

Request for Proposals



SAFE STATES
*Strengthening the practice of
injury and violence prevention*

INNOVATIVE AND UPSTREAM APPROACHES FOR INJURY AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION FOCUSED ON YOUTH

Up to three (3) seed grants will be awarded to fund innovative Injury and Violence Prevention (IVP) programs for youth and young adults (ages 0–24).

Deadline to respond: October 26, 2026, 5:00 pm EST

ABOUT THE SAFE STATES ALLIANCE

The Safe States Alliance (Safe States) is a national non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and professional association whose mission is to strengthen the practice of injury and violence prevention (IVP). Safe States is supported primarily through government grants, membership dues, conference registration fees, and other sources. The Safe States Alliance is the only national association comprised of public health injury and violence prevention professionals representing all U.S. states and territories. Safe States members primarily work in state and local health departments, hospitals, universities, and non-profit organizational settings.

OVERVIEW OF THE SEED GRANT PROGRAM

Unintentional injury, homicide, and suicide remain the leading causes of death among adolescents ages 15-19¹. For the broader population of young people ages 10 to 24, the CDC identifies homicide as the third leading cause of death nationwide. As the field of Injury and Violence Prevention (IVP) evolves, Safe States Alliance is prioritizing upstream, innovative approaches to youth violence and injury prevention. Safe States Alliance is pleased to support **up to three (3) seed grant awards** to advance Youth IVP initiatives. All proposals must prioritize youth and/or young adults (ages 0-24) by directly engaging youth in solutions to IVP and/or addressing factors that impact youth safety and wellbeing.

Successful seed grant projects address or apply one or more of the approaches below.

Upstream Prevention in IVP

Upstream prevention refers to efforts that proactively address IVP by focusing on underlying causes and environmental conditions that lead to injuries and violence. These strategies promote community resilience and incorporate shared risk and protective factor approaches.

¹Source: National Vital Statistics System- Mortality data (2024) via CDC WONDER

Shared Risk and Protective Factor Approaches

[Shared risk and protective factor \(SRPF\) approaches](#) are efforts to improve multiple population health and quality-of-life outcomes by aligning diverse, multi-sector interventions that positively impact the social determinants of health. More broadly, there are three defining characteristics of SRPF approaches:

1. An SRPF approach improves **multiple population-level outcomes**.
2. An SRPF approach impacts the **social drivers of health in positive and upstream ways**.
3. An SRPF approach engages partners across **multiple disciplines and sectors**.

Programs that utilize an SRPF approach often support this work by blending and braiding funds. By combining funding streams for a single purpose, programs are more likely to implement cross-cutting initiatives and achieve the individual goals of each program. For this seed grant program, Safe States welcomes any effort that advance SRPF efforts, including, but not limited to, braiding and blending funding.

Build and Nurture Cross-Sector Partnerships

[The Injury and Violence Prevention Ecosystem](#) highlights the full spectrum of partners who work together to create safer and more resilient communities. The ecosystem model helps identify potential partnerships that can enhance the effectiveness of prevention approaches and are critical to moving IVP efforts upstream. Housing, transportation, and business sectors are examples of key sectors we can partner with to support youth. Safe States has developed the [Preparing to Partner](#) and [Roadmap guidebooks](#) for strengthening partnerships to advance community health outcomes.

Is my project a good fit for this Seed Grant Program?

Strong project proposals often include a multi-tiered approach with support from community partners. Review innovative and upstream approaches of [past awardees](#) and the [CDC's Community Violence Prevention Resource for Action](#) for more examples. Projects that solely or predominantly involve the purchasing of guides, tools, or materials are generally not considered strong proposals.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Eligible applicants include state, local, and territorial health, tribes and tribal organizations, hospitals/health care organizations, academic institutions, city and municipal governments, community-based organizations, businesses, and not-for-profit organizations. Applicants must be US based organizations.

Proposals can include additional milestones; however, the major tasks below must be incorporated into the proposal's Scope of Work. Please note that the project's timeline is fixed due to grant funding periods and is not flexible.

To support this project, the applicant will:

- Participate in a kick-off call with Safe States (late November 2026).
- Finalize the scope of work and timeline by the end of November 2026.
- Participate in regular check-in calls with Safe States throughout the project period.
- Support the development of case studies and other communications activities throughout the grant period.

- Submit activity reports and invoices on a quarterly basis.
- Present an overview of the final project to Safe States committees, work groups, or at a conference.

To support the applicant, Safe States will:

- Provide technological platforms (e.g. Zoom, conference lines, etc.) for any assessment activities.
- Provide input, training, and technical assistance monthly.
- Review and provide feedback on quarterly reports.

TERM OF CONTRACT/AGREEMENT, FEE SCHEDULE, & INVOICING

The term of the funding opportunity is for up to 10 months (November 2026 - September 2027). This funding opportunity is a cost-reimbursement, subrecipient grant made available through a cooperative agreement from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (5 NU49CE000001-04, CFDA 93.136)². Proposals should be submitted with an itemized budget following the cost-categories found in the CDC budget guidance [here](#). Applicants should submit a budget proposal using Safe States' Excel budget table and narrative template. A copy of this Excel template can be downloaded [here](#). An invoicing and payment schedule will be determined in collaboration with the selected grantees. Invoices must align with budget-approved categories, support agreed-upon deliverables and will be paid within 60 days of receipt.

AWARD AMOUNT

The total award available for this opportunity is \$20,000, inclusive of all expenses. Work completed after September 17, 2027, will not be reimbursable. Expenses cannot be prepaid for work performed outside of the period of performance.

