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MNsure Request for Proposals
Navigator Outreach and Enrollment Grants

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Project Overview

MNsure is seeking grant proposals from organizations that have the ability to find, connect with, educate and successfully enroll Minnesota residents in health care coverage through MNsure. Applicants submitting proposals must demonstrate their ability to reach populations facing barriers to health insurance coverage.

Introduction

Navigator Program Vision

The goal of the navigator program is to build a robust infrastructure of regional navigator networks that will help to increase the number of insured Minnesotans, particularly among populations with disproportionately high percentages of uninsured.

A number of factors may contribute to individuals having trouble enrolling, or staying enrolled, in health insurance. Examples of barriers include, but are not limited to, low literacy, limited English proficiency, accessibility challenges related to living in rural areas, lack of access to employer-sponsored insurance, unfamiliarity with technology, inability to access technology or unfamiliarity with having health insurance. There are also consumers that need additional assistance enrolling due to complicated life circumstances, such as complex immigration status, unstable living situations, mental health issues or other vulnerable populations. Navigators and other entities are well positioned to use their enrollment expertise and existing relationships with these consumers to provide effective outreach and enrollment assistance.

MNsure's vision is to build a navigator program where each region of Minnesota is served by a network of entities that together can demonstrate the following qualities:

- Staff skilled in assisting consumers to enroll in coverage through MNsure, including staff with specialized skills to help enroll populations who require additional assistance.
- Established relationships with populations that face barriers to enrollment or renewal.
- Ability to maintain a year-round presence in their geographic area of service.
- Experience using outreach techniques that have proven effective.
- Commitment to partnering with MNsure on outreach and enrollment campaigns.

Fiscal Year 2016 Navigator Outreach and Enrollment Grants

MNsure is authorized by Minnesota law to issue grants to support the navigator program. Grant funding is in addition to per-enrollment payments that navigator organizations receive for successful enrollments.

MNsure is targeting $4 million in funds for outreach and enrollment efforts from July 1, 2015, until June 30, 2016. The goals for the grant program are to:

- Assist populations facing barriers to coverage with enrollment and renewal through MNsure.
- Find, connect with and educate uninsured Minnesotans about the importance of having health insurance and their options for obtaining coverage through MNsure.
- Help consumers take advantage of financial help, including tax credits.
- Build an infrastructure of expert regional navigator resource and referral networks to reach the uninsured and enroll and renew Minnesotans in health insurance coverage.

The State Health Access Data Assistance Center (SHADAC) reported that Minnesota's uninsured rate decreased from 8.2% of the population in September 2013 to 4.9% of the population in May 2014, approximately a 40% reduction. See SHADAC's report titled, "Early Impacts of the Affordable Care Act on Health Insurance Coverage in Minnesota," for more information.

MNsure's navigator and grantee partners contributed to the increase in health care coverage in Minnesota by enrolling more than 45,000 individuals in health care coverage through MNsure from October 2013 through September 2014. MNsure's Navigator Program Evaluation Report, prepared by The Improve Group, provides more specific information about the first year of operations, including promising practices for outreach and enrollment. Applicants are encouraged to review this report before writing proposals. In addition, the Wilder Research Report titled, "Health Care Enrollment Addressing Old Challenges in a New System," summarizes information shared at a March 2014 event that brought together a variety of stakeholders, including navigators, to discuss strategies for increasing enrollment in health care coverage.

Although Minnesota's uninsured rate has decreased, there will likely continue to be segments of the population with much higher rates of the uninsured than the statewide average. For example, more than 23% of American Indians and nearly 30% of Hispanics/Latinos are uninsured. The U.S. Census Bureau 2008-2012 American Community Survey (ACS 5-year) helps identify these differences. While the ACS 5-year is not the most recent data source on the uninsured, it is used because it provides the most demographic detail about the uninsured at the smallest geographic unit. The State Health Access Data Assistance Center (SHADAC) prepared a summary of the ACS 5-year, which is available on the MNsure website.

As technology improves and consumer awareness increases, MNsure's navigator outreach and enrollment grant program will need to adapt to changes in consumers' needs for application assistance. Grantee partners will coordinate closely with MNsure marketing and outreach efforts to enroll the increasingly harder to reach uninsured, especially during the open enrollment period.

Background

MNsure is a marketplace where individuals, families and small businesses can compare, choose and obtain affordable, high quality health insurance. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) provided for creation of Minnesota's navigator program to help individuals, families and small businesses obtain health care coverage through MNsure. Navigators are trained to help consumers learn about their health plan options and to assist with enrollment in public and private health care coverage through MNsure. Navigator organizations are obligated to assist any consumer and receive payment for each successful enrollment with which a navigator assists.

Other consumer assistance partners that can assist with enrollment include brokers, agents and Certified Application Counselors (CACs). CACs are similar to navigators, but CACs only assist their own consumer base with enrollment through MNsure. Brokers, agents and CAC organizations currently do not receive compensation from MNsure for successful enrollments.

For information about becoming a navigator or CAC organization, please see the MNsure website. Organizations may apply for a navigator or CAC contract at any time throughout the year and do not need to be a MNsure grantee to be eligible. Per-enrollment payments are not the subject of this Request for Proposals.

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

Public, private for-profit and nonprofit entities are eligible to apply for a Navigator Outreach and Enrollment grant. Individuals are not eligible to apply for MNsure grant funding and cannot submit proposals in response to this RFP.

The following is a list of potential grant structures:

- Single organization
- Paid partnership: A lead agency with partners that receive grant funds.
- Unpaid partnership: A lead agency with partners that do not receive grant funds.
- Mixed partnership: A lead agency with some partners that receive grant funds and some that do not receive funds.

