



Taking Action to Improve Access and Equity in Opioid Use Disorder Care

March 2023

Background:

RIZE Massachusetts Foundation (RIZE) is the only public-private partnership solely dedicated to funding solutions to end the overdose crisis.

RIZE's goal is to ensure that people suffering from substance use disorder have access to care and experience better quality of life and overall health. Guided by those with lived experience and unafraid of new ideas, RIZE is building networks, creating programming, and supporting community partners who are using novel approaches to preventing overdose. RIZE seeks to increase visibility, expand the evidence base, and inform policy so that government and the treatment and recovery community can more confidently elevate programs with promise. At the same time, RIZE is amplifying the voices of its community partners to bring greater awareness and urgency to the devastating impact of the overdose crisis. We envision a Massachusetts with zero stigma and zero deaths.

In 2019, RIZE launched [*Innovations in Anti-racism to Address the Overdose Epidemic*](#), a multi-year, \$900,000 grant program aimed at creating a more equitable system of care. Based on the promising findings of this program, and other RIZE funded [research projects](#), we are issuing this funding opportunity to further advance access and equity in opioid use disorder (OUD) care.

Grant Opportunity:

Anyone with OUD should have access to a range of substance use treatments, including all types of medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD), psychosocial interventions, harm reduction, community services, and recovery supports. Yet, gaps in access to care remain, especially for people who identify as Black, Latine, and Indigenous. To address these gaps, RIZE will provide funding to selected organizations to create and enhance programs and initiatives that lead to measurable improvements to access and equity in OUD and/or polysubstance use services.

The grant program will fund efforts to better welcome, treat, and support people from the moment they seek services. Selected programs will operate under the guiding principle that treatment is not one-size-fits-all. It should be guided by science and delivered with compassion and respect for the dignity and autonomy of the individual. Specifically, selected grantees will develop or scale strategies to transform operations and center the needs of patients and clients with OUD and who identify as Black, Latine, or Indigenous.

RIZE will award grants of up to \$100,000 a year for two years. The amount of funding will align with the scale of the project and required resources. Awarded grants will fall within one of the following targeted focus areas:

- ***Making care more welcoming*** for Black, Latine, and Indigenous people with OUD.

- **Supporting workforce and organizational capacity** to treat, better support, and increase the number of Black, Latine, and Indigenous patients and clients with OUD served.
- **Strengthening linkages to care and care coordination** to connect and continuously support Black, Latine, and Indigenous people with OUD as they transition from one point of care to another.

All projects should center people with lived and living experience and with intersectional identities to tailor programming to best meet the needs of Black, Latine, and Indigenous people with OUD and/or polysubstance use.

Below are some example projects by targeted focus area. These examples are for illustrative purposes only and should not be considered an exhaustive list of the types of grants RIZE will fund.

Making Care More Welcoming

- Designing or enhancing programming that centers people who are Black, Latine, and Indigenous with OUD.
- Focusing communications and messaging to better support people with OUD, build trust, and reduce stigma while acknowledging past injustices and the impacts of the war on drugs.
- Ensuring signage, printed materials, and communications are available in languages that reflect the diversity of populations and most preferred languages in your community.
- Providing education on all treatment pathways and services and ensuring that they are offered to and readily accessible for Black, Latine, or Indigenous patients or clients.
- Increasing outreach to communities to ensure Black, Latine, and Indigenous clients and patients or clients with OUD have access to quality care.
- Developing or enhancing low-threshold access to care, including take-home medication, or access to safer smoking and snorting kits.

Supporting workforce and organizational capacity

- Providing opportunities for providers or caregivers to share feedback about what they need to better serve patients or clients with OUD and use their feedback to help design innovative programs in collaboration with people who identify as Black, Latine, or Indigenous.
- Fostering new approaches to provider or caregiver training that include harm reduction education, and strategies to discuss all treatment options, including MOUD, in a trauma-informed, culturally responsive manner.
- Providing protected time or a slight reduction in productivity requirements to create or enhance opportunities to center the needs of Black, Latine, and Indigenous people with OUD and measure impact on patient or client outcomes and experience.

