



**STATE OF COLORADO, DEPARTMENT OF LAW  
DIVISION OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT  
OPIOID RESPONSE UNIT**

**RALPH L. CARR, COLORADO JUDICIAL CENTER**  
1300 Broadway, 10th Floor  
Denver, Colorado 80203  
Phone (720) 508-6000

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

**Opioid Abatement Innovation Challenge**

**RFA # 2023-06**

## I. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

### A. Introduction

The Attorney General and the Department of Law (“DOL”), collectively referred to as the Colorado Attorney General’s Office, represents and defends the legal interests of the people of the State of Colorado and its sovereignty. The Attorney General exercises the responsibilities given to the office by the Colorado Constitution, statutes enacted by the Colorado General Assembly, and the common law.

The Division of Community Engagement (“DCE”) serves as Coloradans’ open door to the AG’s Office. We build relationships and establish meaningful dialogue across Colorado, working hard to truly hear the needs, ideas, and voices of the people of our State.

We engage with Coloradans on a range of issues—from improving public safety, to financial literacy and protecting consumers, to addressing the opioid epidemic, protecting our land, air, and water, and many others—through the operation of five programs: Outreach and Engagement, Consumer Engagement and Data Services, Safe2Tell Colorado, Opioid Response, and Grants and Partnerships.

The Opioid Response Unit (“ORU”), a program within the DCE, is responsible for strategically managing and distributing opioid settlement funds received by the DOL in accordance with the [Colorado Opioid Settlement’s Memorandum of Understanding \(“MOU”\)](#). The ORU works closely with stakeholders across Colorado who are engaged in abating the opioid crisis, including municipal and county governments, State agencies, non-profits, service providers, and non-governmental organizations.

DOL funds authorized by C.R.S. § 24-31-108 serve as the primary source of support for DCE funded partnerships. These partnerships support a diverse range of organizations throughout Colorado that address critical challenges facing our State. The DCE works with partners to develop and provide start-up funding for data-driven, high-impact programs that can develop long-term success and build a sustainable foundation.

The Colorado MOU was finalized between the Colorado Attorney General’s office and the local governments of Colorado on August 26, 2021. Three-hundred and twelve local governments signed on to the MOU, which dictates the governance, distribution, and expenditure of any current or future opioid settlement funds for Colorado.

There are four different funding streams listed in the MOU:

- 60% to the Regional Government Share
- 20% to the Local Government Share (Each local government can choose to opt-out of receiving the funds, thus directing the funds to their opioid Region)
- 10% to the State Share
- 10% to the Infrastructure Share

This funding opportunity addresses the 10% of Opioid Settlement funds set aside for the State Share.

## **B. Project Background and Overview**

The DOL announces an Opioid Abatement Innovation Challenge grant which will support emerging and innovative approaches to combat Colorado’s opioid crisis that generate implementable solutions.

The DOL’s intent with the Opioid Abatement Innovation Challenge grant is to accelerate progress with innovative, high-impact ideas to combat Colorado’s opioid crisis. Innovative ideas must also prompt action to create a solution. The ORU seeks partners that present actionable plans, with clear deliverables and timelines, that provide measurable impact in combatting the serious challenges of the opioid epidemic.

Examples of targeted areas could include, but are not limited to the [Approved Purposes as described in Exhibit A](#) of the MOU (“Approved Purposes”). Detail on each targeted area can be found in Appendix A as well as the link provided in “Tools and Guidance”.

1. Prevention and Early Intervention
2. Harm Reduction
3. Treatment
4. Recovery
5. Continuum of Care and/or Care Coordination
6. Behavioral Health Services in the Criminal Justice or Law Enforcement Setting - supply side illicit substance interdiction will not be considered for this grant opportunity
7. Technological Advances to support any of the Approved Purposes, incorporated by reference to this RFA.