Technical Requirements

MNsure is anticipating that the best proposals will be those that are collaborative in nature. Please follow these requirements when developing grant arrangements:

- An individual entity may submit a proposal to be the lead agency on a funding area 1 *or* funding area 2 proposal. That lead agency applicant may *also* submit a *separate* proposal(s) for funding area 3.
- If the applicant's proposal is not selected to receive a funding area 1 or 2 grant, the applicant's funding area 3 proposal(s) will be considered. The applicant will not receive both a funding area 1 or 2 grant and a funding area 3 grant as the lead agency.
- Under funding area 3, an individual entity may submit multiple proposals as the lead agency and be considered for multiple grants if there is a clear difference in population and/or geography proposed to be served by the proposals.
- An individual entity may be a paid or unpaid partner on multiple proposals across funding areas. If an entity is included in multiple proposals, a separation of duties and budgets must be clear in each proposal's project plan and budget.

MNsure considers a "grantee" to include subgrantees recognized in a proposal as an entity that may receive grant funds, also known as paid partners.

Lead Agency Requirements and Responsibilities
To qualify, the lead agency on the proposal must:

- Have or obtain a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) Number. The Federal Government uses DUNS numbers to identify related organizations that are receiving federal funding.
- Have or obtain a State of Minnesota vendor number. The vendor number is needed to make payments to the organization.
- Be registered or obtain registration with the Minnesota Secretary of State.
- Participate in contract negotiations with MNsure.
- Submit progress reports and financial reports to MNsure.
- Ensure the objectives of any grant award are met.
- Provide coordination amongst grant partners on grant activities.

Partner Requirements and Responsibilities

This applies to both paid partners or subgrantees, and unpaid partners.

- Submit a letter of support with the proposal. A letter of support must provide a brief summary of the partner's support and role in achieving the objectives of the proposal. It must be submitted on the network member's letterhead and signed. The letter of support must also list all other proposals the agency is included on as a paid or unpaid partner.
- Achieve individual objectives of the proposed grant.
- Report to the lead agency.

Navigator Outreach and Enrollment Grants

Overview

MNsure is seeking applicants who can achieve the goals of the FY 2016 Outreach and Enrollment grant program:

- Build an infrastructure of expert regional navigator resource and referral networks to reach the uninsured and enroll and renew Minnesotans in health insurance coverage.
- Assist populations facing barriers to coverage with enrollment and renewal through MNsure.
- Find, connect with and educate uninsured Minnesotans about the importance of having health insurance and their options for obtaining coverage through MNsure.
- Help consumers take advantage of financial help, including tax credits.

Funding areas

MNsure is funding grants in the following areas.

Funding Area 1: Navigator Network Grants ($500,000 and $250,000 grants)
Grants to support regional networks of highly skilled navigator organizations working collaboratively to reach the uninsured and enroll or renew Minnesotans in health insurance coverage, with a focus on qualified health plan (QHP) enrollments, underserved populations and the hard-to-reach uninsured. The focus of this funding area is on enrollment, outreach and building geographic coverage and coordination. Applicants must demonstrate the network has:

- Skilled navigators able to assist consumers who require assistance with all aspects of the application and enrollment process.
- Capacity to assist consumers with post-application issues to ensure they successfully enroll in appropriate coverage.
- Capacity to offer year-round enrollment assistance in the geographic region defined by the applicant.
- Established relationships with populations facing barriers to enrollment.
- A long-term organizational commitment to providing navigator services, including outreach, education and enrollment.
- Capacity to mentor and share resources with other navigator organizations.
- Demonstrated ability to work with MNsure to achieve outreach and enrollment goals through centralized grassroots outreach and enrollment tools.
- Capacity to collaborate with other types of MNsure consumer assistance partners, including agents/brokers, certified application counselors, other grantees (including funding area 3 grantees) and agent/broker enrollment centers (agencies contracted with MNsure to locally market services and provide walk-in capacity during open enrollment).

Funding Area 2: Outreach and Enrollment Grants
Grants to support navigator organizations with a demonstrated ability to reach and enroll populations with high levels of uninsured. Grants will focus on outreach, education and enrollment for an identified population, with a strong emphasis on activity during the annual open enrollment period. The focus of this funding area is on enrollment and outreach. Applicants must demonstrate the agency has:

- Skilled navigators able to assist consumers who require assistance with all aspects of the application and enrollment process.
- Capacity to assist consumers with post-application issues to ensure they successfully enroll in appropriate coverage.
- Capacity to conduct outreach and education activities specific to the identified population that connect consumers to enrollment assistance.
- Year-round enrollment assistance, but increased activity during the annual open enrollment period.
- Strong connections to the identified population the applicant is seeking to serve.

Funding Area 3: Outreach and Education Mini Grants
Grants for outreach and education activities that connect consumers to assistance during open enrollment, with a focus on qualified health plan (QHP) enrollments, underserved populations and the hard-to-reach uninsured. Grants will focus on reaching consumers facing particular challenges to enrolling in or renewing coverage, or populations with high levels of uninsurance. Separate grant proposals should be submitted if activities focus on different populations and/or different regions. Applicants can be considered for more than one grant in this area. The focus of this funding area is on outreach, education and connecting consumers to application assistance. Applicants must:

- Apply to conduct specific outreach and/or education activities focused on specific populations and/or geographies during open enrollment.
- Demonstrate strong connections and ability to reach the specific population.
- Provide strategies for connecting individuals to enrollment assistance if the grant applicant does not offer enrollment assistance itself.

