



# THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION

## Healthy Behaviors Initiative

**Proposal Submission Deadline:  
Thursday, April 2; 4:00 p.m. CT**

## Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Mini Grant

### I. Introduction

The mission of The Rapides Foundation is to improve the health status of Central Louisiana. The Rapides Foundation focuses its work in three strategic areas:

- Healthy People, to improve access to healthcare and promote healthy behaviors;
- Education, to increase the level of educational attainment and achievement as the primary path to improved economic, social and health status; and
- Healthy Communities, to improve economic opportunity and family income, and enhance civic and community opportunities for more effective leaders and organizations.

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), The Rapides Foundation seeks to reduce tobacco use and prevent initiation by funding evidence-based prevention and cessation programs and strategies across the nine parishes we serve: Allen, Avoyelles, Catahoula, Grant, LaSalle, Natchitoches, Rapides, Vernon, and Winn.

We are defining tobacco as:

- Combustible cigarettes
- Nicotine pouches
- Nicotine e-cigarettes/vapes
- Smokeless tobacco
- Cigars, cigarillos, and little cigars

### II. Background

Cigarette smoking and the use of tobacco products remain serious public health challenges in the United States, causing preventable disease, disability and death. In Louisiana, 7,200 adults die each year from their own smoking. In the Rapides Foundation Service Area (RFSa), adult tobacco use exceeds state and national averages. According to the 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment, 26.7% of adults in the RFSa currently smoke cigarettes, compared to 16.7% in Louisiana, and 23.9% nationwide. In addition, smokeless tobacco use (8.2%), and vaping (16.2%) are prevalent among adults, with vaping rates increasing significantly since 2021.

Among youth, progress in reducing cigarette smoking has been offset by a rise in vaping and other nicotine products. The 2023 Louisiana Youth Risk Behavior Survey for Central Louisiana found that 24.2% of high school students in the RFSa have ever tried smoking cigarettes, and 36.2% have ever used an electronic vaping product at some point in their lives. Alarming, 12.1% of students reported first smoking before age 13, increasing the likelihood of long-term nicotine addiction. E-cigarettes/vapes are



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not a safe alternative for young people; most contain nicotine, which is highly addictive and can harm brain development. Newer products, such as oral nicotine pouches, further complicate prevention efforts by increasing access to discreet, flavored nicotine products appealing to youth.

Quitting tobacco at any age provides immediate and long-term health benefits, including a reduced risk of many cancers, cardiovascular disease, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Importantly, many youth and adults already demonstrate a desire to quit. Among high school students who currently use any tobacco product, more than half (51.3%) reported attempting to quit in the past 12 months. Similarly, 41.5% of adults who regularly smoke cigarettes went without smoking for one day or longer in the past year because they were trying to quit. These findings highlight the need for effective strategies that emphasize prevention of initiation, particularly among young people, while also providing accessible, evidence-based support for youth and adults seeking to quit.

### **III. Purpose for Request for Proposals (RFP)**

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to prevent initiation and promote cessation of tobacco.

The grant offering does not accept proposals involving disease management or treatment as the primary emphasis. Programs that duplicate the Healthy Behaviors Initiative School District Partnership Grant work plan will not be considered; examples include Catch My Breath and/or LifeSkills Training during the school day at a school.

Types of projects we are interested in funding are listed below. Please note that proposed projects should address the needs of the community and should be evidence-based. Choosing an approach below does not guarantee funding.

Reduce tobacco/vaping use and prevent initiation:

- Coordinate community-level prevention and cessation efforts that educate residents about the dangers of tobacco/vaping use.
- Promote tobacco prevention and cessation resources in conjunction with programming.
- Establish and enforce tobacco/vaping-free environments through policies that prohibit tobacco/vaping use in public spaces and workplaces.
- Deliver evidence-based peer-to-peer education programs that influence social norms.
- Provide evidence-based prevention and/or cessation curriculum in out-of-school programs or at community-based organizations.

Note: All proposed programs must take place in spaces that are tobacco and alcohol free.

### **IV. Eligibility Requirements**

The Foundation invites nonprofit organizations, schools, faith-based organizations and government entities to apply with evidence-based, culturally relevant solutions. Collaboration among local organizations, community advocates, faith-based partners, and neighborhoods is strongly encouraged to create sustainable, population-level improvements in health and well-being.

