

HIV Challenge FAQ

Updated as of 8.25.2021



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Contact Information

Whom can I contact if I have questions?

Please email HIVChallenge@hhs.gov; in fairness to all potential contestants, we may post the answer to your question(s) online on our FAQ page.

Where can I get more information about the HIV Challenge?

Details of the Challenge: <https://www.challenge.gov/challenge/reduce-HIV-related-stigma/>

For more information on the HIV Challenge, visit: <https://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/HIVChallenge>

Para más información en español, visite: <https://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/espanol/RetodelVIH>

General Information

When are the due dates for each phase?

The Phase 1 due date for registration and submission is September 23, 2021. For more information on Phase 2 and 3 due dates visit: <https://www.challenge.gov/challenge/reduce-HIV-related-stigma/> .

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What is the difference between a Challenge and Grant?

The Innovative Community Engagement Strategies to Reduce HIV-related Stigma and Disparities Challenge (HIV Challenge) is not a grant. This is a prize competition through Challenge.gov, which is different from a grant. In grants, an agency receives applications seeking funding or other support to do work in the future, chooses one or more recipients, and then pays the monetary award incrementally as the work is done. In prize competitions, an agency generally selects winner(s) after assessing work (typically ideas or solutions) that has been completed. In more complex, multi-phase challenges, such as the HIV Challenge, phase winners may be selected progressively as development stages are completed. For more information on Challenges visit: <https://www.challenge.gov/toolkit/faq/>.

What are the outcomes you are looking for in this Challenge?

Desired outcomes include improved utilization of PrEP and ART among racial and ethnic minority PWH or racial and ethnic minorities who are at increased risk for HIV infection.

Will participants have access to Technical Assistance?

For Phases 2 and 3, participants will have equal access to SMEs for group and individual coaching throughout the phase. Each participant will have one consultation session with an SME. The semi-finalists will come together as a small community of practice. Additionally, using digital tools (e.g., video conferencing, digital whiteboards) HHS will facilitate knowledge sharing among the group. Over a three-session series, HHS will provide training on proposal writing, model development, customer/patient engagement, budgeting, project planning, partnership building, planning for testing within the community, assessment of information/data, implementation evaluation planning and measurement, and techniques/methods for communication and dissemination.

Are there reporting requirements once funds are received and used?

As stated in the “Prize” [section](#) the winners will present their project findings and participate in post-award activities within six months after the end of the competition. This presentation may be virtual or in-person and prize funds are expected to be used to facilitate this presentation.

A challenge is not similar to a grant or contract and does not have report requirements.

Submission Information

Are both written and video submission (both) are required?

Yes, both written and videos are required.

What potential benefits do I get from making a submission to one of the Challenges?

In addition to the Prize award for the winning applications, winning solvers get expert validation of their solution and benefit from promotion efforts, which may expand their exposure.

Can more than one person work on a submission and receive credit? And if the submission wins, will the prize money be split among the solvers?

Yes, more than one individual is permitted to complete a submission package during both phases of the Challenge. Team members are solely responsible for allocating the value of services, awards, or prizes.

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Is the ability to replicate the strategy part of the judging criteria?

Yes, potential for replication is part of the judging criteria, under Phase 3 “Sustainability”. Please review the judging criteria here: <https://www.challenge.gov/challenge/reduce-HIV-related-stigma/#judging-criteria>.

Could the project focus on PrEP or ART or does it need to address both?

Yes, you can choose the focus of the project and does not need to address both. The judging criteria are a great guidance as to the criteria used to score the projects. Please review the judging criteria here: <https://www.challenge.gov/challenge/reduce-HIV-related-stigma/#judging-criteria>.

Does the proposed community engagement strategy need to be limited to one jurisdiction/area? Or can it span multiple states/cities?

There is no constraints on the approach. The judging criteria are a great guidance as to the criteria used to score the projects. Please review the judging criteria here: <https://www.challenge.gov/challenge/reduce-HIV-related-stigma/#judging-criteria>.

What are the criteria for submission? So, we should send two emails, one to register and one with concept submission?

Yes, correct two emails 1) registration 1) with concept submission and include specific information required for each. Below are details:

1) Register for the Challenge by September 23, 2021

2) Submission of concept by September 23, 2021

How do you register for the Challenge?

- Send an email to HIVChallenge@hhs.gov
 - Email sender (person and email address) must be Official Representative/person of contact for the team.
- Subject Line: “HIV Competition Registration”; include follow information:
 - ✓ Official Representative name
 - ✓ Official Representative phone number
 - ✓ Official Representative email address
 - ✓ State
 - ✓ Statement: “I affirm on behalf of the participant (individual, team, or legal entity), that he or she has read and consents to be governed by the competition rules.”