The following table summarizes the **anticipated** funding areas, allocations, number of grants available and award amounts. MNsure reserves the right to amend any of the information in the table below.

Table 1: Funding areas

Award Type	Grant Amount	Number Available
Funding Area 1a *Navigator Network Grants*	$500,000	3
Funding Area 1b *Navigator Network Grants*	$250,000	4
Funding Area 2 *Outreach and Enrollment Grants*	$125,000	8
Funding Area 3 *Outreach and Education Mini Grants*	$10,000 to $50,000	Varies, dependent on dollar amount requested in each proposal.

Award Information

Funding options: See Table 1: Funding Areas.

Type of award: Grant

Funds Available: Multiple contracts will be awarded as a result of this RFP, not to exceed $4,000,000 in total contract awards.

Maximum Period of Support: The maximum period of support is July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016. The anticipated start date for all grant contracts is July 1, 2015.

Award Notifications: MNsure anticipates that initial award announcements will be made to selected applicants on or before May 18, 2015, but MNsure reserves the right to announce the grants at any time. Notices of Grant Award will be issued following any negotiations and completion of all requirements. MNsure anticipates that public announcement of the grantees and grant partners (paid or unpaid) will be made in July, but MNsure reserves the right to make any public announcements at any time.

Application Requirements by Funding Area

Summary of Application Requirements

Applicants in all funding areas must follow the instructions within this MNsure grant application and complete all required forms and narrative requirements. MNsure reserves the right to eliminate from consideration any incomplete or improperly completed grant application. The grant application must include the following items and be compiled in this order:

- Face Page: filled out online as part of the proposal submission
- Declarations and Signature: signed by individual authorized to submit the grant application (Attachment A)
- Table of Contents
- Executive Summary
- Outreach and Enrollment Strategy
- Project Plan
- Experience
- Budget: narrative, lead agency summary budget and detailed budget, partner detailed budgets (if applicable)
- Letters of Support or Agreement (required if including paid or unpaid grant partners)
- Required Documents
    - Affidavit of Noncollusion (Attachment B)
    - Affirmative Action Certification (Attachment C)
    - Certification Regarding Lobbying (Attachment D)
    - Exceptions to Terms and Conditions (Attachment E)

Executive Summary

Applicant must summarize the key elements of its proposal, including the funding area, a brief description of any grant partners, populations that will be served and specific objectives.

Page limit: 1 page for all funding areas

Outreach and Enrollment Strategy

Applicants must clearly describe the populations that will be reached (appropriate to their selected funding area), strategies that will be used and the geographical area(s) that will be served. Applicants must also clearly describe the role of paid and/or unpaid partners in this section if they are part of the proposal. Instructions by funding area and page limits are provided below.

Funding Area 1a
Page limit: 3 pages

Applicants for funding area 1a must:

- Identify the specific populations that will be served, using available data as part of the rationale for reaching the proposed population.
- Identify the geographic areas that will be served by this grant. Specifically, applicants must list the counties (or other appropriate geographic area) served and describe the outreach and enrollment strategies to be deployed in each area.

- Outline the strategies they will use to find, connect with, educate and enroll consumers that are specific to the populations they propose to serve.
- Describe what strategies will be used to ensure all outreach and education activities connect consumers to application assistance.
- Describe plan for offering assistance during open enrollment and outside of open enrollment in the defined geographic area (year-round assistance is required in this funding area).
- Describe specific tactics for increasing qualified health plan enrollments during open enrollment, including assistance with enrollment centers and utilizing centralized grassroots outreach tools.
- Describe specific tactics for reaching the uninsured outside of open enrollment.
- Describe strategies for building geographic coverage and coordinating a network.
- Briefly describe any other outreach and enrollment activities that are occurring in addition to the activities proposed in this grant proposal.

Funding Area 1b
Page limit: 3 pages

Applicants for funding area 1b must:

- Identify the specific populations that will be served, using available data as part of the rationale for reaching the proposed population.
- Identify the geographic areas that will be served by this grant. Specifically, applicants must list the counties (or other appropriate geographic area) served and describe the outreach and enrollment strategies to be deployed in each area.
- Outline the strategies they will use to find, connect with, educate and enroll consumers that are specific to the populations they propose to serve.
- Describe what strategies will be used to ensure all outreach and education activities connect consumers to application assistance.
- Describe plan for offering assistance during open enrollment and outside of open enrollment in the defined geographic area (year-round assistance is required in this funding area).
- Describe specific tactics for increasing qualified health plan enrollments during open enrollment, including assistance with enrollment centers and utilizing centralized grassroots outreach tools.
- Describe specific tactics for reaching the uninsured outside of open enrollment.
- Describe strategies for building geographic coverage and coordinating a network.
- Briefly describe any other outreach and enrollment activities that are occurring in addition to the activities proposed in this grant proposal.

Funding Area 2
Page limit: 2 pages

Applicants for funding area 2 must:

- Identify the specific populations that will be served, using available data as part of the rationale for reaching the proposed population. Applicants for funding area 2 are expected to focus on an identified population that is disproportionately uninsured or faces barriers to enrollment.
- Outline the strategies they will use to find, connect with, educate and enroll consumers that are specific to the populations they propose to serve.

- Identify the geographic areas that will be served by this grant, even if the barrier being addressed is not geographic in nature. Specifically, applicants must list the counties (or other appropriate geographic area) served and describe the outreach and, if appropriate, enrollment strategies to be deployed in each area.
- Describe what strategies will be used to ensure all outreach and education activities connect consumers to application assistance.
- Briefly describe any other outreach and enrollment activities that are occurring in addition to the activities proposed in this grant proposal.

