



The California Health Equity and Racial Justice Fund

Our top goal this year is for the State of California to establish a Health Equity and Racial Justice Fund (HERJF) framework in law, which can then receive future public or private appropriations as the State's budgetary outlook improves. The HERJF Fund would be administered by the Office of Health Equity in the Department of Public Health. This Fund would provide direct assistance to community-based organizations, tribal organizations, and clinics focused on health equity and racial justice innovation to address health inequities and racism as public health crises more effectively. These resources would be allocated based on clear objectives and key results frameworks ratified through contracts between each grantee organization and the Office of Health Equity.

The Fund will fill gaps in state investments by supporting organizations working directly with impacted community members to address key drivers of health disparities in areas such as healthy food access and healthier community-built environments, while also tackling racism head-on, areas that did not receive major new investments. Health equity projects will be closely coordinated with local health departments to ensure collaboration on funded projects.

What projects could receive investments through the Health Equity Program?

- Projects proposed by nonprofit organizations, clinics, and tribal organizations that serve disproportionately impacted communities of color and the low income, to address the social determinants of physical health and behavioral health and reduce the unequal burden of the leading causes of death and illness, in children and in adults, would be eligible.
- The initial pilot projects of the Health Equity Fund will focus on addressing food security and healthy food systems; health education (including vaccine hesitancy); community violence, including gender-based violence, intimate partner violence, and hate crimes; youth criminal justice; and environmental justice.

What projects could receive investments in the Racial Justice Innovation Program?

Projects must have a direct intended impact on racial equity or racial justice. Projects should seek to transform the behaviors, institutions, and systems that disproportionately harm historically marginalized communities and create barriers to opportunity, in order to empower communities of color to

thrive and reach their full potential. Projects may:

- Advance racial equity through research.
- Build community infrastructure for community engagement within governmental institutions, including engagement on allocation of community resources.
- Evaluate community needs as it relates to racial equity and racial justice.
- Provide community-based organization led equity, inclusion, and cultural competency trainings for health and other service Providers, Provider groups, health plans, clinics, local health departments, municipal, and county governments.

What do outcomes and accountability for HERJF funded projects look like?

Funded projects must:

- Include a specific focus area from and work plan for the project.
- Define clear objectives and key results sought.
- Identify specific populations or geographic areas to be served.
- Estimate number of individuals and/or families intended to be served.
- Demonstrate meaningful engagement with impacted communities and strengthen coordination and synergy across public and nongovernmental sectors, which for health equity projects may include:
 - Being part of municipal or county level partnerships that can enhance community engagement across the public and nonprofit sectors.
 - Having a structure for listening sessions or other coordination with governmental bodies such as local health departments.
- Demonstrate equitable practices in its design and implementation including in staffing, wages, contracting, and selection of beneficiaries.
- Specify how key results will be measured, for example, number of community gardens or green spaces created, fruit and vegetable incentives used, number of residents served by peaceful parks projects, improvements in community physical activity levels, reductions in incidents of violence in participating sites, or healthcare providers receiving training on equity, inclusion and cultural competency.
- Collect data to support measuring key results and outcomes.