



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS October 24, 2017

Funding Opportunity for Proactive Local-Level Policies and Initiatives

The National Institute for Reproductive Health (NIRH) is now accepting proposals from 501(c)(3) organizations to support proactive policy initiatives that utilize its Local Reproductive Freedom Index to advance reproductive freedom and engage in advocacy efforts at the local level.

About the Local Reproductive Freedom Index

The [Local Reproductive Freedom Index: Evaluating U.S. Cities \(Local Index\)](#) is a first-of-its-kind initiative that evaluates the reproductive health, rights, and justice policies of 40 cities across the United States and calls for their leadership in ensuring that all people have the full freedom and ability to control their reproductive and sexual lives.

The Local Index is centered on two key resources, the “Comprehensive Scorecard” and the “Model City.” The Comprehensive Scorecard reviews existing policies across all forty cities and establishes a baseline of data for stakeholders to evaluate their current local policy landscape. The Model City is broader and aspirational, putting forth a vision of the policies that a city would adopt to most fully realize reproductive freedom for all of its residents. To encourage cities and advocates to move closer to that vision, the Local Index includes a set of policy recommendations based on existing policies evaluated in the Comprehensive Scorecard, more expansive policy ideas reflected in the Model City, our research and interviews with local leaders about what policies would most benefit their residents, and our broader understanding of the field.

About the National Institute for Reproductive Health

The National Institute for Reproductive Health (NIRH) builds power at the state and local level to change public policy, galvanize public support, and normalize women’s decisions about abortion and contraception. Using a partnership model, we provide state and local advocates with strategic guidance, hands-on support, and funding to create national change from the ground up. We are a force multiplier – we form strategic partnerships with a wide range of organizations to directly impact the reproductive health and lives of women across the country. Since 2008, NIRH has provided direct grants and hands-on support to more than 145 reproductive health, rights, and justice organizations in 37 states and 50 localities across the country.

At the national level, NIRH goes where others don’t, engaging in groundbreaking public opinion research, proactive policy initiatives, and innovative advocacy campaigns to shape a new national conversation about reproductive freedom. The 2017 Local Reproductive Freedom Index is one example of this work.

About NIRH’s Partnership Model

NIRH is a national advocacy organization, not a foundation; we work in close partnership with organizations on their funded initiatives in order to learn from those working directly on the ground, offer our expertise and resources, and share emerging best practices with the field. To that end, NIRH may ask partners to participate in webinars or present at conferences. NIRH may also convene partners on calls with each other to facilitate collaboration and learning across cities and states.



Supporting Proactive Local-Level Policies and Initiatives

Proposals are now being accepted to advance a proactive local-level policy, based on NIRH's newly released Local Reproductive Freedom Index. **The maximum amount of funding available for each initiative will be \$20,000. The funding cycle is January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018.**

The policies and programs included in the Local Index are organized into six categories: protecting abortion clinic access; funding and coverage for reproductive health care*; supporting young people; supporting families; advancing inclusive policies; and taking a stand. Because the Local Index is a new tool, it does not need to be central to the strategies outlined in the proposal, but the proposal should include ideas about how the Local Index could help achieve your goals. Proposals from all cities, including those not evaluated in the Local Index, are welcome. *If the city or county where the initiative is based is not included in the Local Index, NIRH is able to work with staff to create a City Scorecard. In these instances, staff are asked to note this in their proposal and detail the technical assistance needed.*

Proposals should:

- focus on passage or creation of a new policy or initiative included in the [Local Index's](#) Model City (p. 18), Comprehensive Scorecard (p. 72), or policy recommendations (p.73), or
- strengthen an existing local policy or initiative to more closely align it with the values laid out in the Model City.

NIRH will support projects that center reproductive health, rights, and justice in their strategies. For organizations that do not typically focus on reproductive freedom, the proposal should detail how it will accomplish this, including how the proposed project will build and/or expand cross-movement partnerships and address the intersection between the chosen policy and reproductive freedom.

Organizations are encouraged to collaborate with stakeholders, coalition partners, non-traditional partner organizations, and/or policymakers in planning for this initiative as appropriate. NIRH values, supports, and encourages proposals from organizations led by people of color and/or the communities most impacted by the proposed initiative. We also welcome proposals from communities that might face hostile lawmakers or organized anti-choice opposition.

If you have questions about your proposed project or idea, please contact NIRH staff by emailing Winnie Ye at wye@nirhealth.org

* The National Institute has been a proud member of the All* Above All campaign since its launch. Proposals that focus on advancing funding and/or insurance coverage of abortion will be evaluated in partnership with All* Above All. Proposals that are selected will receive strategic guidance and technical assistance from both NIRH and All* Above All.

About [All* Above All](#)

All* Above All unites organizations and individuals to build support for lifting the bans that deny abortion coverage. Their vision is to restore public insurance coverage so that each of us, no matter how much we make, can get the care we need.

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Please submit a proposal (maximum seven pages, not including cover sheet and budget) that includes the following.