Funding Area 3
Page limit: 2 pages

Applicants for funding area 3 must:

- Identify the specific populations that will be served, using available data as part of the rationale for reaching the proposed population.
- Identify the geographic area that will be served by this grant. Specifically, applicants must list the counties (or other appropriate geographic area) served and describe the outreach and education strategies to be deployed in each area.
- Describe specific strategies that will be used to reach the identified population. The following are examples of allowable strategies:
    - Statewide outreach and education effort to connect population of focus directly to enrollment assistance.
    - Creation of outreach and education materials focused on a specific population not included in MNsure's outreach or marketing materials.
    - Open enrollment campaign focused on specific population or geographic area.
    - Single event or series of events on a specific topic leading up to or during open enrollment.
    - Open enrollment campaign focused on reaching Qualified Health Plan eligible populations.
    - Small Business Health Options (SHOP) outreach and education effort.
- Describe how these outreach efforts will connect those reached to enrollment assistance. The following are examples of allowable approaches:
    - Applicant organization offers enrollment assistance using resources other than a MNsure grant.
    - Identify a paid or unpaid partner that will provide enrollment assistance.
    - Integrate MNsure's tools into outreach work to capture leads that will be connected to enrollment assistance. For example, a tool similar to the "Make a Plan" mobile application utilized during the 2015 Open Enrollment period.
- Briefly describe any other outreach and enrollment activities that are occurring in addition to the activities proposed in this grant proposal.

Project Plan

Applicants must describe their specific project plan, including providing objectives, staffing and implementation plans that support the goals of the FY 2016 Navigator Outreach and Enrollment grants. Objectives are statements of how the applicant will reach the goals of the grant program that are narrow, measurable and achievable. Applicants must also clearly describe the role of paid and/or unpaid partners in this section if they are part of the proposal.

Applicants should describe their project plan by the timeframe.

Pre-Open Enrollment: July 1 – October 31, 2015
Focus: staffing, coordination, training, outreach/ education, grassroots strategies, public program enrollment

Open Enrollment: November 1, 2015 – January 31, 2016
Focus: enrollment, emphasis on QHPs, renewals, coordination with MNsure marketing/ outreach

Post-Open Enrollment: February 1 – June 30, 2016
Focus: public program outreach/education and enrollment, special enrollment periods

Instructions by funding area and page limits are provided below.

Funding Area 1a
Page limit: 4 pages

The project plan should cover July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016, and reflect an understanding of a significant increase in activity during open enrollment, but also the need for activity all year round.

Objectives must clarify how the applicant will:

- Increase understanding among uninsured populations about the importance of health insurance, coverage options and financial help available through MNsure.
- Increase understanding among uninsured populations about the availability of application assistance through MNsure.
- Enroll or renew persons in health care coverage through MNsure, including assisting consumers with post-application issues to ensure they successfully enroll in appropriate coverage.
- Target Qualified Health Plan (QHP) enrollments during the open enrollment period.
- Convert outreach and education activities into enrollment of consumers into health care coverage.
- Build or sustain a network within a defined geographic area.

At a minimum, the applicant must include the following objectives:

- Projected number of navigator-assisted successful enrollments by timeframe.
- Projected number of QHP enrollments during open enrollment.
- Projected reach by the following direct outreach activity types (do not include reach by social media or media): material distribution, presentations and enrollment events.
- Provide an objective regarding helping consumers who seek assistance after completing the application on their own or with another assister.
- Provide an objective regarding developing and/or maintaining the expertise of navigators funded through this grant.
- Provide an objective regarding sharing resources and mentoring other navigator organizations in the proposed network.
- Provide an objective regarding building geographic coverage or filling gaps in enrollment assistance.
- Provide an objective related to network coordination activities.

The applicant's staffing plan must clarify the following:

- Number of navigator FTEs supported by MNsure grant funding.

- Number of navigator FTEs supported by MNsure per-enrollment payments.
- Number of FTEs supported by the grant.
- Number of navigator hours available to support enrollment centers during open enrollment.
- Specific role of staff FTEs supported by the grant and what they will be doing during the three time periods.
- Any additional staffing that will support outreach and enrollment work that is not funded by this grant.

Note on staffing plan for funding area 1: The purpose of collecting the specific information above is to gain a better understanding about the applicant's (and any paid or unpaid partners') workforce for supporting outreach and enrollment efforts. In addition, MNsure believes it is especially important in funding area 1 to support navigators whose primary focus is doing navigator work, since the expertise can only be developed by doing this work on a regular basis.

Funding Area 1b
Page limit: 4 pages

The project plan should cover July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016, and reflect an understanding of a significant increase in activity during open enrollment, but also the need for activity all year round.

Objectives must clarify how the applicant will:

- Increase understanding among uninsured populations about the importance of health insurance, coverage options and financial help available through MNsure.
- Increase understanding among uninsured populations about the availability of application assistance through MNsure.
- Enroll or renew persons in health care coverage through MNsure, including assisting consumers with post-application issues to ensure they successfully enroll in appropriate coverage.
- Target Qualified Health Plan (QHP) enrollments during the open enrollment period.
- Convert outreach and education activities into enrollment of consumers into health care coverage.
- Build or sustain a network within a defined geographic area.

