



The Affordable Care Act Implementation Fund January 18, 2011

Community Catalyst is pleased to announce the Affordable Care Act Implementation Fund. The Fund will provide new support to state-based health advocates to ensure effective and consumer-focused implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The Fund will offer crucial support to state and local advocates during an especially historic moment – when the promise of expanded health care coverage and stronger, healthier communities is within reach if we work together.

Background: Why an investment in state advocacy?

In addition to giving 30 million people new access to affordable health insurance, successful implementation of the ACA will help reduce poverty, improve health equity, and slow the growth of health care costs while increasing care quality.

The creation of the Fund follows a recent report, "[Where the Rubber Meets the Road: Strategies for Successful State Implementation of the Affordable Care Act](#)," that provides a roadmap for implementation, and outlines the critical roles state advocates, national organizations and funders will play. As the report details, fulfilling the promise of the law depends on state-level policy decisions. State and local consumer advocates are critical to ensuring those decisions address the concerns and priorities of families and individuals and that their interests are protected, especially in the case of vulnerable populations.

State advocates are tackling a wide range of tasks to push for the law's successful implementation, from educating and mobilizing the communities that will benefit from the law to analyzing policy and legal issues to make sure decisions are grounded in people's needs

Goals and selection process

The goal of the Fund is to make timely and strategic investments in crucial state-based advocacy initiatives that will maximize the impact state consumer advocates have on implementation nationwide. The Fund, which will be administered by Community Catalyst, will invite grant applications from advocacy organizations in eligible states. To foster collaboration and coordination among local advocacy organizations, the Fund will invite only one application from each eligible state.

Eligible states have been selected based on a thorough assessment of the potential for successful implementation or the significance of local advocacy, existing advocacy capacity, the possibility for regional or national impact, and available resources. Community Catalyst has worked with the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Families USA, the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families, Health Care for America Now, other national advocacy organizations and the Fund Advisory Group in the selection process.

For this first round of funding, state and local advocacy organizations have been invited to work together to submit one proposal from each of the following states: California, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York and Washington.

In addition, state and local advocacy organizations have been invited to work together to submit one letter of interest from each of the following states: Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Utah and Virginia. After the letter of interest is accepted, a full proposal will be submitted.

Grant Support

Grants will support work towards specific policy outcomes utilizing the tools of public education, policy and legal advocacy, communications, coalition-building, and grassroots organizing and mobilization in support of successful implementation of the ACA. Issue areas may include Exchanges, Medicaid, private insurance reforms, health equity, CHIP or other ACA implementation-related issues. The size of grants will vary by state and will range from \$75,000 to \$250,000 per year.

One of the goals is to increase the overall funding available for state-based implementation work by encouraging the participation of new foundation partners and other major donors. To this end, grantees will be required to seek 1:1 matching funds from local and state foundations and individual donors. This creates an opportunity for local and state foundations and donors to support implementation in a way that suits their special priorities and interests, building on the grants provided by the Fund. The recent Grantmakers in Health [report](#) “Implementing Health Care Reform: Funders and Advocates Respond to the Challenge” provides many ways in which funders have worked with advocates to support implementation efforts.

The advocacy organizations in states eligible for the first round of funding were notified on January 18, 2011. We will continue to seek donations to the Fund and additional invitations may be issued as more funds become available. We anticipate that the first round of grants will be awarded in March and April 2011.

For more information, please visit our [website](#) or email questions to ACAFund@communitycatalyst.org.