Eligibility

- Are there any specific eligibility requirements for this opportunity? If so, could you please share them?
  - There are no specific eligibility requirements but, as noted in the funding announcement, it is preferred that applicants have experience working with LHDs and rural communities, have experience utilizing a health equity framework to guide their work, and, finally, have some subject matter expertise related to overdose prevention and response.

Application

- Should the proposal include attachments of work samples/reports? Are such attachments allowed?
  - Examples of other work and related reports that are referenced in the implementation capacity section may be attached to the submission. Applicants should not submit other documentation that is not referenced in the body of their application narrative.

- Do tables/charts/figures count towards the word limitations in each section? If so, can we include tables/charts/figures as an attachment instead?
  - Tables and charts may be submitted and do not count towards the listed word limits. Applicants should, however, ensure that their submission is not wholly reliant on these attachments and can be clearly understood through the text of the narrative.

- Do you want references included with the proposal?
  - Applicants need not submit references with their proposals.

- Is there a page limit for the proposal beyond the word limits provided? For instance, are we able to include general cover materials about our organization?
  - Yes, cover materials are acceptable. There is no overall page limit for each submission.

- If subcontractors will be used, do they need to be identified in the proposal or can they be added after the project is awarded?
Specific sub-contractors need not be identified. However, the budget narrative should clearly outline their expected scope of work.

- **Do we not need to sign the contract upon submission of our proposal? Just be familiar with it?**
  - The selected awardee will be asked to sign the contract. For application purposes, we just want to be sure you're familiar with the requirements.

**Budget and Use of Funding**

- **What is the allowed indirect cost rate? The RFP and budget template documents do not seem to specify.**
  - NACCHO does not have a limit on allowed indirect rates, though asks for documentation of the rate if it exceeds 10%.

- **The RFP specifies that interviewees in the community engagement portion of the scope of work will be offered compensation for their participation in project activities. Should the proposal budget incorporate these costs, or will NACCHO provide compensation directly to interviewee?**
  - Yes, applicants should endeavor to include compensation for interviewees in their budgets.

- **What types of compensation are allowed and are there limitations?**
  - There is no limit on the incentive amount although it must be justifiable and in line with established rates for similar work. There is no requirement around the mode, though direct monetary compensation must be through a formal invoice or mini-contract with the interviewee. Gift card-based compensation is also allowable, though there are some regulations around their use and they require approval from CDC.
  - NACCHO is committed to working with the awardee to establish an acceptable compensation structure and will not be scoring budgets as part of the review process. Given that, applicants need not worry that compensation structures that need amendments will negatively impact their applications.

- **In our past experience- its most helpful to work with CBOs to get some community input and provide wrap around services such as dinner, childcare etc.- would those costs be acceptable?**
  - We agree and really appreciate these considerations. While there are some limitations on allowable costs, we are committed to supporting these costs where we can and will work with the awardee to complete additional steps necessary for approval.

- **Is a fully burdened salary structure (fringe/indirect inclusive) acceptable?**
  - Yes, a fully burdened cost structure is acceptable.

- **Can NACCHO confirm that the budget should only be broken down by personnel, travel, supplies, etc., and not by task?**
• Correct, the budget should reflect the entire project and not each specific task.

• **Can NACCHO confirm that the budget proposed will not impact award, as long as it is under $250K?**
  o That is correct – the budget will not be scored. No preference will be given to lower proposed budgets.

• **For the purposes of budget planning/breakdowns for the proposal, are there 3 locations that you’d like vendors to use for the 3 in-person interviews?**
  o You do not need to identify the locations at this point, but can use approved GSA rates to plan your proposed budget.

• Will NAACHO or CDC provide support for language accommodations (translation, interpretation, other needs) to reach diverse SMEs? Or is that the responsibility of the contractor?
  o We would ask you to please include proposed costs in your budget.

• Can we provide naloxone at no cost?
  o We cannot cover costs of naloxone, but certainly support you distributing if you have access to naloxone or can connect you to someone who can.

### Project Activities

• **Can NACCHO clarify the role of CDC in the project team? For example, will CDC review deliverables?**
  o This opportunity is made possible through NACCHO’s cooperative agreement with CDC and will be supported by a CDC technical monitor. The technical monitor will provide valuable input on program activities and deliverables. Ultimately, however, NACCHO will provide final approval on all submitted deliverables.