PROPOSAL ELEMENTS & SELECTION CRITERIA

The **narrative must be double-spaced and include section titles, one-inch margins, and Arial 11-point font**. The entire narrative should **not exceed a total of five (5) pages, excluding budget template**. A cover page and appendices are not permitted. All tables, charts, and graphics included in the project narrative count toward the five-page limit.

A proposal in response to this opportunity must include the following elements:

1. Proposed Project/Initiative (40 Points)

- Provide a brief summary of your organization and your work with youth and/or young adults.
- Provide a detailed description of your proposed project, including the specific approach to youth IVP. Be sure to emphasize any elements that incorporate shared risk and protective factor approaches, cross-sector partnerships, and/or upstream prevention in general.
- Identify the steps you will take as part of this project.
- What program metrics and evaluation activities will be used to demonstrate project progress? Consider using qualitative and nontraditional data to capture a more complete picture of project progress.

² As a recipient of pass-thru federal funding, the federal laws, regulations, policies, and CDC General Terms and Conditions for CDC grant and cooperative agreement recipients at <https://www.cdc.gov/grants/federal-regulations-policies/index.html> pass thru to the sub-recipients of this seed-grant program.

2. Organizational Readiness (20 Points)

- a. What existing resources could your organization and any partnering organizations leverage as part of the effort to assist with this project (e.g., existing staff, funding, strategic plans, etc.)?

3. Overall Benefit & Sustainability (30 Points)

- a. How does the proposed project fit within your current work?
- b. Describe how your project would address conditions/needs of youth within your community. If selected, what would be the overall benefit of this project for youth in your community?
- c. After the Seed Grant funding ends, what programs, activities, or services do you anticipate will continue?

4. Budget (10 Points)

- a. Within your proposal clearly describe how funds will be used to address project needs and implementation activities. All work must be completed by September 17, 2027. Expenses cannot be prepaid for work to be completed outside of the period of performance.
 - b. In addition to the budget narrative within your proposal, complete the [budget spreadsheet template](#)³ with the following categories: direct labor, fringe rate, consultant/contractors, materials/supplies, travel, other expenses, and indirect rate (if applicable). Purchasing “giveaways,” incentive items, branded supplies, food, and equipment are **NOT** approved expenses for the Seed Grant Program. Additionally, research cannot be conducted as a part of the Seed Grant Program. The budget should include a clear and detailed narrative justification for all expenses. The template can be accessed and downloaded [here](#). Applicants should follow the federal budgeting guidelines found [here](#).
 - c. Budget revisions may be submitted during the awarded applicant’s funding cycle if the reallocation of funds is consistent with the RFP, original proposal and award notice, and Safe States’ requirements for how the funds may be used. Budget revisions must be submitted and approved **BEFORE** funds are expended.
 - d. The funds available to support the seed grants are made available through a cooperative agreement from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (5 NU49CE000001-04, CFDA 93.136). On the Federal Subrecipient Guidance tab of the budget template is a list of minimum guidelines from the concerned federal agency (CDC) that will be passed through to awarded applicants. Official guidelines for pass through will be detailed in the award notice.
5. **A letter of support** (on agency letterhead) from the applicant organization must be submitted with the application. The letter should include confirmation that the direct supervisor or agency leadership agrees to and supports the applicant’s participation in the *Innovative and Upstream Approaches for Youth-Focused Injury and Violence Prevention Seed Grant Program*. Letters must be formatted in PDF format.

Reviewers from Safe States will evaluate and score proposals based on their quality and adherence to the proposal elements described above. All applicants will be notified of their proposal **status by mid-November 2026**. The anticipated start date for the seed grant program is mid to late-November.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals will be accepted through October 26, 2026, at 5:00 PM EST. Submit your full proposal as one PDF file to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9QQLDX7>.

Questions about this opportunity can be submitted to info@safestates.org or by calling (770) 690-9000.

³ Applicants must submit a budget file for submission using the required budget template. The budget template can be accessed [here](#) or by contacting info@SafeStates.org

Innovative and Upstream Approaches for Injury and Violence Prevention Focused on Youth Seed Grant Program

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How is the Safe States Alliance team structured to support the oversight of this work?

Safe States has dedicated staff available to oversee this project and provide subject matter expertise to support programmatic activities. We will provide feedback and technical assistance through monthly check-in calls and/or emails. Zoom will be the primary meeting platform.

2. When are reports due, and will a template be provided?

Programmatic and budget reports are due at least quarterly. Exact dates will be provided during the Kick-Off Call, and templates/guidance for both the programmatic and invoice reports will also be provided.

3. Which program staff are required to attend check-in calls?

Program and finance staff should attend the initial kick-off call. Only the program lead is required to attend the monthly check-in calls.

4. If you have previously funded an injury prevention topic area, will you consider funding the same topic area for this current round?

Yes. The selection process involves reviewing the overall approach and connection to upstream IVP prevention, not by injury topic area. All proposals must prioritize youth and/or young adults (ages 0-24).

5. Are there any unallowable costs for this project?

Purchasing “giveaways,” incentive items, branded supplies, food, and equipment are NOT approved expenses for the Seed Grant Program. Additionally, research cannot be conducted as a part of the Seed Grant Program. Applicants should follow the federal budgeting guidelines found [here](#). Please email Safe States at info@safestates.org if you have any specific questions about allowable expenses.

6. Is compensation included in giveaways and incentive items?

Using federal funds to purchase food or incentive items for participants is not permitted outside of extenuating circumstances, in accordance with HHS policies on [food](#) and [promotional items](#). Please contact Safe States Alliance at info@safestates.org with any specific questions on interpretation of these policies for your program budget.