Active People, Healthy Nation Walkability Virtual Academy

Local Communities and/or Metropolitan Planning Organization Regions
(or other similar regional entities)
Request for Funding Assistance

**Applications Due:** January 13, 2023, by 11:59 p.m. ET to kedwards_ic@chronicdisease.org

**A. PURPOSE**

The National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD), in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP) Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity (DNPAO), seeks applications from local communities and/or Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) regions [or other similar regional entities] for competitive funding assistance to support attendance at NACDD/CDC’s Active People, Healthy Nation℠ National Walkability Virtual Academy (WVA). The below alternatively named MPO equivalents for “other similar regional entities” include the following:

- Rural Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO)
- Transportation Planning Organizations (TPO)
- Regional Councils of Governments (RCOG)
- Transportation Management Agencies (TMA), etc.

The purpose of this opportunity is to engage and prepare up to eight interdisciplinary teams from local communities and/or MPO regions (or other similar regional entities) to pursue policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) supports for improved walkability and movability. This virtual academy will provide teams with the most up-to-date academic and applied learning methods and will reinforce and support implementation of significant national public health policy statements promoting walking and walkability, such as the *The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition; Step It Up! Surgeon General’s Call to Action (SG CTA) to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities (SGCTA); Community Preventive Services Task Force’s Built Environment Recommendations;* and the CDC’s [Active People, Healthy Nation Community Design for Physical Activity strategy](#), which consists of combining activity-friendly routes to everyday destinations, including identifying opportunities for community design improvements for people with disabilities. NACDD and CDC are interested in applicant interdisciplinary teams who can commit to all project deliverables outlined in this request for funding assistance (RFA) and produce measurable PSE outcomes after attending the virtual academy.
B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Regular physical activity can lead to reductions in chronic disease risk and burden. Walking is an easy, cost-efficient, and common form of physical activity that can help many more people meet The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd Edition and obtain health benefits. Walkable communities make it easier for people of all ages and abilities to be active by increasing access to safe and convenient places to walk or move with assistive devices such as wheelchairs and walkers. Improved walkability and movability can make communities safer, support social cohesion, reduce air pollution, and benefit local economies, as well as serve to help all users move and navigate communities to everyday destinations such as homes, workplaces, schools, parks, healthcare, and food outlets. To promote walking and walkability throughout the country, NACDD and CDC will partner with up to eight local communities and/or MPO regions (or other similar regional entities) to achieve PSE outcomes that support community design for physical activity by creating proximity to everyday destinations connected by safer and more accessible pedestrian, bicycle, and transit transportation networks for people of all ages, abilities, races, ethnicities, incomes, background, abilities, and disabilities.

NACDD seeks collaborative applications from up to eight local communities and/or MPO regions (or other similar regional entities) within any state except for the states of Louisiana, Michigan, or South Carolina since these states are hosting a state-specific walkability course in the upcoming year. Communities or MPOs from these states who are interested in learning more about the opportunity in their respective state should contact Karma Edwards at kedwards_ic@chronicdisease.org.

NACDD will provide funding in the amount of $5,000 each for up to eight interdisciplinary local community and/or MPO regional teams to attend the Active People, Healthy Nation National WVA with NACDD, CDC, and an expert course faculty team.

All members of the teams selected must commit to participate in each of the following project activities:

- Attend a pre-course webinar (mandatory for Team Leads and optional for additional team members) to learn about course expectations and pre-course homework activities;
- Attend 100% of the virtual academy sessions;
- Develop a team action plan inclusive of evidence-based PSE strategies for improving walkability, movability, and community design (land use or transportation design); and
- Begin implementation of action plan strategies.

Applicant teams must include at least four, but no more than six, local or regional team members. Either the required public health representative or the required MPO/planning representative for each regional team will assume the role of Team Lead, representing the team and serving as a primary point-of-contact for NACDD throughout the project. (Please refer to Section C below for more details on the “required” and “additional” team make-up). In addition to overseeing team participation in project activities listed above, Team Leads must also commit to:
• Participating in the pre-course webinar orientation call with NACDD;
• Assisting NACDD with completing Team Contact Charts and Team Bios for the course booklets in advance of the academy; and
• Assisting NACDD with progress reporting activities.

