique to each branch. [250 words]

8) Describe any patron population that could benefit from additional mental health support and services delivered at your library. [200 words]

9) Have any staff participated in mental health training over the past three years in your library (e.g. Mental Health First Aid)? Have any mental health or wellness programs been offered in recent years? Is a social worker onsite or available through a partnership? If any of these apply, please describe. If no, please note "not applicable". [250 words]

10) What is your bandwidth to fully participate in this learning cohort from October 2021 through October 2023? (For example, please describe any recent or upcoming board or library changes in leadership.) [250 words]

11) What competing priorities may hinder your ability to participate in Libraries for Health? [200 words]

12) Please list all the zip codes that are in your designated service area. [unlimited]

13) Are you currently accredited by the Texas State Libraries and Archives Commission? If you have been accredited and are currently or recently lapsed, please explain the reasons. [250 words]

14) Provide your historical budget and staff information for FY 2018-2021, including shared costs provided by other entities. Approximations for past years is acceptable. [Fill out table for each of FY 2018-2021 re: operating budget, FTE staff, active volunteers, hours open to public.]

Fiscal Year	Operating budget	# FTE staff	# Active volunteers	# Hours open to public each week
2021				
2020				
2019				
2018				

15) Attach a current version of your strategic plan or similar document that reflects your organization's priorities for the next three to four years.

Other attachments include Key Staff List, Board List, Organizational Diversity, and standard financial documents.

`

Appendix: Resources

Heather Stringer. Libraries as mental health hubs: Across the United States, libraries are striving to offer visitors mental health supports. (American Psychological Association (April 1, 2020): vol. 51, No. 3) https://www.apa.org/monitor/2020/04/libraries-health-hubs

Open Space: Evaluation of a library-based wellbeing programme. The McPin Foundation. (n.d.) https://mcpin.org/open-space/

Emily Nonko. Library Systems Embracing Their New Roles as Social Service Hubs. (NextCity. January 22, 2019) https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/library-systems-embracing-their-new-roles-as-social-service-hubs

Lynsay Ayer and Clare Stevens. Want to Stem the Rising Mental Health Crisis? Look Beyond the Usual Suspects for Help (RAND Blog. May 12, 2020) https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/05/want-to-stem-the-rising-mental-health-crisis-look-beyond.html

Belkin, Gary et al. Scaling Up for the "Bottom Billion": "5×5" Implementation of Community Mental Health Care in Low-Income Regions. (Psychiatry Online. December 1, 2011) https://ps.psychiatryonline.org/doi/full/10.1176/appi.ps.000012011

Helen Jack, Bronwyn Myers, Kristen Regenauer, and Jessica Magidson. Mutual Capacity Building to Reduce the Behavioral Health Treatment Gap Globally. (Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research (2020) 47:497–500) https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-019-00999-y

Miya Barnett, Araceli Gonzalez, Jeanne Miranda, Denise Chavira, and Anna Lau. Mobilizing Community Health Workers to Address Mental Health Disparities for Underserved Populations: A Systematic Review. (Adm. Policy Mental Health (March 2018) 45(2): 195–211) https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28730278/

Jessica Magidson, Helen Jack, Kristen Regenauer, and Bronwyn Myers. Applying lessons from task sharing in global mental health to the opioid crisis. (J Consult Clin Psychol. 2019 October; 87(10): 962–966) https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31556672/

RHI Hub: Tools to Assess the Social Determinants of Health. https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/sdoh/4/assessment-tools

Claire Snell-Rood, Frances Feltner and Nancy Schoenberg. What Role Can Community Health Workers Play in Connecting Rural Women with Depression to the "De Facto" Mental Health Care System? (Community Mental Health Journal (2019) 55:63–73) https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-017-0221-9

Stevens, Clare et al. Helpers in Plain Sight: A Guide to Implementing Mental Health Task Sharing in Community-Based Organizations. (Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, 2020) https://www.rand.org/pubs/tools/TL317.html

Jean Badalamenti. Peers — In Their Own Words. (Public Libraries Online. August 7, 2019). http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2019/08/peers-in-their-own-words/

`