

Request for Proposals
Mental Health Workforce Recruitment and Retention Initiative
Deadline March 15, 2023

The Patrick P. Lee Foundation invites eligible organizations serving western and central New York to submit proposals for programs and initiatives promoting recruitment and retention in the mental health workforce.

I. About the Foundation

The Patrick P. Lee Foundation (Lee Foundation) is a private, family foundation committed to achieving immediate and measurable impact in the areas of education and mental health.

In education, we envision a community where individuals achieve economic self-sufficiency without experiencing undue financial burden. Our work focuses on post-secondary scholarships for students studying engineering and other STEM majors. We also fund scholarships for students training in mental health fields.

In mental health, our vision is for people living with mental illnesses to be engaged and supported members of the community. To achieve this, we work to strengthen the mental health workforce, invest in community programs and services, advocate for increased public funding and build the mental health literacy of the community.

II. The Funding Opportunity

Challenges related to recruitment and retention of mental health professionals is a barrier to accessing mental health services in our region. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this trend by increasing community need for mental health services and accelerating turnover in the field.

According to research conducted by the [Health Resource and Services Administration](#), over 155 million Americans live in mental health professional shortage areas, due to a growing national deficit of mental health practitioners. This shortage of mental health professionals has become particularly pronounced because of high levels of staff turnover and challenges in recruiting qualified personnel. A [fall 2021 survey](#) of mental health and substance use treatment organizations, conducted by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing, found that 97% of respondents experienced difficulty hiring new employees. Compounding this challenge, 82% of survey participants also stated that it was difficult or very difficult to retain staff.

The Lee Foundation seeks to support programs and initiatives that promote recruitment and retention in the local mental health workforce for organizations that serve adults living with mental illness.

Grant funds may support a variety of initiatives, including but not limited to:

- Staff training to meet continuing education requirements
- Internship and fellowship programs
- Staff training to complete certification and licensure requirements

- Mentorship programs
- Programs that promote professional longevity
- Programs that address staff turnover
- Coordination of services that reduce clerical work for staff

III. Eligibility and Funding Guidelines

Applicants must be 501c3 or be partnering with a 501c3. Past grantees as well as new organizations are welcome to apply. Individuals are not eligible to apply.

Factors that will be used to evaluate proposals for this RFP include:

- Program leverages existing federal, state and/or local funding resources
- Preference will be given to organizations that provide services to adults living with serious mental illnesses

Funding requests may range from \$50,000-\$150,000 and the expected grant period is 12-24 months. Awards will be announced in August 2023.

IV. Application Process

The Lee Foundation uses a grant management system (Foundant). From the [Foundation's home page](#), applicants have the opportunity to 1) preview the application questions, 2) create a registered account and 3) submit an application.

1. **Preview the application questions** by following the instructions in the gray box on the Foundation's homepage. When prompted to Enter Code, type the word **Partners**. Next, select the RFP process "Mental Health Workforce Initiative - 2023."

2. **Applicants must have a registered account to submit a proposal.**

For New Users: To register, follow the directions for "new users" in the gray box on the right side of the [Foundation's home page](#). Please note, you will be required to enter a federal tax identification number.

For Existing Users: Visit the [Foundation's home page](#) to enter your credentials and log in. If you forgot your password, select the "Forgot your Password?" link to reset your password.

3. **To submit an application**, you must be logged into a registered account. On your dashboard, select the Apply Page and type the word **Partners** when asked for the Enter Code. Click on the blue Apply button for the "Mental Health Workforce Initiative - 2023."

V. Timeline:

- February 8 – RFP Announced
- March 15 (5pm EST) – Submission Deadline
- August – Grant Awards Announced

For technical assistance registering an account or submitting an application, please contact Chris Allaire at 716-844-3100, or by email at callaire@lee.foundation