At a minimum, the applicant must include the following objectives:

- Projected number of navigator-assisted successful enrollments by timeframe.
- Projected number of QHP enrollments during open enrollment.
- Projected reach by the following direct outreach activity types (do not include reach by social media or media): material distribution, presentations and enrollment events.
- Provide an objective regarding helping consumers who seek assistance after completing the application on their own or with another assister.
- Provide an objective regarding developing and/or maintaining the expertise of navigators funded through this grant.
- Provide an objective regarding sharing resources and mentoring other navigator organizations in the proposed network.
- Provide an objective regarding building geographic coverage or filling gaps in enrollment assistance.
- Provide an objective related to network coordination activities.

The applicant's staffing plan must clarify the following:

- Number of navigator FTEs supported by MNsure grant funding.
- Number of navigator FTEs supported by MNsure per-enrollment payments.
- Number of FTEs supported by the grant.
- Number of navigator hours available to support enrollment centers during open enrollment.
- Specific role of staff FTEs supported by the grant and what they will be doing during the three time periods.
- Any additional staffing that will support outreach and enrollment work that is not funded by this grant.

Note on staffing plan for funding area 1: The purpose of collecting the specific information above is to gain a better understanding about the applicant's (and any paid or unpaid partners') workforce for supporting outreach and enrollment efforts. MNsure believes it is especially important in funding area 1 to support navigators whose primary focus is doing navigator work, since the expertise can only be developed by doing this work on a regular basis.

Funding Area 2
Page limit: 3 pages

The project plan should cover July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016, and reflect an understanding of the shifting of activity during open enrollment.

Objectives must clarify how the applicant will:

- Increase understanding among uninsured populations about the importance of health insurance, coverage options and financial help available through MNsure.
- Increase understanding among uninsured populations about the availability of application assistance through MNsure.
- Enroll or renew persons in health care coverage through MNsure, including assisting consumers with post-application issues to ensure they successfully enroll in appropriate coverage.
- Drive Qualified Health Plan (QHP) enrollments during the open enrollment period.
- Convert outreach and education activities into enrollment of consumers into health care coverage.

At a minimum, the application must include the following objectives:

- Projected number of navigator-assisted enrollments by timeframe.
- Projected number of QHP enrollments during open enrollment.
- Projected reach by activity type (do not include reach by social media or media): material distribution, presentations and enrollment events.

The staffing plan must clarify the following:

- Number of navigator FTEs supported by MNsure grant funding.
- Number of navigator FTEs supported by MNsure per-enrollment payments.
- Number of FTEs supported by the grant.
- Specific role of staff FTEs supported by the grant and what they will be doing during the three time periods.
- Any additional staffing that will support outreach and enrollment work that is not funded by this grant.

Note on staffing plan for funding area 2: The purpose of collecting the specific information above is to gain a better understanding about the applicant's (and any paid or unpaid partners') workforce for supporting outreach and enrollment efforts.

Funding Area 3
Page limit: 2 pages

The project plan must be focused on open enrollment. This can include a timeframe leading up to and during open enrollment (July 1, 2015, through January 31, 2016).

Objectives must clarify how the applicant will:

- Increase understanding among uninsured populations about the importance of health insurance, coverage options and financial help available through MNsure.
- Increase understanding among uninsured populations about the availability of application assistance through MNsure.
- Target Qualified Health Plan (QHP) populations during the open enrollment period.
- Connect outreach and education activities to enrollment assistance opportunities to ensure consumers obtain health care coverage.

At a minimum, the applicant must include the following objectives:

- Projected reach by the following direct outreach activity types (do not include reach by social media or media): material distribution, presentations and enrollment events.
- Projected number of navigator-assisted successful enrollments by timeframe OR projected number of individuals directly connected to a navigator for enrollment assistance OR projected number of leads generated and entered into a MNsure tool.

The staffing plan must clarify the following:

- Number of outreach FTEs supported by the grant.
- Specific role of staff FTEs supported by the grant and what they will be doing during the three time periods.
- Staffing level may end after open enrollment, but staff must complete grant closeout activities.

Note on staffing plan for funding area 3: If the applicant is a navigator organization, the staffing plan should address how navigators are being utilized, but funding area 3 grants are for outreach/education and connecting individuals to enrollment assistance (not actual enrollment assistance).

Experience

All applicants must demonstrate that the lead agency and any paid or unpaid partners have the ability to meet the objectives identified in the Project Plan. Applicants must also clearly describe the role of paid and/or unpaid partners in this section if they are part of the proposal. Instructions by funding area and page limit requirements are provided below.

Funding Area 1a
Page limit: 3 pages

Applicants for funding area 1a must:

- Describe previous success with using proposed outreach strategies.

- Describe previous success educating communities on health insurance or health care usage.
- Describe previous success enrolling consumers in health insurance through MNsure, or other enrollment experience.
- Describe current staff of skilled navigators, including the unique qualities that allow them to assist with especially challenging cases.
- Provide evidence of existing relationships with populations to be served by the grant.
- Describe previous experience in the geographic area proposed to be served by the grant.
- Describe experience and capacity to coordinate network activities.
- Describe experience and capacity to mentor, support and share resources with network partners.
- Describe capacity of network to provide post-application follow-up support.
- Describe organizational commitment to providing navigator services over the long term.

Funding Area 1b
Page limit: 3 pages

Applicants for funding area 1b must:

- Describe previous success with using proposed outreach strategies.
- Describe previous success educating communities on health insurance or health care usage.
- Describe previous success enrolling consumers in health insurance through MNsure, or other enrollment experience.
- Describe current staff of skilled navigators, including the unique qualities that allow them to assist with especially challenging cases.
- Provide evidence of existing relationships with populations to be served by the grant.
- Describe previous experience in the geographic area proposed to be served by the grant.
- Describe experience and capacity to coordinate network activities.
- Describe experience and capacity to mentor, support and share resources with network partners.
- Describe capacity of network to provide post-application follow-up support.
- Describe organizational commitment to providing navigator services over the long term.