What do you need to submit for commission?

Submit the following by September 23, 2021

1. Written entries must consist of PDF files with font size no smaller than 11-point Arial.
2. Video entries shall be uploaded to YouTube as an unlisted video file and the link should be sent in the email.
3. All submissions must be in English.
4. Participants must not use HHS or other government logos or official seals in the submissions and must not otherwise give an appearance of Federal government endorsement.
5. Submission details should be sent to HIVChallenge@hhs.gov:
 - Title the email subject line “HIV Competition Phase 1 Proposal.”
 - Email sender (person and email address) must be Official Representative/person of contact for the team.

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What are the criteria for the video submission? What do you expect in the video?

It must be 3 minutes or less and uploaded as unlisted YouTube video that shall be emailed with the submission for accessing. Videos are a supplemental to the written submission. Both written and video will be reviewed by the judges, but Video is where you can include highlights of your approach and anything unique about your approach.

Are videos open to the public?

Video entries: Shall be uploaded to YouTube, as an unlisted video file and the link should be sent in the email.

Are submission videos viewed only by HIV Challenge supporting staff?

Yes, only OIDP and OMH leadership and staff processing, reviewing and judging your submissions will have access to the videos.

If this is a bilingual challenge, why cannot we submit a video in Spanish? Can the video be in Spanish?

We are very excited to offer the Challenge in Spanish, but will only accept written and video submissions in English.

Will we need to include a budget in our proposals as well as an appendix for reference?

The Challenge does not include a requirement to include a budget, though it including a budget, appendix for references and sources are best practices and will help strengthen the submission.

Do we need to include citations and evidence in our proposals? Does HHS prefer a specific style of citation or can it be informal, e.g., URL linking?

A specific citation style is not required, but please include citations, references to evidence in the proposals. Links to citations are OK.

Are we able to collaborate with other community-based organizations?

Yes, this Challenge encourage on the ground voices, and collaboration with communities and community support organizations.

Prize Information

May funds be used to provide incentives, such as prizes, to partners and participants?

The Challenge rules do not contain requirements for how the prize money should be spent, except the instructions (found here: [Innovative Community Engagement Strategies to Reduce HIV-related Stigma and Disparities Challenge | Challenge.gov](#)) in the “Prizes” section state that, “The winners are expected to present their project findings and participate in post-award activities within six months after the end of the competition. This presentation may be virtual or in-person and prize funds are expected to be used to facilitate this presentation”.

If we are considering participating singly or in a group/team, how would the 1099 be issued?

Payment will be made to the Official Representative (team leader) and not individual members of a team. If there are multiple members of the team, the Official Representative will receive the payment and be responsible for dividing amongst the team. If an individual is competing, a 1099-MISC will be issued at the end of the calendar year.

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Funding timeline

You will be notified of your winning and will be put in contact with our business office.

Can an individual receive the prize money?

Yes, if they are a U.S. citizen or have permanent residency. It is important to note that there would be tax implications in receiving the prize.

How will prizes be awarded for Phase 1?

All compliant submissions will be reviewed by the Challenge judges according to the Phase 1 selection criteria. Based on judges' feedback, OMH management will choose the winning submissions that move on to Phase 2.

How is the prize money funded?

It is through electronic funds transfer through the program support center.

What is the prize structure and amount?

Total Awards: \$760,000 in FY21 funds:

Prize Breakdown

Phase 1 (Design of Concept): Participants will develop concepts for community engagement strategies to reduce stigma related to HIV prevention and treatment within a specific population. Up to 15 submissions may be selected to each receive a prize of up to \$20,000.

Phase 2 (Development of Approach): Participants selected to receive a Phase 1 prize will create well-developed approaches for community engagement strategies to reduce stigma related to HIV prevention and treatment. Up to seven (7) submissions may be selected to each receive a prize of up to \$40,000.

Phase 3 (Refinement of Approach and Small-Scale Testing): Participants selected to receive Phase 2 prize will test dissemination and uptake of their approaches at a small scale/community level. Up to three (3) submissions may be selected; the winners may receive a prize of up to \$60,000.

All winners will be notified via email. The winners are expected to present their project findings and participate in post-award activities within six months after the end of the competition. This presentation may be virtual or in-person and prize funds are expected to be used to facilitate this presentation.

Eligibility Information

Can I maximize my odds for winning a Phase 1 prize by providing multiple submissions?