The virtual academy will provide applied learning and skill-building instruction to support achievement of related PSE strategies for increasing walkability and movability including design and infrastructure improvements. This institute will be facilitated by a nationally renowned cadre of faculty within a structured, team-based, and practical learning atmosphere. The virtual academy will occur via the Zoom meeting platform.

As noted above, each of the eight attending teams will receive funding in the amount of $5,000. If a team should not attend 100% of the academy or fulfill the WVA deliverables set forth in this RFA and corresponding appendices, the total amount of the paid funds must be returned to NACDD within 15 business days of notification to NACDD. Funds may be used for:

• Support for interdisciplinary team meetings
• Support for WVA interdisciplinary team attendance and required homework activities
• Seed money for Team Action Plan implementation of PSE strategies, tactical urbanism, or pop-up demonstration projects

C. ELIGIBILITY and TEAM MAKE-UP

Eligible applicants for this RFA include interdisciplinary teams from local communities and/or geographical regions represented by MPOs (or other similar regional entities) to implement PSE supports for walkability/movability and walkable/movable communities. Interdisciplinary teams from local communities and/or MPO regions located in the three states of Louisiana, Michigan, and South Carolina are not eligible to apply for the 2023 WVA since these states are hosting a state-specific walkability course in the upcoming year. Communities or MPOs from these states who are interested in learning more about the opportunity in their respective state should contact Karma Edwards at kedwards_ic@chronicdisease.org.

Preferred teams will include four-to-six individuals each, with four of the prospective team members representing the following required team positions:

• Public Health representative at the local or regional level
• MPO (or other similar regional entity) planning representative in the applicant region:
  o For local team applicants, it is preferred that the required planning position be the MPO representative if the local community is part of an MPO region. If the local community is not part of an MPO region, then the planning representative can be a city/county planner or satisfy the position based on the corresponding position descriptions for required and additional team members in Appendix A.
• Transportation representative (preferably in engineering) at the local or regional Department of Transportation or Public Works, or otherwise affiliated with the MPO (or other similar regional entity) region
• Elected official in the applicant region with voting, programmatic, or policy decision-making capabilities pertaining to walkability and active transportation, active living, community development/redevelopment, healthy community design, and/or transportation design

**Additional team member(s)** (for teams applying with five or six total team members) could represent any of the following partner disciplines from the region:

- Business/Industry
- Economic Development
- Education
- Parks, Recreation, and Trails
- Public Housing
- Public Transit
- Law enforcement
- Volunteer/nonprofit walkability-related advocacy organizations or foundations
- Representatives from underserved groups, such as racial/ethnic minority groups, persons with disability and/or disability groups, etc.
- Others (please note that applicants are expected to explain in the application justification section the involvement of additional disciplines not listed here)

It is strongly recommended that the transportation professional or one of the other members (for example, the "required" elected official or the "additional" team member) have an engineering background and/or infrastructure-focused responsibility such as a public works director. In the past, teams including engineering and/or public works expertise and perspective on the team have benefited greatly. Although it is not required, it is strongly encouraged as teams including someone in this type of position will be assessed more favorably during the review process.

Priority in scoring and selection will be given to applicant teams who adhere to this team make-up criteria. Applicant teams with less than the minimum of four required representatives or with more than the total number of six team members will **not** be accepted.

**NACDD will make team selections based upon the successful combination of the following criteria:**

- Strength and diversity of team make-up, as outlined above
- Demonstrated community need and opportunities for active transportation improvements
- Demonstrated level of community interest and engagement on this topic
- Ability and intent to focus on underserved population groups and locations
- Geographic and population diversity across the country

Applicants are encouraged to consider past, current, and potential for future collaboration as well as anticipated level of influence to improve walkability and movability at population levels when developing their team. Each applicant team should have a designated **Team Lead** to serve as a primary point-of-contact for NACDD throughout the project. **This must either be the Public Health or MPO/planning representative from the local or regional team.** Applicants who fail to develop the required team make-up will not be considered for funding. The team must be in place at the time of
application submission no later than January 13, 2023. Please see Appendix A for descriptions of the required and additional team members listed above. View a searchable list of established MPOs in the United States.