Strengthening linkages to care and care coordination

- Supporting services that may not be funded by health insurance, such as peer support, navigation, case management, and translation services that enhance access to care, and create stronger linkages to care across service sites.
- Developing customized, easy to use data dashboards that track outcomes by demographic, to support patient or client progress with their health goals, better coordinate transitions of care, and to reengage in care and services post-overdose or return to use.

- Developing or enhancing programs to prevent overdose, increase access to MOUD and harm reduction tools for people who are incarcerated before release and during reentry.
- Enhancing or developing new partnerships between harm reduction organizations and other healthcare or service delivery settings to enhance knowledge, support, and two-way connections.

Proposal budgets can include any items or activities your organization finds necessary to properly implement and iteratively improve access and equity in OUD care.

To meet the urgency of the moment, we encourage applicants to include support for both program improvement and capacity building, which can include but are not limited to:

- Stipends for people with lived and living experience and with intersectional identities to participate as advisors to co-design and help shape programming
- Project management and data analytics support
- Consulting services, including in strategic communications, storytelling, behavioral science, marketing, and focused outreach expertise
- Subgrantee support to strengthen relationships with key service partners, including harm reduction, recovery, or other community-based organizations that bring added proven approaches and have earned trust with Black, Latine, and Indigenous clients who may benefit from the services offered
- Trauma-informed approaches

Evaluation:

RIZE will engage a third-party evaluation partner to support grantees in measuring progress toward increasing access and equity in OUD care. Our evaluation partner will help develop data analytics and will support grantees to understand what works, adjust what doesn't, and develop more sustainable means to measure access and equity in care delivery.

We ask that applicants include the desired outcomes for the project, including how you plan to measure success. Some examples include but are not limited to:

- Improved provider or caregiver readiness to serve patients or clients with OUD,
- Increased proportion of Black, Latine, and Indigenous patients or clients served and whose health goals are supported and tracked, and
- Improved patient or client satisfaction.

We design our internal and external evaluation efforts with a clear purpose in mind: to measure what matters most. Therefore, we will not overburden selected grantees with evaluation requests. Instead, we envision the evaluation support as an opportunity to increase capacity and to develop a community of learning and improvement. Proposed measures may be adjusted post-award and will benefit from the support of RIZE and its evaluation partner to finalize, if awarded.

There are a few activities that we are not able to fund:

- Fundraising pursuits
- Capital campaigns or annual appeals
- Clinical or drug trials
- Support for individuals, for-profits, or for the promulgation of religious beliefs

- Activities that do not benefit residents of Massachusetts

Grant requirements:

If funded, RIZE will request that selected grantees:

- Participate in the third-party evaluation.
- Take part in occasional virtual or in-person meetings and convenings to create space for sharing ideas and/or for community-led learning opportunities.
- Prepare a brief year-end grant narrative and financial report for grants management, shared learning, and to share information with our funders and others who might benefit from learning alongside us.
- Collaborate on potential publicity, media, and dissemination to advance shared goals.

Application timeline:

March 28, 2023	Request for proposals released
April 11, 2023	Questions due. Submit to: grants@rizema.org
April 13, 2023	Questions and responses posted to the RIZE website
April 25, 2023	Proposals due. Submit to: grants@rizema.org by 12:00 PM
June 1, 2023	Decisions announced

Application process:

All applications must be submitted to RIZE by 12:00 PM on April 25, 2023, via email and must be submitted using the [grant application form](#) for this program.

RIZE may contact applicants for additional information or clarification if needed. Applicants may submit questions about the program or about the application process in writing by April 11, 2023. RIZE will post answers to submitted questions in writing on our website by April 13, 2023.

Please note that RIZE will only fund projects that fit within our funding interests outlined above. If no project meets the goals for this program, RIZE reserves the right to not fund this initiative as currently outlined.