The primary applicant (grant fiscal agent) must meet all of the following requirements:



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- Classified as a Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization under the Internal Revenue Code or a government entity.
- Cannot be a private foundation under Section 509(a).
- Must be an organization seeking funding support for projects restricted to the Foundation's nine parishes.

## V. Funding Guidelines and Grant Terms

Funds up to \$25,000 for a 12-month (July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027) project are available. The Foundation will consider only one application per organization, or agency, and funding must align with project needs.

Grant funding may be used for:

- Staff time: salaries and wages, fringe, consultants/contract services for logistics and coordinator, instructors and facilitators.
- Travel and training: mileage reimbursement for implementing grant activities. Fees to attend relevant training.
- Program Costs
  - Printing and publications: production of printed materials.
  - Media/advertising: newspaper, social media, etc. (not to exceed 15% of project budget)
  - Program supplies: educational materials and other participant-related costs.
- Indirect cost rate (not to exceed 10% of project budget).

Applicants are not required to secure matching funds and/or in-kind support.

Grant funds are not for:

- Lobbying or political programs or events.
- Activities, projects, or programs exclusively benefiting members of sectarian or religious organizations.
- Biomedical, clinical or educational research.
- Direct support to individuals or endowments.
- Funding that supplants existing sources of support.
- Individuals, including patient assistance funds.
- Social events or similar fundraising efforts or telethons.
- Projects outside of the Foundation's service area.
- Direct funding for medical or social services already funded through existing third-party reimbursement sources.
- Operating expenses not used for significantly expanding the services of ongoing organizations.
- Vans or other vehicles.
- Capital or capital improvements.
- Programs that duplicate the Healthy Behaviors Initiative School District Partnership Grant work plan at schools during the school day.

### Review Process and Additional Considerations

These funding opportunities are limited and are offered on a competitive basis; therefore, it is possible not all applicants will receive funding. Competitive proposals will be evidence-based, community-driven and budgets will be appropriate to the size of the population impacted. We reserve the right to award less than the amount requested. We reserve the right to not award any grants through this Request for Proposals.



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A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications based on alignment with the purpose of the Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Mini Grant and will make recommendations for final decisions by The Rapides Foundation's Board of Trustees. Reviewers may recommend whole or partial funding of a project. The review committee may use geographic distribution, size of impact/reach, and applicant's history as a grantee when making their decisions. The Rapides Foundation will notify applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, in writing by May 26, 2026.

## VI. Timeline for Submission

Proposal Deadline	Thursday, April 2, 2026
Notification of Selection	Tuesday, May 26, 2026
Grant Term	July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027

Proposals are accepted using the Foundation's online application process only. The application is located on the Foundation's website at [www.rapidesfoundation.org](http://www.rapidesfoundation.org) under the "Grants" tab. Online deadline submission is no later than 4:00 p.m. on the date listed above. In fairness to all applicants, late or incomplete submissions are not considered.

*Please note, the proposal must be fully submitted by the deadline; therefore, you must begin uploading documents prior to 4:00 p.m. on the day of the deadline. We suggest you allow a minimum of three hours for the upload process.*

### Pre-submission Consultation

Prospective applicants are encouraged to schedule a call or a meeting with the Program Officer to discuss alignment and feasibility of their proposal before submission. Contact Dallas Russell at [dallas@rapidesfoundation.org](mailto:dallas@rapidesfoundation.org) or (318)767-3005 to request a meeting. Please schedule the meeting at least two weeks before the submission deadline.

## VII. Accountability, Reporting, and Site Visits

Funded partners bring valuable expertise, experience, and community insight. The Foundation is committed to supporting that expertise by providing opportunities for ongoing learning, collaboration, and reflection throughout the grant period.

As part of this commitment, funded partners will participate in regular update meetings, capacity building support, a site visit and written reports on progress. These activities are designed to strengthen organizational capacity, enhance program implementation, and foster a supportive network of learning among all partners.

Participation in these activities is a grant requirement and a key component of the partnership between the Foundation and grantees. These engagements are intended to support funded organizations, providing space to exchange ideas, build new skills, and deepen impact.