Applicant local or regional teams who previously applied for and were selected to attend the Walkability Action Institute (WAI)/WVA in previous years are not eligible to apply. However, any team who previously applied for the WAI/WVA, but were not selected, are both eligible and encouraged to submit another application for the current year if they are located in one of the eligible states.

D. ANTICIPATED TIMELINE and DESCRIPTION

The anticipated project timeline and description is detailed in Appendix B. Team selection notices will be announced by January 30, 2023 (anticipated), for a project period beginning on February 8, 2023 (or the date of notice of selection) and ending on June 2, 2023 (the due date for Team Action Plans). NACDD has established a Walkability Community of Practice (CoP) virtual peer alumni group that all participant WVA teams will have the ability to join and participate in for additional learning and peer-to-peer support around the topics of walkability, movability, and community design (land use or transportation design) implementation. NACDD will also share a progress reporting mechanism for Team Leads to report on team action plan outcomes beyond the current project year.

E. PROJECT DELIVERABLES

The required Active People, Healthy Nation WVA project deliverables for the local community and/or MPO regional teams (or other similar regional entities) are listed below.

Deliverables to be achieved during application process:

- Appointment of a local or regional Public Health representative to the applicant local community and/or MPO regional team (required)
- Appointment of an MPO/planning (or other similar regional entity) representative to the local community and/or MPO regional team (required)
- Designation of the Team Lead (either the public health or planning representative) to serve as a primary point-of-contact for NACDD throughout the project process (required)
- Appointment of a local or regional Transportation representative (preferably in engineering) affiliated with the local community and/or MPO regional team (required)
- Appointment of an elected official for the local community and/or MPO regional team (required)
- Appointment of one or two additional team members per Section C and Appendix A (optional)

Deliverables to be achieved upon notice of award and throughout project:

- Team Leads (required) and team members (optional) to participate in one project orientation call with NACDD on February 8, 2023 from 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. ET to learn about related logistics and requirements, institute expectations, interdisciplinary team approach to training, pre-course team assignments, and implementation options

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• Complete and submit all pre-course homework assignments and related paperwork as detailed in the large group orientation call to NACDD by specified deadlines
• Participate in 100% of the sessions of the WVA via the Zoom meeting platform
• Complete individual and overall course evaluations for the virtual academy
• **Develop a team action plan** by June 2, 2023, including short- and long-term outcomes, inclusive of at least one (ideally more than one) **PSE outcome** to support improved walkability and movability through community design (land use or transportation design) strategies as outlined by the SG CTA and/or the Community Preventive Services Task Force (NACDD will provide related action plan template and training)
  o Sample implementation strategies are described in Appendix C
• Optional and ongoing participation in NACDD’s Walkability Alumni CoP group beginning with the June 20, 2023 session and beyond (bi-monthly) to foster ongoing peer engagement, sharing and learning, and provision of targeted technical assistance for implementation of outcomes
• Participate in annual progress reporting to NACDD once team action plans are developed and submitted; NACDD will establish online annual progress reporting schedule

**F. APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS**

Collaborative applications for this RFA must include the RFA Application Form AND a **Letter of Commitment from each team member** indicating commitment for all aspects of the WVA project period (not just attendance in the WVA sessions). Application forms submitted without the accompanying letters of commitment will **NOT** be reviewed.

The RFA Application Form will consist of a multi-page, writable Word document with scoring sections and will include the components and specifications listed below. The **scored components** of the application **cannot exceed four total pages**:

• Designated space on the cover page(s) must identify the names and contact information of the Public Health representative, MPO/planning representative, applicant team’s fiscal agent, and all additional team members. Applicant teams must also indicate the Team Lead in designated space on the cover page(s) (required component; not scored; does not count towards the page limit).
• The **scored components** of the application form must not exceed four pages. It must be 1.5 or double-spaced, and must be typed using Calibri, size 11 or 12 font (required component; scored, does count towards page limit).
• The signature sheet of the application form must be signed by the Public Health and MPO/planning representatives for the application to be considered complete (required component; not scored; does not count towards the page limit).

