



Hub and Spoke Centers of Excellence in Harm Reduction:

Regional Centers of Excellence in Harm Reduction

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Release Date: December 5, 2024

Proposal Due Date: January 5, 2025 at 11:59pm PST

[APPLY HERE](#)

NASTAD Information

NASTAD is a leading non-partisan non-profit association that represents public health officials who administer HIV and hepatitis programs in the U.S. NASTAD work to advance the health and dignity of people living with and impacted by HIV/AIDS, viral hepatitis, and intersecting epidemics by strengthening governmental public health through advocacy, capacity building, and social justice.

Each of NASTAD's seven programmatic teams—Health Care Access, Health Systems Integration, Policy & Legislative Affairs, Hepatitis, Prevention, Health Equity, and Drug User Health—interpret and influence policies, conduct trainings, offer technical assistance (TA), and provide advocacy mobilization for U.S. health departments to improve health outcomes for people living with HIV and hepatitis.

Questions about this RFP should be directed to the Drug User Health team at druguserhealthTA@nastad.org.

Funding Opportunity Title

Regional Centers of Excellence in Harm Reduction

Awarding Agency

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC), Division of Overdose Prevention (DoP)

Federal Award Project Title

Strengthening Public Health Systems and Services through National Partnerships to Improve and Protect the Nation's Health, [CDC-RFA-PW-24-00800101SUPP24](#): Hub and Spoke Center of Excellence (CoE) in Harm Reduction

Assistance Listing Number

93.421

Number of Awards

6 – 8

Award Amount

\$650,000 total; anticipated funding is \$85,000 - \$125,000 per award.

Period of Performance

Year 1 of this program will run from February 1, 2025 – July 31, 2025.

Project Background

Harm reduction programs, specifically syringe services programs (SSPs), mitigate harmful consequences of drug use through low-threshold, stigma-free care centered on the needs of people who use drugs and are critical to individual and public health. Despite their key role in addressing significant public health needs and advancing holistic health for underserved people, harm reduction programs situated in community-based settings are often isolated from other public health infrastructure and lack systems of support, coordination, and peer learning. Due to variation in policy environment, drug supply, and local needs, harm reduction services, supplies, and service models can vary greatly regionally and even locally. This variation encourages a regional support model to supplement national-level training, technical assistance (TA), and resources.

In collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Overdose Prevention (DoP) within the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC), NASTAD will develop a hub-and-spoke model for harm reduction training and technical assistance (TA) provision. NASTAD will serve as a “hub”, or National Center of Excellence (CoE), coordinating the development and delivery of TA, training, resource creation, and workforce development opportunities for public health and harm reduction staff and stakeholders. NASTAD will work with “spokes”, or Regional Centers of Excellence, as well as a network of subject matter experts, to increase capacity and connection at the local and regional levels while working to strengthen relationships among harm reduction programs and with local health departments.

This project aims to improve health outcomes for people who use drugs at the regional level by increasing access to regional harm reduction support and building capacity to develop partnerships among SSPs and between community-based harm reduction organizations and the local public health infrastructure through the following activities:

- Establishing a National Center of Excellence in Harm Reduction, in partnership with the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO) and the University of Washington Supporting Harm Reduction Programs (SHaRP) team, to support the Regional Centers of Excellence and develop and disseminate national-level trainings, webinars, templates, tools, and resources.
- Increasing access to tailored TA, training, and consultation that is responsive to emerging needs and supports SSP organizational development, sustainability, and workforce development through a network of subject matter experts.
- **Through this RFP**, increasing investment in regional networks of mutual aid, collaboration, and cross-program learning through supporting syringe services programs (SSPs) to become Regional Centers of Excellence, which will: develop and implement a plan to inform TA, training, capacity building and workforce development activities; build or expand peer to peer relationships and partnerships across the region; and advise the National CoE (NASTAD) and national partners on local/regional trends, emerging needs, challenges, and promising practices.

Funding Opportunity Description

NASTAD will select 6-8 SSPs with experience in delivering local and/or regional harm reduction TA and capacity building activities to become Regional Centers of Excellence. Regional CoEs will engage with stakeholders across their region to build networks of mutual aid, service coordination, and peer learning among SSPs while identifying opportunities to integrate harm reduction approaches into public health systems, including through building or expanding relationships with local health departments. Each

Regional CoEs will receive support through regular communication with a coach from the National CoE (NASTAD) and tailored support from national partners NACCHO and UW SHaRP.