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Grantees are expected to dedicate the necessary time and staff to fully engage in the following activities:

Activity	Description	Frequency
Virtual Update Meeting	Informal project update meetings.	Monthly.
Capacity Building	Support from Program Officer in relevant topics as the project is implemented.	As needed.
Site Visit	On-site meetings and tour of project activities.	Annually or more as requested.
Interim and Final Written Reports	A report template is provided and consists of a narrative, budget worksheet, supporting documents, and evaluation form.	January 29, 2027 Interim July 30, 2027 Final

Applicants should carefully consider their capacity and availability to meet these expectations when developing their proposals. Participation takes time but is designed to be both valuable and rewarding. Applicants should also ensure their budget requests include appropriate funds to support participation such as staff time, travel, and related expenses.

## VIII. Proposal Requirements

### 1. Overview

- a. Applicant organization information (name, address, phone number, email, etc.).
- b. Name, title, phone number and email address of the proposed project coordinator or key contact person from the applicant organization.
- c. Project title.
- d. Requested funding amount.
- e. Total project amount.
- f. Geographic location served.
- g. Project start date.
- h. Project end date.
- i. Brief program description. (Example: ORGANIZATION proposes to prevent youth ages 7-14, initiation of tobacco use in CITY/NEIGHBORHOOD by offering an evidence-based curriculum in an out of school time program.)

### 2. Organization Alignment (up to 400 words per question)

- a. **Organization overview.** Briefly describe your organization’s mission, primary programs, and the population(s) you serve.
- b. **Experience with Tobacco Prevention and/or Cessation.** Describe your organization’s prior experience related to tobacco prevention, cessation, or other health behavior change initiatives. If you do not have direct experience, explain how staff or partners bring the necessary expertise.



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- c. **Alignment with RFP Purpose.** Briefly explain how your proposed project aligns with the purpose of this request for proposals.
- 3. Statement of need (up to 400 words per question)**
  - a. **Community needs and target population.** Describe the tobacco and/or vaping related need your project seeks to address. Provide an overview of the community you serve, including existing resources and identified gaps or challenges. Identify the population most affected (ex. youth, young adults, or specific communities). Use local data and community knowledge whenever possible.
  - b. **Why does this need matter now.** Explain why addressing this issue is important at this time in your community and how it aligns with the goal of reducing tobacco use, preventing initiation, or supporting cessation.
  - c. **Community support.** Describe how the community you propose to serve was engaged in identifying this need and shaping the proposed project. What feedback did you receive from community members or participants, and how did it inform your approach? Indicate whether there is demonstrated community support and interest in participating and describe how this information was gathered (ex. surveys, focus groups, listening sessions, advisory groups, letters of support). Include any evidence of community commitment in the optional attachments.
- 4. Project Plan (up to 400 words per question)**
  - a. **Project description.** Provide a clear description of the proposed project or program. What are you proposing to do?
  - b. **Target audience.** Who will participate or be reached by the project or program. Explain how this audience was selected.
  - c. **Location and setting.** Where will the project/program take place?
  - d. **Marketing, recruitment and retention.** Describe how you will market and promote your project/program to reach your intended audience. Explain your plan for recruiting participants, including how you will address potential barriers to participation (ex. awareness, transportation, trust, scheduling). Additionally, describe the strategies you will use to keep participants engaged throughout the program and encourage continued participation over time.
  - e. **Activities and approach.** Describe the key activities that will be implemented. Include the following details to help us understand how the program will operate:
    - i. The type of activities or services to be delivered and how they will be carried out.
    - ii. How often will activities occur and the duration of each activity.
    - iii. Whether the project focuses on prevention, cessation, or both, and how this focus is reflected in the activities.
  - f. **Evidence-based strategy.** Identify the evidence-based program, curriculum, policy approach, or best practice that informs your project. Briefly explain how your proposed approach is supported by evidence. Cite your sources.
- 5. Staffing, Partnerships, and Capacity**