Applications not using the appropriate form, or applications without all sections completed, will **NOT** be reviewed.

**All Letters of Commitment** must be submitted with the RFA Application Form, indicating full commitment and participation from each team member in all project processes and activities in collaboration with each other and NACDD:
• **One Letter of Commitment from each team member** on each team member’s respective agency letterhead. The letter must demonstrate the following:
  o Commitment to collaborate throughout the project
  o Commitment to accomplish the stated project deliverables (Section E) and within the project’s anticipated timeline (Appendix B)
  o Commitment to ongoing collaboration and long-term implementation of PSE action plan strategies beyond the project period to make the local community and/or region more walkable and movable
  o Commitment to work closely with NACDD and the Team Lead throughout the project, including assisting the Team Lead with progress report activities as outlined in Section E and Appendix B

The letters of commitment do not count towards the page limit.

• In addition to the items listed above, the Team Lead must **additionally commit** to the following in their Letter of Commitment:
  o Serving as the primary point-of-contact for NACDD
  o Distributing all relevant materials for the course—before, during, and after the course
  o Assisting NACDD with all necessary paperwork in advance of the course
  o Establishing the team action plan by June 2, 2023
  o Providing NACDD with progress reporting of established working agreement and implementation process
  o Commitment to return the paid funds within 15 business days of notification to NACDD if the team does not attend the virtual academy or satisfy other required deliverables

In one email message, please attach the following and send via email to Karma Edwards by **11:59 p.m. ET on January 13, 2023**, kedwards_ic@chronicdisease.org:

• **One PDF document** consisting of both the RFA Application Form and the required letters of commitment
  • Hard copy and fax applications will **not** be accepted
  • Please use the following **subject line** for your message:
    o WVA 2023 (insert name of applicant local community or MPO region) (insert name of state) RFA
    o **Example**: WVA 2023 Alpha Beta Region, NC RFA

All applications sent by the deadline will receive an NACDD email acknowledging receipt of application. Applications submitted after 11:59 p.m. ET on January 13, 2023, will **not** be reviewed.

G. **SELECTION PROCESS**

Local community and/or MPO regional team applicants (or other similar regional entities) must demonstrate how they will participate in the project’s required deliverables as described in section E, their capacity and commitment to implement one or more suggested implementation strategies

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(subjective level of readiness examples provided in Appendix D) within their respective region, and how soon their team can move towards PSE implementation.

All applications will be scored and reviewed by representatives of CDC, NACDD, members of the original Course Steering Committee, and project partners and/or faculty members. The selection committee reserves the right to select local and/or regional teams who demonstrate increased readiness for implementation.

H. NACDD COMMITMENT

NACDD commits to providing regular and consistent communication, consultation, and project assistance and support to team awardees via email, one-on-one conference calls, WVA sessions, and linkages to national expertise in accordance with the deliverables described in Section E and per the request of team awardees.

I. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS RFA

- Download the RFA, RFA Application Form, and corresponding RFA Appendices, and view a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ) (to be updated throughout the application process) on the NACDD Walkability Action Institute website.
- To view a sample agenda of expected course structure, dates, and times, please see Appendix E. (Please note that this sample agenda is not the final 2023 WVA agenda).
- For questions about this RFA application process, please first check the FAQ questions for your answer.
  - If you do not see your question and answer on the FAQs, you may then email Karma Edwards, NACDD’s Walkability Project Lead, at kedwards_ic@chronicdisease.org. All submitted questions will be compiled and answered within two business days on the FAQ list and updated to the website.
- For more information on:
  - CDC DNPAO Programs and efforts
  - CDC DNPAO Physical Activity efforts
  - CDC DNPAO’s Active People, Healthy Nation
  - NACDD
  - U.S. SG CTA released in September 2015
  - Guide to Community Preventive Services (The Community Guide)
  - The Community Preventive Services Task Force
    - The Community Preventive Services Task Force’s Built Environment Recommendations
    - The Community Preventive Services Task Force’s Findings and Rationale Statement, with attention to Tables 1 and 2 on page 3