Regional CoEs will be expected to carry out the following required activities:

1. Develop and implement a locally and regionally specific plan to inform TA, training, capacity building and workforce development activities. Example activities may include:
 - Directly delivering, coordinating, or facilitating training for staff of SSPs, health departments, or partner organizations (virtual or in-person).
 - Tailored 1:1 consultation and support to local or regional harm reduction programs (virtual or in-person).
 - Participating in, facilitating, or supporting professional development opportunities for harm reduction program staff.
 - Creating and disseminating resources for SSP staff and programs.
 - Sharing best practices, sample policies and procedures, and other tools and resources that support programmatic and organizational development.
2. Build or expand relationships across the region between community-based harm reduction programs, as well as between harm reduction programs and public health and health system partners. This could include, but is not limited to, the following activities:
 - Attending, hosting, or facilitating events for peer networking between SSPs or between harm reduction programs and health departments (virtual or in-person).
 - Participating in or supporting site visits for peer learning and connection between harm reduction program staff.
 - Providing consultation or support related to navigating governmental public health systems and partnerships between SSPs and local health departments (for example, identifying and securing funding opportunities, approaches to supply purchasing and provision, contracting relationships, models of integrated service provision, referral processes, etc.)
3. Advise the National CoE (NASTAD) and national partners on local/regional trends, emerging needs, challenges, and promising practices.

Eligibility Information

Between 6-8 applicants will be selected to participate in this project as Regional Harm Reduction Centers of Excellence. Eligible applicants will be 501c3 or fiscally sponsored harm reduction programs currently providing direct services to people who use drugs, include access to safer drug use and overdose prevention supplies. Participating SSPs will have existing capacity and demonstrated experience delivering harm reduction TA and capacity building activities related to at least one of the following areas: workforce development, SSP organizational development and sustainability, and program implementation. Competitive applicants will be well-positioned to implement project activities quickly once resources have been made available. Organizations may partner to submit an application together. One lead applicant should submit the application, detailing any proposed partnerships in the narrative and budget.

Program Expectations

Organizations funded through this initiative will be required to work collaboratively with NASTAD and national partners University of Washington SHaRP Program and the National Association of County and

City Health Officials (NACCHO) throughout the project period. Selected programs will be expected to participate in the evaluation process and collect and report data related to TA and capacity building activities and overall progress towards facilitating and sustaining local partner engagement, peer-to-peer training and education, and efforts to integrate harm reduction into public health infrastructure. Participants may be expected to attend at least one in-person project meeting and/or one informational site visit for NASTAD staff and project partners.

If awarded, programs may be expected to submit the following documentation:

- Organizational policies and procedures including financial, employee handbook, conflict of interest, and data-related policies.
- Most recent audit with corrective action plan, if applicable, and/or financial statements
- IRS nonprofit determination letter
- W9 form
- UEI number
- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)
- If you have a fiscal sponsor, you must submit the fiscal sponsorship agreement and all above documents must be from your sponsor.

Selection Criteria

Competitive applicants will demonstrate:

- Expertise in supporting local/regional SSPs in one or more of the following areas:
 - Harm reduction workforce development (for example, planning and delivering training for SSP staff, supporting staff with lived/living experience)
 - Organizational development and sustainability (for example, leadership development, succession planning, nonprofit management, budgeting, grant writing and grants management)
 - Program development (for example, supporting SSPs to implement new systems, processes, or services; development of policies and procedures; data collection and evaluation)

** Note: Preference is for applicants that can demonstrate the ability to meet a range of SSP TA and training needs.*
- Ability to facilitate and sustain local partner engagement among SSPs and between SSPs and community partners.
- Experience integrating harm reduction approaches into public health infrastructure, in particular health departments (may also include clinical settings and other health systems partners).
- Ability to travel locally and regionally for program consultation and support, peer networking, in-person convenings, and other activities.
- Realistic proposal that meets program expectations and supports completion of project activities.
- Realistic budget within the range provided (\$85,000 - \$125,000 for initial project period of February 1 – July 31, 2025).
- Readiness to manage federal funding.
- Capacity and willingness to work collaboratively with NASTAD and partners to track, monitor, and report on activities conducted on a regular basis.

Additional Selection Considerations:

- Diversity of geographic location and coverage across regions served.
- Diversity of organizational size, structure, and program models.
- Preference will be given to proposals that focus on building capacity and scaling up harm reduction services within Black or Indigenous communities.
- Alignment between proposals, organizational experience, and the NASTAD Drug User Health Grantmaking Values (see below).

The selection process will be informed by and adhere to the following **NASTAD Drug User Health Grantmaking Values**.