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- a. **Project Leadership and Staffing.** Who will lead and implement this project? Describe the roles, qualifications, and relevant experience of key staff and/or volunteers.
  - b. **Organizational Capacity.** Describe your organization's capacity to manage this project, including staffing, facilities, partnerships, and administrative responsibilities as well as relevant skills and interest, and experience working with the target population.
  - c. **Partnership and Collaboration.** List any partner organizations involved and describe their roles. Explain how the collaboration strengthens the project.
- 6. Goals, Outcomes, and Evaluation (up to 400 words per question)**
- a. **Project Goals.** State the primary goal(s) of the project. What do you intend to change or improve as a result of this project?
  - b. **Expected outputs.** Describe the direct products of your proposed project activities. Include the number of people you expect to serve, as well as key deliverables (ex. number of sessions held, policies adopted, curricula delivered, or materials distributed).
  - c. **Expected outcomes.** Describe the specific, measurable outcomes you expect (ex. changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, quit attempts, reduced initiation).
  - d. **Evaluation plan.** Explain how you will measure progress and outcomes. What data will you collect, how will it be collected, and who will be responsible for evaluation?
- 7. Sustainability (up to 400 words per question)**
- a. **Sustainability plan.** Describe how the project or its impact will be sustained after grant funding ends. Include plans for ongoing funding, partnerships, policy changes, or integration into existing programs.
- 8. Budget and Budget Narrative**
- a. **Budget Worksheet.** Using the provided template (found on the website in the key materials section) to complete the Excel worksheet to reflect the requested funds and any in-kind/match.
  - b. **Budget Narrative.** Provide a detailed budget narrative providing calculations and describing how you propose to use the funds in each line item. (See example provided on website in the key materials section)
- 9. Workplan & Timeline**
- a. Use the **work plan template** to describe the major activities, person responsible, timeline, and anticipated outputs.
- 10. Supporting Documents**
- a. **Required Attachments.** Please upload the following:
    - i. Applicant organization's 501 (c)(3) or government entity exemption determination letter.
    - ii. Your organization's most current 990, annual audit or financial report.
    - iii. A list of applicant organization's board members. Include member, professional/community affiliation, and board tenure.
    - iv. Signature page (found on the website in the key materials section).
  - b. **Optional Attachments.** These documents are optional but strongly encouraged.
    - i. Letters of support
    - ii. Staff resumes or short bios



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iii. Community feedback such as surveys, summary of interviews, etc.

## IX. Additional Considerations

- The Foundation reserves the right to:
- Request additional information from any or all applicants.
- Meet with applicants to ensure full understanding of, and responsiveness to, the application requirements.
- Request modifications to a respondent’s application prior to final award to ensure alignment of project elements with the core values, mission, and operating standards of the Foundation.
- Reject any or all applications submitted.

Funded organizations are required to submit a grant agreement (contract) and a board resolution affirming commitment to the grant-funded project by the board of directors.

<p><b>For questions related to this funding opportunity:</b>          Dallas Russell, Program Officer  <a href="mailto:dallas@rapidesfoundation.org">dallas@rapidesfoundation.org</a>          Direct: 318.767.3005</p>	<p><b>For assistance with submitting the online proposal:</b>          Courtney Keys, Programs Assistant  <a href="mailto:courtney@rapidesfoundation.org">courtney@rapidesfoundation.org</a>          Direct: 318.767.3013          Main lines: 318.443.3394 or toll-free 800.994.3394</p>
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## X. Resources

### Optional Grant Writing Workshops

Community Development Works (CDW), a program of The Rapides Foundation, offers a training schedule of free workshops and webinars on topics such as grant writing, leadership, and marketing. Register for webinars, workshops and videos at [communitydevelopmentworks.org](http://communitydevelopmentworks.org) or call 800-803-8075.

For more information on evidence-based and best/promising practices related to this funding opportunity, refer to the following resources. Please note that this is intended to provide general guidance and does not serve as a comprehensive list.

### Tobacco Prevention and Control

#### General (including background information and evidence-based policies and programs):

- CDC Smoking and Tobacco Use: <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/>
- What Works for Health: <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/take-action-to-improvehealth/what-works-for-health>
- Evidence on the Health Impacts of E-Cigarettes and Vaping: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/340-337-VapingHealthImpacts.pdf>
- Truth Initiative: <https://truthinitiative.org/>

### Tobacco Cessation

- National Cancer Institute programs: <https://smokefree.gov/>
- American Lung Association: <https://www.lung.org/our-initiatives/tobacco/cessation-and-prevention/>
- Quit With Us, Louisiana: <http://www.quitwithusla.org/>
- EX Program <https://www.becomeanex.org/>