The focus of the Opioid Abatement Innovation Challenge is intentionally broad to encourage advanced ideas and solutions that will maximize impact of the State’s Opioid Settlement funds. Applicants are encouraged to reference the Approved Purposes, and the Budget and Work Plan Template (link provided in “Tools and Guidance”). The anticipated projected funding period is from January 2024 through January 2026. The actual funding period will coincide with the award date and grant agreement execution and is subject to vary from the dates above, accordingly.

## **II. FUNDING AND BUDGET REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. Funding Requirements**

Applicants may only apply for one of the following three funding tiers over the course of a 2-year budget cycle:

1. Small Funding Opportunity - \$100,000-\$350,000
2. Medium Funding Opportunity - \$350,001-\$700,000
3. Large Funding Opportunity - \$700,001-\$1,000,000

Up to \$4,000,000 is available in this funding period. The DOL will, within their sole discretion, select awardees from any, all, or none of the funding tiers, limited by the available funding in this period.

## **B. Budget Requirements**

1. A budget template for the initial budget period for up to 2 years is provided (link provided in “Tools and Guidance”).
2. Administrative costs cannot exceed 10% of funding request of the applicant.
3. Opioid Funds from the State Share shall be used for Approved Purposes only. The list of Approved Purposes can be found in Exhibit A of MOU, referenced in this RFA.

## **III. PROJECT REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. Eligibility**

Eligible entities for the Innovation Challenge include:

1. Colorado county
2. Colorado municipality
3. Colorado State agency
4. Colorado’s Federally Recognized Tribes
5. Colorado Regional Opioid Abatement Councils as defined by and formed as a result of the MOU.
6. Non-profit organization, in good standing with the Colorado Secretary of State
7. For-profit organization, in good standing with the Colorado Secretary of State

If multiple entities are applying together, please select one entity to serve as Applicant. This should be the entity that will receive the grant award, receive the disbursed funds, and be responsible for funds management and submitting required reporting. The additional entities should be listed in the application as “Implementing Organization(s).”

Although a single institution or organization must be the lead applicant, a multi-agency partnership is possible. Such joint applications, entailing active participation by more than one organization, are highly encouraged, and preferred if there is clear evidence of close interaction and responsible partnership among the participants.

Applications may be declined if the grant recipient cannot demonstrate financial viability or program sustainability, or if the request does not fall within the Approved Purposes.

### **B. How to Apply**

1. For consideration of award, an applicant for the OPIOID ABATEMENT INNOVATION CHALLENGE (RFA 2023-06) must submit a completed application no later than 11:59 p.m. MT on June 30, 2023 via email to [procurement@coag.gov](mailto:procurement@coag.gov).
2. A completed application (link provided in “Tools and Guidance”)
3. No hard copies of applications will be accepted. Applications submitted after the application submission deadline will not be accepted.

4. Applicants will be notified via email of funding decisions. The estimated notification date is indicated in the “Schedule of Activities” section of this RFA.
5. The DOL reserves the right to negotiate budgets and work plans with eligible Awardees, which may impact the start date of the contract.

#### **IV. TOOLS AND GUIDANCE**

All Applicants are encouraged to review in detail the following documents, which are incorporated and made part of this funding opportunity by reference and are available on the [DOL’s Funding Opportunities](#) webpage.

- A. [Colorado MOU, Including Exhibit A – Approved Purposes](#)
- B. [Opioid Abatement Innovation Challenge Application and Checklist](#)
- C. [Opioid Abatement Innovation Challenge Budget and Work Plan Template](#)
- D. [Opioid Abatement Innovation Challenge Potential Targeted Areas of Focus](#) (see Appendix A)
- E. [Opioid Abatement Innovation Challenge Glossary of Terms](#) (see Appendix B)

#### **V. REPORTING**

Acceptance of these funds indicates agreement to terms of reporting. Quarterly progress reports will be required using a provided template. Supplementary information or virtual meetings may be requested as necessary in addition to reporting.

Additionally, on an annual basis, grantees shall provide all expenditure data, including administrative costs, related to any Opioid Funds received from the State Share and subject itself to an accounting as required by the Colorado Opioid Abatement Council.