Funding Area 2
Page limit: 2 pages

Applicants for funding area 2 must:

- Describe previous success with using proposed outreach strategies.
- Describe previous success educating communities on health insurance or health care usage.
- Describe previous success enrolling consumers in health insurance through MNsure, or other enrollment experience.
- Describe current staff of skilled navigators, including the unique qualities that allow them to assist with the population that is the focus of this grant.
- Provide evidence of existing relationships with populations to be served by the grant.

- Describe previous experience in the geographic area proposed to be served by the grant.
- Provide the number of executive staff and board members that represent the population the grant seeks to serve.

Funding Area 3
Page limit: 2 pages

Applicants for funding area 3 must:

- Describe previous success with using proposed outreach strategies.
- Describe previous success educating communities on health insurance or health care usage.
- Provide evidence of existing relationships with populations to be served by the grant.
- Describe any previous success enrolling consumers in health insurance through MNsure, other enrollment experience or relationships with entities that provide enrollment services.
- Describe previous experience in the geographic area proposed to be served by the grant.
- Provide the number of executive staff and board members that are members of the population the grant seeks to serve.

Budget

MNsure grant funds must be used to cover expenses that are clearly service-related (finding, connecting with, educating and enrolling Minnesotans). Applicants must also clearly describe the role of paid and/or unpaid partners in this section if they are part of the proposal. In the narrative budget section, applicant must describe:

- Their financial management processes, including how the lead agency will manage across paid grant partners, if applicable.
- How per-enrollment funds will be used to fund navigator activities related to the proposed grant project, if applicable.
- Why grant funds are needed in addition to per-enrollment funds received for successful enrollments.
- How MNsure funds are leveraging other resources for this work.

The proposal must include an overall summary budget and detailed budget for the lead agency, and detailed budgets for each paid grant partner identified in the proposal. Applicant must use the budget templates provided.

- Summary Budget
- Detailed Budget: Required for each paid grant partner identified in summary budget.

MNsure has phased out the online system for ordering MNsure marketing materials. Grantees will have access to basic MNsure brochures, but should request funds for developing and printing materials if those materials are essential to fulfilling grant objectives.

Unallowable expenses across *all* funding areas:

- General MNsure-paid advertisements that are not directly related to the outreach/education activity being performed by grantee.

- Booth or conference fees are not allowable expenses if your organization is already planning to attend the event, unless the sole purpose of your attendance is MNsure outreach, education or enrollment.
- Costs to provide direct health care services to individuals.
- Meeting matching requirements of any other federal program.
- Non-project related executive compensation.
- Selling a specific or limited set of insurance or insurance-like products, including discount plans.
- Promotion of federal or state legislative and regulatory modifications.
- Improvements in systems or processes solely related to Medicaid/CHIP, or any other state or federal program's eligibility (lobbying).
- Activities such as retreats.
- Services, equipment or support that are the legal responsibility of another party under federal or state law (e.g., vocational rehabilitation or education services) or under any civil rights laws.
- Supplanting other grant funds, or otherwise misusing or misappropriating grant funds.
- Interpreter services for enrollment. MNsure provides this service.

Funding Area 1a and 1b
Page limit: 2 pages for narrative, and as many budget forms as needed for paid partner(s)' budgets

Budget must reflect a balance between anticipated number of enrollments, proposed geographic area covered, level of network coordination and comprehensiveness of service provided.

Allowable expenses:

- Costs directly connected to outreach and education, including project coordination, outreach coordination, network coordination, communications support.
- Navigator staff time for enrollment and follow-up services, but must take into account per-enrollment payments (budget should include anticipated per-enrollment payments)
- Consultants or contractors: communications, outreach, education, marketing.
- Equipment or supplies: costs to support outreach, education and enrollment activities, including laptops, privacy dividers, locked cabinets, etc.
- Travel: directly related to outreach, education and enrollment, including participating in network meetings with other grant members, participating in regional networking, staffing enrollment events and attending training opportunities.
- Other direct: marketing and outreach materials and media placements (detailed communications plan will be mutually agreed on between MNsure and grantee if proposal is selected), videoconference or other software, translation of outreach materials not provided by MNsure, promotional giveaways of nominal value, technical assistance for capacity building specific to fulfilling grant objectives, printing costs, event space rental, staff and network training directly related to providing MNsure assistance.
- Indirect: indirect costs will be capped at 10% unless your organization documents exemption from indirect-cost rules, calculated based on overall grant award amount not by individual partner budget.
- Funded grant partners: include line item for each funded partner that will receive grant funds, and provide separate detailed budgets for each funded partner.

- Incorporating a MNsure outreach and education activity into regularly planned organization activity or event is allowed, but the budget must show what percentage of the activity the MNsure grant is funding.

Unallowable expenses:

- Navigator staff time that will be compensated through per-enrollment payments.
- Outreach and education activities that do not connect individuals to enrollment assistance.