We strive to:

- Shift power and resources to those most vulnerable to structural violence.
- Center racial justice and leadership for Black, Latinx, Indigenous peoples, and other racialized groups.
- Include and uplift the voices and priorities of people who use drugs.
- Provide resources to those who are minoritized and historically under-resourced/over-exploited, including those of LGBTQ+ experience, monolingual Spanish speakers, and those who engage in sex work.
- Ensure that services and resources are available and accessible to those living with disabilities.
- Create a space for community accountability, including transformative justice, healing justice, and restorative justice.
- Support geographic diversity, as well as diversity in terms of program size, current capacity, infrastructure/program models and implementation strategies, and unique outreach into communities.
- Be mindful of the often-harmful impact of the involvement of carceral systems within harm reduction programs and services.
- Increase health equity and address racial justice in communities relevant to disparities based on economics (or poverty), race/ethnicity, other demographic data (or other populations under attack – such as serving sex workers or migrant communities), and/or geography.
- Establish and/or expand resources for those in areas of high incidence of HIV and/or viral hepatitis, drug poisoning, and other health-related occurrences associated with the War on Drugs.
- Practice low barrier grantmaking.

Review and Selection Process

NASTAD Drug User Health intends to follow the review and selection timeline below:

- January 5, 2025: Deadline for application submission [via ClickUp form](#), 11:59pm PT
- January 13-24, 2025: NASTAD project staff holds virtual interviews with finalists
- January 27-31, 2025: Final selection, notification

Proposals will be reviewed through the following process:

- Each application will be reviewed and scored by multiple reviewers using a standardized rubric that evaluates the extent to which applicants meet selection criteria.
- Reviewers will include NASTAD Drug User Health, NACCHO, and UW SHaRP project staff. Additional external reviewers may be recruited from the drug user health and harm reduction field.
- Reviewers will meet to discuss scores and identify finalists.
- Project staff will hold virtual interviews with finalists.
- Project staff will make final selections based on application materials, virtual interview, overall demonstration of ability and readiness to carry out project deliverables, regional representation, and overall project strategy.

Application and Submission Information

For reference, application questions are listed below. **Applicants should complete and submit the requested information via a ClickUp electronic form by Sunday, January 5, 2025 at 11:59pm PT.** [Access the application form here.](#)

Organizational Information

- Organization/Program name
- Organization Staff Name
- Organization Staff Email
- Organization Staff Phone Number
- What is your 501c3/fiscal sponsor status?
- Name of fiscal sponsor, if applicable.
- Provide a brief narrative describing the setting, size, and structure of your current programming. Include a description of staff that may be involved with the project and their TA, training, and/or capacity-building experience. (word limit: 300 max)
- In which state(s) does your program currently operate?
- In which state(s) would proposed TA activities take place?
- In which of the [10 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regions](#) would proposed TA activities take place?
- Provide more detail about the geographic region that would be covered by proposed TA activities. For regions smaller than a state, please list the jurisdiction(s) or region name (for example, Atlanta metro area, northern California, etc.).

Project Narrative

- Describe your experience convening SSPs and facilitating peer-to-peer learning, networking, or mutual aid, including any specific activities or events. (word limit: 500 max)

- Describe your expertise supporting SSPs and other harm reduction programs through training, TA, consultation, or resource development in one or more of the following areas:
 - o Harm reduction workforce development (for example, planning and delivering training for SSP staff, supporting staff with lived/living experience)
 - o Organizational development and sustainability (for example, leadership development, succession planning, nonprofit management, budgeting, grant writing and grants management)
 - o Program development (for example, supporting SSP best practices, implementation of implement new systems, processes, or services; development of policies and procedures; data collection and evaluation) (word limit: 500 max)

**Note: Preference is for applicants that can demonstrate the ability to meet a range of SSP TA and training needs.*
- What is your requested level of funding? (suggested range: \$85,000 - \$125,000)
- Describe how you plan to use the requested funds to carry out the required activities within the project period. Explain how activities will be adapted to fit your organization and the needs of your region. Include specific goals, activities, timeline, and anticipated outcomes your organization would like to achieve. (word limit: 500 max)
- Indicate how your proposal aligns with relevant NASTAD Drug User Health Grantmaking Values listed in the RFP above. (word limit: 300 max)
- Describe any anticipated support needed from NASTAD and partners to establish your program as a Regional Center of Excellence and carry out the proposed activities. (word limit: 300 max)
- List up to 3 references (SSPs, jurisdictional health departments, other local or regional partner organizations) that can attest to your demonstrated expertise and ability to develop and sustain partnerships.

Attachments

- Upload 1 letter of support from a local peer or partner SSP that speaks to your ability to build trusting relationships and support harm reduction program development and sustainability.
- Upload completed budget template (provided by NASTAD, click [here](#) to download.)