#### **VI. SELECTION, EVALUATION, AND AWARDS**

DOL will review each application to determine whether the application includes all required information and documentation. Applicants that do not meet all requirements specified above will be disqualified, and their applications will not be considered for a grant award.

Applications will be assessed based on the soundness of the applicant's approach and the applicant's understanding of the requirements. Experience/qualifications will be assessed by considering the extent to which the qualifications, experience, and past performance are likely to foster successful, on-time performance.

An evaluation committee will review each qualifying application and will make a separate determination for an award of a grant for each qualifying application. Only individuals on the evaluation committee will evaluate applications for grant awards.

Below is the schedule of activities for this Opioid Abatement Innovation Challenge RFA. Dates in this schedule are subject to change at the discretion of DOL.

<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>Dates*</b>
Request for Applications (RFA) Posted	May 3, 2023
Applicant Question Submission Deadline	May 19, 2023
State Responses Posted	May 26, 2023
Pre-Application Webinar (Optional)	Jun 6, 2023, 10:00-11:00AM (MT)
Online Office Hours (Optional)	Jun 14, 2023, 9:00-10:00AM (MT)
Online Office Hours (Optional)	Jun 23, 2023, 9:00-10:00AM (MT)
Application Submission Deadline	Jun 30, 2023
Estimated Award(s) Announcements	Jan 2023

\*The DOL reserves the right to revise the dates in this schedule.

## **VII. QUESTIONS AND INQUIRIES**

### **A. Question Submission Period**

Applicants may make written inquiries via email to obtain clarification of requirements concerning this RFA. No inquiries will be accepted after the date and time indicated in the Schedule of Activities. Send all inquiries to:

DOL contact name: Mitchell Tate

DOL contact email: [procurement@coag.gov](mailto:procurement@coag.gov)

Clearly identify your inquiries with:

1. RFA Number
2. RFA Title
3. The section number and paragraph number of your inquiry.

Responses to applicant inquiries will be published as outlined in the Schedule of Activities by close of business on the date indicated. Applicants are not to rely on any other statements that alter any specification or other term or condition of the funding opportunity.

### **B. Webinar and Online Office Hours**

As indicated in the Schedule of Activities, Applicants have the option to attend a pre-application webinar and two online office hours for clarification on this RFA. Visit the [DOL's Funding Opportunities webpage](#) for information on how to log-in to join these meetings.

## Appendix A: Potential Targeted Areas of Focus

Please see [Exhibit A](#) for full list of Approved Purposes, below are some possible targeted areas of focus.

- 1. Prevention** activities work to educate and support individuals and communities to prevent the use and misuse of drugs and the development of opioid and other substance use disorders. **Early Intervention** services are designed to decrease high-risk substance use or risk factors that appear to be related to substance use and prevent the development of substance-related problems. These services strive to increase perceived personal risk related to high-risk substance use and other high-risk activities related to substance use. They may involve evidence-based education, skills training, and counseling for the individual and family members.
- 2. Harm Reduction** refers to a set of evidence-based practices that can help reduce the potential negative consequences associated with substance use. It is a person-centered approach that can take many forms and helps keep individuals safer while also protecting public health.
- 3. Treatment** services are for people diagnosed with opioid and other substance use disorders. These may include treatment services along the American Society of Addiction Medicine Levels of care, including medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD). MOUD treatment is a comprehensive way to address the needs of individuals that combines the use of medication (methadone, buprenorphine, or naltrexone) with counseling and behavioral therapies.
- 4. Recovery** support services help people enter and navigate systems of care, remove barriers to recovery, stay engaged in the recovery process, and live full lives in communities of their choice. Recovery support services include culturally and linguistically appropriate services that assist individuals and families working toward recovery from mental and/or substance use problems. They incorporate a full range of services that facilitate recovery, wellness, and linkage to and coordination among service providers, and other supports shown to improve quality of life for people (and their families) in and seeking recovery. Recovery support services may be provided before, during, or after clinical treatment, or may be provided to individuals who are not in treatment but seek support services.
- 5. Care Coordination and/or Continuum of Care** involves deliberately organizing patient care activities and sharing information among all the participants concerned with a patient's care to achieve safer and more effective care. This means that the patient's needs and preferences are known ahead of time and communicated at the right time to the right people, and that this information is used to provide safe, appropriate, and effective care to the patient. **Continuum of Care** activities address multiple activities along the substance use continuum of care (from prevention, harm reduction, treatment, or recovery.)
- 6. Behavioral Health Services in the Criminal Justice or Law Enforcement Setting** may include services along [The Sequential Intercept Model \(SIM\)](#). The Sequential Intercept Model (SIM) is a framework that details how people with behavioral health needs may become engaged with — and move through — the justice system, as well as the opportunities to connect them to needed care. Examples could include but are not limited to pre-arrest diversion from the criminal justice, co-responder models, care coordination upon release, treatment in the criminal justice setting, Medicaid navigation for individuals involved in the criminal justice setting or other innovative services. Supply side illicit substance interdiction will not be considered for this grant opportunity.
- 7. Technological Advances or Data Infrastructure** to support or enhance any of the [Approved Purposes](#) as outlined above or in Exhibit A of the MOU.

