



Mental Health America

Request for Proposals:

Rural Mental Health Innovation Grant

Mental Health America National (MHA National) has received generous support from West Fraser to develop a multi-faceted mental health initiative that supports the communities where West Fraser's employees work and live. As part of this support, MHA National is pleased to announce the availability of two \$55,000 grants to nonprofit organizations serving eligible rural communities. These grants are designed to support innovative, community-driven approaches that address mental health challenges and improve access to care in rural areas. This is an 11-month grant opportunity.

Rural communities face unique and persistent barriers to mental health care, including workforce shortages, transportation challenges, stigma, and limited access to services. This funding opportunity is intended to support organizations in implementing and strengthening innovative solutions that respond to these challenges in creative and impactful ways. Applicants are encouraged to propose programs that build on existing efforts and demonstrate early promise or proof of concept. Proposed programs may expand, adapt, or deepen interventions such as (but not limited to):

- Peer support or navigator models
- Telehealth or digital access strategies
- Tailored community interventions
- Nontraditional engagement and/or community outreach approaches
- Use of emerging technologies

This grant is an opportunity to refine and expand promising approaches, strengthen implementation, and generate learnings that can inform future replication or scaling in other rural communities.

Application Criteria

To be eligible to apply, prospective grantees must:

1. Demonstrate the ability and a clear plan to serve one or more of the following eligible locations (applicants DO NOT need to be physically located in these communities):
 - Arkansas
 - Grant County
 - Pope County
 - Sebastian County
 - Florida
 - Duval County
 - Escambia County
 - Georgia
 - Ben Hill County
 - Crisp County
 - Laurens County

- Pierce County
 - Mississippi
 - Lee County
 - North Carolina
 - Columbus County
 - Northampton County
 - Texas
 - Angelina County
 - Bowie County
 - Marion County
 - Nacogdoches County
 - Rusk County
2. Integrate mental health-focused, socio-economic, and accessibility components into the application
 3. Incorporate [MHA Screening](#) tools into the program (optional)
 4. Demonstrate organizational and staff capacity to carry out the program described in this application
 5. Be able to demonstrate dedicated impact
 6. Agree to participate in site visits as requested by MHA National
 7. Submit three outcome-focused reports (details to be provided) in November 2026, February 2027, and June 2027 that highlight progress toward goals, key activities, community impact, and overall use of funds, along with supporting data and stories
 8. Participate in bi-monthly group technical assistance calls and, in alternating months, engage in one-on-one technical assistance calls with MHA National

Applications will be reviewed based on proposed content, program activities, access integration throughout the program, benchmarks, and grantees' proposed budgets and organization.

Grant Terms and Restrictions

- The grant program is expected to start in August 2026 and run through June 30, 2027.
- If awarded, you will receive a grant agreement and reporting documents from MHA National.
- Funds may not be used for any of the following purposes: to carry out propaganda or attempt to influence legislation or the outcome of any public election; to carry on, whether directly or indirectly, any voter registration drive, for advocacy; or undertake any activities for a charitable purpose other than those set forth in the grant agreement.

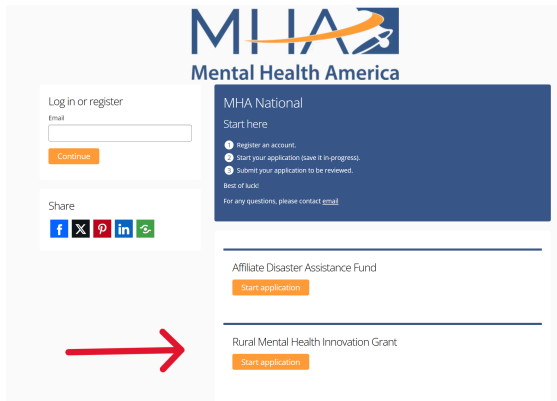
Deadline and Resources

A Grants Call regarding this funding opportunity will be held on **Tuesday, April 28, at 1:00 PM ET**. Bring your questions and ideas for this meeting. This will be recorded and sent out after the meeting if you cannot attend. Register for the Zoom Meeting:

https://mhanational-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/_ueJ6293RBuerrVazR6bTA

Application Deadline: 5:00 PM ET on Monday, June 1, 2026. Only one application per organization will be accepted.

Please apply at mhanational.grantplatform.com by selecting 'Start application' under the Rural Mental Health Innovation Grant opportunity. You will be asked to register for an account before beginning the application. Please see the image below for reference.