Multiple submissions are allowed, but each one must be a unique approach, sufficiently differentiated, and in compliance with the Challenge Requirements. Only one prize may be awarded per team.

If I participate and win Phase 1, do I have to participate in Phase 2?

The Challenge is structured so that Phase 1 winners must participate in Phase 2.

Are groups and universities eligible?

Yes, participants can be individuals or groups.

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Can I compete in Phase 2 of the Challenges if I did not apply or win Phase 1?

No. The Challenge is structured so that Phase 2 builds upon the success from Phase 1. Only Phase 1 semi-finalists may participate in Phase 2 and only Phase 2 semi-finalists may participate in Phase 3.

Can I apply with an existing program? How is the word "innovative" defined? Is that a new approach for our geographic area, or a completely new approach (nationally) entirely?

While the submission requirements for this Challenge allows for the use of an existing solution as *a part* of a participant's entry, there still needs to be clear innovation. Solvers will need to show they did not simply apply an existing solution without its modification, enhancement, or augmentation. The purpose of the Challenge is to drive innovation, so there has to be a clearly innovative offering in your submission for it to successfully compete. It can be an approach for your local, state or national.

I receive Federal grants or contracts. Can I still apply?

That depends. Federal grantees may not use Federal funds to develop COMPETES Act Challenge applications unless consistent with the purpose of their grant award. Federal contractors may not use Federal funds from a contract to develop COMPETES Act Challenge applications or to fund efforts in support of a COMPETES Act Challenge submission.

Do I retain intellectual property ownership?

Each entrant retains title and full ownership in and to their submission. Entrants expressly reserve all intellectual property rights not expressly granted under the Challenge agreement. By participating in the Challenge, each entrant hereby irrevocably grants to OMH a limited, paid-up, royalty-free nonexclusive worldwide license to reproduce, publish, post, link to, share, and display publicly the submission on the web or elsewhere, and a nonexclusive, nontransferable, paid-up license to practice, or have practiced for or on its behalf, the solution throughout the world.

We are a local wide non-profit program do not have national reach, we are local to the city, does that disqualify us?

No it does not disqualify you, we would like to see community-based solution for specific programs and phase 2 and 3 are to develop the program and extended sustainability.

Does a contestant need to be an official non-profit or CBO? Can it be a collective of community members that apply to this?

No, contestants are not required to be an official non-profit or CBO. Please review all eligibility criteria found here: <https://www.challenge.gov/challenge/reduce-HIV-related-stigma/#rules>

Resources

- Minority Health Social Vulnerability Index: <https://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/minority-health-svi/>
- CDC's Facts about HIV Stigma: <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/hiv-stigma/index.html> Community Engagement Toolkit - CDC
- HIV.gov Standing Up to Stigma: <https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/overview/making-a-difference/standing-up-to-stigma>
- NIH/NIAID The Science of Stigma-Understanding and Addressing HIV Stigma: <https://www.niaid.nih.gov/news-events/science-stigma-understanding-and-addressing-hiv-stigma>

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- HRSA/HAB's TargetHIV HIV-Related Stigma in Healthcare Settings: <https://targethiv.org/library/cqii-hiv-related-stigma-healthcare-settings>
- CDC's Let's Stop HIV Together: <https://www.cdc.gov/stophivtogether/index.html>
- CDC's Principles of Community Engagement - Second Edition: <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/communityengagement/index.html>
- HHS's Ready, Set, PrEP: <https://www.hiv.gov/federal-response/ending-the-hiv-epidemic/prep-program>
- CDC's Community Health Improvement Navigator: <https://www.cdc.gov/chinav/index.html>
- HHS OMH's National CLAS Standards: <https://thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/clas>
- CDC's Logic Models: <https://www.cdc.gov/eval/logicmodels/index.htm>
- AETC National Coordinating Center's resource collection on stigma: <https://aidsetc.org/topic/stigma>
- CDC's Social Marketing Resource Page: <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/effective-interventions/respond/social-marketing/index.html>
- CDC's AtlasPlus: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchhstp/atlas/index.htm>
- AHEAD- specifically PrEP coverage: <https://ahead.hiv.gov/>
- HRSA's Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program – Addressing HIV Stigma and Discrimination to End the HIV Epidemic: <https://hab.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/hab/Publications/careactionnewsletter/care-nov-2020-newsletter.pdf>
- A systematic review of interventions to reduce HIV-related stigma and discrimination from 2002 to 2013: how far have we come?: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3833106/>
- Stigma Reduction Interventions in People Living with HIV to Improve Health-Related Quality of Life: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7343253/>