• **Is the aim for this work to be representative of rural communities across the US? Would you consider a subpopulation focus, women for example?**
  o Yes, particularly for the environmental scan, gap analysis, and roundtables, the focus should be on the rural experience as a whole. Based on the takeaways from this work, NACCHO and CDC are open to narrowing the focus for the community engagement piece if, in consultation with the awardee, it is determined that there is a specific subpopulation that merits deeper engagement at this time.

• **Will the research activities require IRB review?**
  o No, activities are structured in collaboration with federal partners to avoid IRB review.

• **For the eight community interviews, do you mean group or individual?**
  o In most cases, it will probably be a small group, but in some cases may be appropriate to be with an individual. NACCHO will work with awardee to finalize the interviews.
• For the community engagement, are you hoping to have the 8 interviews be in different locations or would you be open to us engaging with individuals in a particular designated region?
  o Yes, the interviews should cover more than one location, even if a specific subpopulation of focus for them is chosen. A regional approach may be warranted if the subpopulation of focus is geographically clustered.

• Do we need to identify locations for the community engagement interviews?
  o You do not need to identify the locations at this point but can use approved GSA rates to plan your proposed budget.

• May applicants propose alternate research activities to meet NACCHO’s community engagement goals, or are we limited to 3 individual interviews?
  o Yes, we are open to it but wanted to be mindful of the limited timeline, budget and capacity. NACCHO has proposed 3 to 8 interviews, with at least 3 being in person. Applicants may propose to conduct more in person if their budget will support it and it fits within the timeline. Additionally, other community engagement activities may be proposed if the applicant is still able to conduct the required interviews.

• Has NACCHO identified potential “engaged rural LHDs” for participation in interviews? If so, in which states are they located?
  o No, NACCHO has not and anticipates identifying these LHDs and/or other rural community organizations in collaboration with the awardee.

• Can you describe the context and your vision for the Funding Brief in more detail? Does this have to do with contracting challenges, or challenges posed by general lack of funding, or something else?
  o In NACCHO’s experience, many smaller, often rural LHDs and their community partners lack the internal capacity to effectively monitor and respond to public health grant opportunities. Survey data also indicates that these smaller, rural, LHDs have been more likely to see staffing or funding reductions than their larger peers. Drawing on information pulled from the environmental scan, roundtables, and community engagement, NACCHO would like to give voice to the funding challenges these communities face for their overdose prevention and response work and develop a set of recommendations funding institutions might consider to lessen them.

• Can you please offer any other guidance on the environmental scan besides that the resources apply to all rural areas? Is the expectation to examine all available resources developed by all rural communities or to look for resources available from national organizations?
  o The intent of the environmental scan is to locate and review resources that provide support for overdose prevention and response activities in a way that is specifically tailored for rural audiences. While many resources may have been
created by, or with the support of, national organizations, all resources fitting these criteria should be included.

- Aside from the consultants, NACCHO and CDC, can the roundtables be open for other attendees? If so, do NACCHO and CDC have an intended audience?
  - Yes, NACCHO is envisioning that the roundtables will largely draw from organizations other than the awardee, CDC, and NACCHO. While a list of specific organizations has not been compiled, the intended audience is organizations with subject matter expertise in rural health and overdose prevention and response.

**Timeline**

- **Do you anticipate sticking to the November start date, given the time needed for application review and contracting?**
  - NACCHO is continually working to improve our contracting process. The NOA will be issued by November 9 and work will begin immediately upon issuance. NACCHO will work with the selected awardee to finalize a scope of work within one week of the NOA and will endeavor to provide a contract for signature within two weeks of the NOA.

- **Are you comfortable having project activities take place in the new year, with planning occurring in Nov/Dec? This time can be challenging for meaningful engagement in research and expert groups.**
  - NACCHO anticipates that work on the scan and gap analysis will begin immediately, along with planning activities for the other items in the proposed scope of work. NACCHO is comfortable with the roundtables and community engagement pieces taking place in 2024, so long as the overall timeline is adhered to.

**Other**

- **Is there an incumbent contractor?**
  - This is a new opportunity and there is no incumbent contractor.

- **Are you only seeking one contractor, or will multiple awards be issued?**
  - At this time, we are only planning one award.

- **Of the 2,800 local health departments across the country that NACCHO serves, how many are considered rural?**
  - This is a complicated question without one answer. Going by the most recent county level HRSA data (some LHDS may represent multiple counties), 1,888 of the 3,221 counties and independent cities have a majority (50%+) of their population living in rural areas. 1,065 have a population of which 75%+ live in rural areas.
• For companies who have contracted with NACCHO in the past, would agreed-upon contract terms be applied to this award?
  o Yes, previously agreed upon contract terms will be honored.