- Completed Coversheet (available [here](#))
- Executive Summary (no more than half a page)
 - A brief summary of the initiative, including a description of the policy being pursued and the need or problem it addresses, and key goals
- Organizational Background (no more than a page)
 - Brief summary of the organization, its mission and activities, and constituencies served
 - Please include information on how your thinking about racial equity and reproductive coercion informs how you develop and implement programs.
 - Description of key staff, indicating their role with funding management and/or implementation of the initiative
 - Brief summary of how this initiative fits into organizational priorities and mission
- Description and Goals of Initiative
 - Description of the proposed initiative's goals and interim objectives, including initial ideas about using the Local Index as a tool to further your goals
 - Detail how the initiative sets out to either:
 - Focus on passage or creation of a new policy or initiative included in the Local Index's Comprehensive Scorecard, Model City, or policy recommendations, or
 - Strengthen an existing local policy or initiative to more closely align it with the values laid out in the Model City (link to Model City/include as an addendum).
 - Additionally, address the following:
 - Who has the power to help the organization achieve the initiative's goal(s)?
 - Who are your organization's closest allies in achieving the initiative goals, if any? Please describe the nature of these relationships and existing buy-in from these and other partners for this initiative.
 - Who are the key stakeholders you will need to build relationships with to achieve your goals? What steps do you foresee as necessary to build those relationships? What challenges do you anticipate?
 - Demonstrated support of elected officials and/or administrative agencies for work on this initiative, if appropriate, or plans for developing that support. *Letters of support are welcome, but not required.*
- Initiative Timeline (no more than a page)
 - Outline an anticipated timeline for the initiative that includes the key goals during this funding period.
- Anticipated Strategic Guidance and Technical Support Needs and Timeline
 - Provide a brief summary of all anticipated technical assistance needs and at what steps of the funding cycle they will be needed (see Strategic Guidance and Technical Support Menu at the end of this document).
- Proposed Budget, including a budget narrative detailing how funds would be used. The maximum amount awarded will be \$20,000; determination of the final award will be based on the resources

needed to complete the proposed activities. Possible budget lines include staffing, coalition meetings, materials development, technical costs (e.g., website), and other direct program costs. Please note that indirect costs should not exceed 15 % of your initiative’s budget and that the funding awarded should not be the exclusive source of funding for any staff person.

- *Please note that indirect costs should not exceed 15 % of your initiative’s budget and that the funding awarded should not be the exclusive source of funding for any staff person. Indirect costs include overhead expenses or ongoing operational costs and administrative or other expenses that are not directly allocable to a particular activity or initiative.*

THE SELECTION PROCESS AND DEADLINES

- 1. Distribution of Request for Proposal:** The Request for Proposal will be distributed on October 24, 2017.
- 2. RFP Webinar:** NIRH will host a webinar on November 2, 2017 at 1:00 pm EDT to discuss the RFP, provide guidance on what a successful proposal could look like, and answer any questions. Register [here](#).
- 3. Proposal Feedback:** Organizations with individual questions about their proposals or proposal ideas, and particularly those organizations who have not partnered with NIRH previously, are encouraged to set up a time to review their ideas with NIRH staff by setting up a call at <https://calendly.com/jmistry/nirhrfp2018>.
- 4. Final Proposal Submitted:** Final proposals should be sent via email to Winne Ye at wye@nirhealth.org with “Local Repro Index RFP 2018” in the subject line and are due no later than 5:00 pm EST on November 20, 2017. Proposals will not be accepted after the deadline.
- 5. Proposal Review and Follow-Up:** Proposals will be reviewed by NIRH staff. Additional information or clarification of the proposal may be requested of applicants following the initial review.
- 6. Announcement of Funding Decisions:** Applicants will be informed of funding decisions on a rolling basis; all applicants will be notified of final decisions by December 15, 2017.
- 7. MOU Signed:** NIRH will outline goals and expectations with partners in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). All MOUs should be signed by January 19, 2018. Funding will be disbursed to partners upon receipt of the signed MOU.

Strategic Guidance and Technical Support Menu

NIRH can provide the following technical assistance. This list is not exhaustive, and NIRH is also able to connect partners with organizations or individuals that can provide support not available in-house.

Strategy Support & Campaign Planning

- Development and implementation of strategies to achieve initiative's objectives
- Guidance in responding to obstacles or opportunities as they arise
- Development and implementation of campaign strategy
- Development and implementation of strategies that engage grassroots and grassroots power
- Identification of other movement resources and opportunities to advance objectives

Policy Support

- Research and development of Local Reproductive Freedom Index City Scorecard and Star Ranking for cities not included in the 2017 edition of the report
- Legal research and analysis of existing and proposed legislation or administrative action
- Development and drafting of proactive legislation, regulations, amendments, and policy briefs
- Development of talking points and testimony
- Preparation of lawmaker-friendly resources and talking points
- Connections with national policy resources
- Connections with other state and local groups working to develop similar proactive policies

Communications

- Development and implementation of communications/media plans
- Creation of messaging strategy, including message development and research
- Communications and messaging training for advocates and activists
- Support with media relations, including press strategy, media pitches, and access to a national database of reporters
- Assistance with social media, including development of social media campaigns, drafting of sample posts, and support for graphics creation
- Development and writing of issue briefs
- Development of websites and microsites

Field Operations

- Development and implementation of field operations, including supporter identification and data analytics
- Engagement in volunteer management and leadership development
- Support with understanding and use of voter file systems

Coalition Building

- Support with coalition formation/planning and governance, including sample coalition documents (e.g. commitment letters, MOUs, membership roles)
- Engaging non-traditional partners and managing coalition dynamics
- Planning and facilitation of coalition meetings