Funding Area 2
Page limit: 2 pages for narrative, and as many budget forms as needed for paid partner(s)' budgets

Allowable expenses:

- Costs directly connected to outreach and education, including project coordination, outreach coordination, communications support.
- Navigator staff time for enrollment, but must take into account per-enrollment payments (budget should include anticipated per-enrollment payments).
- Consultants or contractors: communications, outreach, education, marketing.
- Equipment or supplies: costs to support outreach, education and enrollment activities, including laptops, privacy dividers, locked cabinets, etc.
- Travel: directly related to outreach, education and enrollment, including participating in network meetings with other grant members, participating in regional networking, staffing enrollment events and attending training opportunities.
- Other direct: marketing and outreach materials and media placements (detailed communications plan will be mutually agreed on between MNsure and grantee if proposal is selected), videoconference or other software, translation of outreach materials not provided by MNsure, training, promotional giveaways of nominal value, technical assistance for capacity building specific to fulfilling grant objectives, printing costs and event space rental.
- Indirect: indirect costs will be capped at 10% unless your organization documents exemption from indirect-cost rules, calculated based on overall grant award amount not by individual partner budget.
- Funded grant partners: include line item for each funded partner that will receive grant funds, and provide separate detailed budgets for each funded partner.
- Incorporating a MNsure outreach and education activity into regularly planned organization activity or event is allowed, but the budget must show what percentage of the activity the MNsure grant is funding.

Unallowable expenses:

- Navigator staff time that will be compensated through per-enrollment payments.
- Outreach and education activities that do not connect individuals to enrollment assistance.

Funding Area 3
Page limit: 2 pages for narrative, and as many budget forms as needed for paid partner(s)' budgets

Allowable expenses:

- Costs directly connected to outreach and education, including project coordination, outreach coordination, communications support.
- Staff time to plan, implement and evaluate MNsure specific outreach and education activities.
- Consultants or contractors: communications, outreach, education, marketing.
- Equipment or supplies: costs to support outreach and education.
- Travel: directly related to MNsure outreach and education.
- Other direct: marketing and outreach materials, media placements and local advertisements about the outreach/education activity (detailed communications plan will be mutually agreed on between MNsure and grantee if proposal is selected), translation of outreach materials not provided by MNsure, training, promotional giveaways of nominal value, technical assistance for capacity building specific to fulfilling grant objectives, printing costs, event space rental and developing referral processes.
- Indirect: indirect costs will be capped at 10% unless your organization documents exemption from indirect cost rules, calculated based on overall grant award amount not by individual partner budget.
- Funded grant partners: include line item for each funded partner that will receive grant funds, and provide separate detailed budgets for each funded partner.
- Incorporating a MNsure outreach and education activity into regularly planned organization activity or event is allowed, but the budget must show what percentage of the activity the MNsure grant is funding.

Unallowable expenses:

- Navigator staff time for enrollment assistance.
- Outreach and education activities that do not connect individuals to enrollment assistance.

Letters of Support

Letters of support from paid and unpaid network partners must be submitted with the proposal. An unpaid partner is an organization that will not receive grant funds. A paid partner is an organization that will receive grant funds. A letter of support or agreement must provide a brief summary of the network member's support and role in achieving the objectives of the proposal. It must also list all proposals the agency is included on as a paid or unpaid partner. It must be submitted on the network member's letterhead and signed.

If selected for an award, the lead agency will need to submit copies of subcontracts with paid partners to MNsure.

Required Documents

The following are required documents that must be included with your proposal. Complete the attachments found in the RFP Appendix and submit them as the "Required Statements" section of your proposal.

- Face Page – online submission form
- Attachment A – Declarations and Signature
- Attachment B - Affidavit of Noncollusion
- Attachment C - Affirmative Action Certification
- Attachment D - Certification Regarding Lobbying
- Attachment E – Exceptions to Terms and Conditions

Format Specifications

Follow font and format specifications to avoid processing delays or rejection of the application.

Font and Graphics

- Use an Arial typeface, a black font color and a font size of 11 points or larger. Special characters may be used but must be 11 points.
- Type should be formatted to be easy to read in black type, a type density of no more than 15 characters per inch and no more than 6 lines per inch. Do not use color or shading within the text.
- A smaller type size is acceptable for figures, graphs, diagrams, charts, legends and footnotes, but must be in black ink and easily legible.

Page Formatting

- Use letter size (8 ½" x 11") sheets of paper.
- Use at least one-inch margins (top, bottom, left and right) for all pages, including continuation pages.
- Use only a standard, single-column format for the text.
- The application must be single-sided and single-spaced when writing narrative content.
- Consecutively number all pages throughout the application, including continuation pages. Do not use suffixes (e.g., 5a, 5b).

RFP Process

Applicant Webinar

MNsure will hold an applicant webinar on March 13, 2015. The mnsure.org website will be updated with more details when available regarding registration requirements and pre-webinar submission of questions. The oral responses provided during the webinar will be written and posted on the website. MNsure will not be held responsible for oral responses made during the webinar.

Applicant Questions

It is the policy of MNsure to assist applicants with their inquiries during the application process.

Applicants' questions regarding this RFP must be emailed by 1:00 p.m. Central Time on Monday, March 16, 2015. All questions must be emailed to navigatorgrants@mnsure.org. Questions will be addressed in writing and posted on the MNsure website no later than Monday, March 30, 2015. MNsure will post generalized answers while maintaining the confidentiality of the potential applicant and any specifics about their proposal.

Questions sent to other email boxes such as the navigator email box or individual staff member email boxes will not be responded to and MNsure assumes no responsibility for answering questions submitted to any e-mail address other than navigatorgrants@mnsure.org.

Proposal Submission

Applicants must submit proposals using the online submission process described on the Navigator Outreach and Enrollment Grant RFP webpage. All applications **must be received on or before 1:00 p.m. Central Time on Monday, April 6, 2015**. **Applications received after this deadline will not be considered.**

Applicants should email navigatorgrants@mnsure.org if they experience a technical issue while submitting their proposal. Do not wait until the last few hours to submit the proposal.