## Appendix B: Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
<b>Administrative Costs</b>	Costs associated with overseeing and administering Opioid Funds. Administrative costs shall not exceed 10% actual costs expended by the recipient or 10% of the amount received, whichever is less.
<b>Applicant</b>	The entity that will submit the application, receive the grant award, receive the disbursed funds, and be responsible for funds management and submitting required reporting.
<b>Approved Purpose(s)</b>	<p>Approved Purposes are forward-looking strategies, programming, and services to abate the opioid epidemic as identified by the terms of any Settlement. If a Settlement is silent on Approved Purpose(s), then Approved Purpose(s) shall mean those forward-looking strategies to abate the opioid epidemic identified in <a href="#">Exhibit A</a> or any supplemental forward-looking abatement strategies added to Exhibit A by the Abatement Council.</p> <p>Consistent with the terms of any Settlement, “Approved Purposes” shall also include the reasonable administrative costs associated with overseeing and administering Opioid Funds.</p>
<b>Colorado Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)</b>	<p>The <a href="#">Colorado MOU</a> establishes the framework for distributing and sharing these settlement proceeds throughout Colorado. Local governments and the State prepared the Colorado MOU, which prioritizes regionalism, collaboration, and abatement. It is expected that the Colorado MOU will also be used for settlements with other opioid defendants in the future, including any settlement from Purdue Pharma’s bankruptcy proceeding.</p> <p>Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser signed the MOU on August 26, 2021. The Colorado MOU can be found at <a href="http://www.coag.gov/opioids">www.coag.gov/opioids</a>.</p>
<b>DOL</b>	Colorado Department of Law
<b>Implementing Organizations</b>	<p>Entities other than the Applicants that are either supporting or part of a collaborative application.</p> <p>Nongovernmental entities, such as not-profit organizations, may be part of the collaborative partnership proposed in the application with a governmental entity acting as the Applicant and fiscal sponsor.</p>
<b>Opioid Funds</b>	Opioid Funds shall mean damage awards obtained through a Settlement.



<b>Settlement</b>	<p>"Settlement" shall mean the negotiated resolution of legal or equitable claims against an Opioid Settling Defendant when that resolution has been jointly entered into by the State and the Participating Local Governments, or by any individual Party or collection of Parties that opt to subject their Settlement to this MOU.</p> <p>Unless otherwise directed by an order from a United States Bankruptcy Court, "Settlement" shall also include distributions from any liquidation under Chapter 7 of the United States Bankruptcy Code or confirmed plan under Chapter 11 of the United States Bankruptcy Code that treats the claims of the State and Local Governments against an Opioid Settling Defendant.</p>
<b>State Share</b>	<p>The State Share, representing 10% of Opioid Settlement Funds, will be used for state-funded initiatives, including the Opioid Abatement Innovation Challenge.</p>