If you have any questions, please contact Harpur Schwartz, Director of Special Projects at hschwartz@mhanational.org.

Rural Mental Health Innovation Grant

Grant Application Questions

Eligibility Criteria

By checking each box below, the applicant certifies that the following statements are true and accurate:

- The applicant is a United States tax-exempt public charity under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code
- The applicant is in good standing in its state of incorporation or registration
- Neither the applicant nor any of its key personnel are currently debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from receiving federal or philanthropic funds
- The applicant maintains general liability insurance coverage appropriate to the scope of the proposed program
- The applicant is able to provide a signed W-9 upon request
- The applicant has been in operation for five years or more
- The applicant can provide the two most recent years' Form 990 filed with the IRS or other audited financial statements
- If you are an affiliate of MHA National, you certify that you are in full compliance with all applicable national standards, operating policies, and any additional requirements specific to your affiliation

Program Overview

Which state and county(ies) does your organization currently serve or plan to serve through this program? (Select all that apply.)

- Grant County, Arkansas
- Pope County, Arkansas
- Sebastian County, Arkansas
- Duval County, Florida
- Escambia County, Florida
- Ben Hill County, Georgia
- Crisp County, Georgia
- Laurens County, Georgia
- Pierce County, Georgia
- Lee County, Mississippi
- Columbus County, North Carolina
- Northampton County, North Carolina

- Angelina County, Texas
- Bowie County, Texas
- Marion County, Texas
- Nacogdoches County, Texas
- Rusk County, Texas

For this opportunity, applicants must be beyond the idea stage and have begun implementing their program with participants. Which of the following best describes the stage of your program and your experience around implementation? (select one)

- Proof of Concept: Your organization has created a new program and is testing and refining it with a small group of participants, gathering evidence of its impact.
- Scaling: You have evidence that your program is successful, and your organization has experience delivering it. You're now expanding and adapting the program to more participants, possibly in new locations.
- Operating at Scale: Your program has proven impact, and your organization is experienced in delivering it. You are currently implementing the program on a larger scale and are not actively expanding the number of participants significantly.

Please expand upon your selection from above and describe the current status of the proposed program at the time of this application.

Proposed Program Details

What is the name of your proposed program?

Provide a brief summary (3–5 sentences) of your proposed program.

Approximately how many youth and adults do you plan to serve? Please include an estimated number for each group.

What specific outreach strategies will you use to engage this population, especially those who may not typically seek support? Include any unique or innovative methods, trusted community partners, and culturally relevant approaches.

How did you determine the focus population for your program? Please include any relevant data sources (e.g., MHA's Mapping Data: <https://mhanational.org/mhamapping>, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation): <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>, U.S. Census Data: <https://data.census.gov/>, or other local or community datasets).

Program Evaluation and Impact Measurement

Please complete and attach your Work Plan and Evaluation Plan using the provided template. In your plan, identify the community-level changes or impacts you anticipate as a result of this program. Be sure to include required output measures, such as the number of people participating in the program. Please use the [Work Plan and Evaluation Plan Template](#).

Attach a detailed program timeline using the provided template. Be sure to include key implementation

and evaluation milestones. Please use the [Timeline and Milestones Template](#).

Community Access and Sustainability

Explain how your program will identify and address barriers to participation, implementation, and access to supports.

How will your organization continue the program after the grant ends? Consider sustainability beyond funding.

Organizational Experience and Capacity

Given the focus of your proposed program, please share in two sentences information about two similar programs your organization has successfully completed. Include the outcomes or impact of each.

Please describe your team's ability to successfully implement this program and meet the requirements of the grant. Include the key staff who will support this work (or any positions you plan to hire), their roles and relevant experience, and how your team will manage day-to-day implementation and overall program oversight.

Budget and Budget Narrative

Attach a detailed budget showing how you plan to use the grant funds if awarded. Please use the [Budget Template](#). Include a camera for taking high-quality, high-resolution images in your budget.

Attach a budget narrative showing how you plan to use the grant funds if awarded. Use of a Word document is acceptable.

Visual Assets

Please submit two original high-resolution images representing your program. These will be used to announce your organization as a grant recipient if awarded. Ensure that any individuals in the images and the photographer have approved the use of these images. Please do not submit any stock images, images of your logo, or headshots.

Letters of Support

Attach a letter of support from your organization's Board of Directors, signed by the board chair, for your proposed program.

Attach a letter of commitment or memorandum of understanding from every partner organization participating in your proposed program. Upload letters/memorandums as one file.