Contract Negotiation

The contents of this RFP and the proposal(s) of the successful applicants may become part of the final contract if a contract is awarded. Each applicant's proposal must include a statement of acceptance of all terms and conditions stated within this RFP or provide a detailed statement of exception for each item excepted by the applicant. Applicants who object to any condition of this RFP must note the objection within Attachment E, "Exceptions to Terms and Conditions," referenced above in the "Required Documents" section. If an applicant has no objections to any terms or conditions, the applicant should write "None" on the form.

Each applicant should be aware of MNsure's standard contract terms and conditions in preparing its response. A sample grant contract is available here for your reference. Much of the language reflected in the contract is required by law or policy. If you take exception to any of the terms, conditions or language in the contract, you must indicate those exceptions in your response to the RFP in Attachment E also. Only those exceptions indicated in your response to the RFP will be available for discussion or negotiation. Further, although this RFP establishes the basis for proposals, the detailed obligations and additional measures of performance will be defined in the final negotiated contract.

Evaluation and Selection

Review Process, Criteria and Selection

The MNsure review and selection process will occur in three stages.

Stage 1: Evaluation based upon completeness, compliance and eligibility
This evaluation will occur immediately following submission of a proposal to ensure an application meets MNsure requirements. Applications that do not meet requirements may not be forwarded for Stage 2 review.

Stage 2: Merit review (Evaluation of proposal requirements/relevance)
MNsure will utilize a review committee made up of internal (MNsure staff) and external reviewers to review the merits of each proposal. The review committee will use a 100-point scale to evaluate the merit of each proposal. After scores are added up for each proposal, proposals are compared to each other by funding area.

Reviewers will consider the following selection criteria in determining overall merit scores (refer back to the Application Requirements section for expectations in each area). In each area, proposals will be rated on responsiveness to the RFP's required elements and ability of the proposal to help MNsure meet the goals of the grant program.

Executive Summary	5 %
Outreach and Enrollment Strategy	25 %
Project Plan	30 %
Experience	25 %
Budget	15 %

Stage 3: Financial Review
MNsure staff will review applications for fiscal compliance with MNsure grant policies and procedures. These include budget reasonableness, budget justification and use of funds in addition to the organization's financial management capabilities.

Applicants *selected* to move on to Stage 3 will be asked to submit evidence of the organization's financial management capabilities. Specifically, applicants must submit an Accounting System and Financial Capacity Questionnaire and one of the following documents depending on the size of the applicant's annual revenue:

- Applicants with a total annual revenue of less than $50,000 or that have not been in existence long enough to have a completed IRS Form 990 or audit must submit their most recent board-reviewed financial statements.
- Applicants with a total annual revenue of $50,000 or more and less than $750,000 must submit their most recent IRS Form 990.
- Applicants with a total annual revenue of more than $750,000 must submit their most recent certified financial audit.

During this stage, MNsure reserves the right to negotiate on specific areas of the application, to request additional information needed to clarify questions or to establish financial management capability and to conduct background checks. Final recommendation decisions will be based on the successful outcome of the financial review and negotiations. Final award decisions will be made following this step.

Grant Administration Requirements

The following is an overview of the requirements that grantees must meet. Full post-award administration requirements will be included in the terms and conditions of the award and contract. MNsure's goal is to manage funded projects through a streamlined process that limits administrative burdens on the grantees while ensuring proper oversight.

Minnesota Secretary of State

MNsure will verify that the entity is currently registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State and maintains an "Active / In Good Standing" status.

Attestation and Disclosure

All grantee entities will be required to sign a conflict of interest disclosure statement as referenced in the Minnesota State Rules relating to Consumer Assistance Services.

Evaluation Requirements

Financial Reports

Grantees will be required to submit financial reports throughout the contract time period. Further information will be provided in the terms and conditions of award.

Financial Accounting of Federal Funds

Grantees will be required to keep a detailed accounting of how MNsure federal funds are being used. Financial records of grantees associated with grant-funded activities are subject to potential random audits.

Interim Progress Report(s)

Grantees may be required to submit a monthly progress report. The format and due dates for progress reports will be included within the terms and conditions of award.

Final Reports

Final reports are due 30 calendar days following the expiration date. The content and format of this report will be included within the terms and conditions of award.

Monitoring

To ensure appropriate oversight, grantees may be subject to random monitoring and audits of grant-funded activities.

Program Requirements

Work Plan

Selected applicants will work in coordination with MNsure's community specialists to finalize a work plan that may include revised objectives, performance measures and a communications plan.

Performance Metrics

In an effort to measure the impact of MNsure's grant program and make continuous improvements, MNsure will be establishing performance metrics with selected applicants. Requirements for performance metrics will be included within the terms and conditions of award.

Publishing

It is MNsure policy that the results and accomplishments of the activities funded through this solicitation are made available to the public. Organizations are expected to make the results and accomplishments of their activities available to the public. Grantees may be asked to prepare a summary of their project and allow its use on the MNsure website and in MNsure materials.

Access to Funds

At the beginning of the grant period, grantees may request an advance payment covering 30 days of work. Any advance payments must be reconciled within 12 months of issuance or within 60 days of the end of the grant period. This is a one-time-only advance. Generally, grantees will be reimbursed for work completed on a monthly basis. Following notification of award, MNsure will work with grantees to complete the information needed to facilitate payment. No direct payments will be made to an individual. All compensation will be paid to the affiliated entity.