

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[Program Announcement 03117]

#### Initiative To Integrate Clinical Laboratories in Public Health Laboratory Testing; Notice of Availability of Funds

*Application Deadline:* August 8, 2003.

#### A. Authority and Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number

This program is authorized under section 317(k)(2) of the Public Health Service Act, 42 U.S.C. 247b(k)(2), as amended. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number is 93.283.

#### B. Purpose

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announces the availability of fiscal year (FY) 2003 funds for a cooperative agreement program regarding an Initiative to Integrate Clinical Laboratories in Public Health Testing. This program addresses the "Healthy People 2010" focus areas of Access to Quality Health Services, and Public Health Infrastructure.

The purpose of the program is to demonstrate the potential ways in which clinical laboratories may be better prepared to conduct public health related testing and participate in the public health system. Activities must revolve around national priorities for public health testing, such as those related to antimicrobial susceptibility, hepatitis C virus, HIV/AIDS, rapid HIV testing, foodborne diseases, sexually transmitted diseases, West Nile Virus, and other diseases of public health significance. Specifically, activities should center on investigating shortcomings in the delivery of medical and public health laboratory services, creating and demonstrating new approaches to create and implement voluntary laboratory practice standards, assessing the factors that impact why voluntary standards are or are not followed by clinical laboratories, training clinical laboratorians to better understand and adhere to voluntary national guidelines for testing and, as applicable, reporting results to public health authorities in the areas listed above. To the extent possible, the investigator(s) should demonstrate the possibilities for conducting some of the above activities in regional (inter-state) settings, and possibly in collaboration with Indian Health Service (IHS) clinical laboratories.

Measurable outcomes of the program will be in alignment with one or more of the following performance goals for the Public Health Practice Program Office: Increase the number of frontline public health workers at the state, tribal and local level that are competent to respond to bioterrorism, other infectious disease outbreaks, and other public health threats and emergencies, and prepare frontline state and local health departments and laboratories to respond to current and emerging public health threats.

#### C. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by:

- Public nonprofit organizations
- Private nonprofit organizations
- Universities
- Research institutions
- Faith-based organizations
- State, tribal, and local governments

or their bona fide agents (this includes the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Guam, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau)

Consideration will be given to those entities that are expected to have sufficient resources in terms of expertise in public health laboratory testing and medical microbiology to investigate and determine the influence on the delivery of public health laboratory testing. Important resources include standing advisory organizations composed of public health and private laboratorians, access to local and national subject matter experts, and demonstrated credibility in building laboratory partnerships.

**Note:** Title 2 of the United States Code section 1611 states that an organization described in section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to receive Federal funds constituting an award, grant or loan.

#### D. Funding

*Availability of Funds:* Approximately \$200,000 is available in FY 2003 to fund approximately one award. It is expected that the average award will be \$200,000, ranging from \$180,000 to \$220,000. It is expected that the award will begin on or about September 15, 2003 and will be made for a 12-month budget period within a project period of up to three budget years. Funding estimates may change.

Continuation awards within an approved project period will be made on the basis of satisfactory progress as

evidenced by required reports and the availability of funds.

*Recipient Financial Participation:* Matching funds are not required for this program.

*Funding Preferences:* Funding preferences will be given to those entities that have demonstrated significant expertise in microbiology and public health testing and that have available resources that can be leveraged. Important resources include standing advisory organizations composed of public health and private laboratorians, access to local and national subject matter experts, and demonstrated credibility in building laboratory partnerships.

#### E. Program Requirements

In conducting activities to achieve the purpose of this program, the recipient will be responsible for the activities listed in 1. Recipient Activities, and 2. Optional Recipient Activities, and CDC will be responsible for the activities listed in 3. CDC Activities.

##### 1. Required Recipient Activities:

(a) Collaborate with CDC, including subject matter experts, to determine specific programs (STDs, antimicrobial susceptibility testing, etc.) that could be selected as the best models for demonstrating the local and regional benefits of improved integration of clinical laboratories into the delivery of testing that has public health implications.

(b) Identify training needs and work with laboratory training experts, including the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) and the National Laboratory Training Network (NLTN), and conduct training to improve laboratory practices in areas of national priority, as mentioned in the purpose section of this announcement. To the extent possible, all training should be evaluated for its impact on knowledge and practices.

##### 2. Optional Recipient Activities:

(a) Select ways to link clinical laboratories into the public health system using communication and promotion, which may include newsletters, e-mails, websites, teleconferences, site visits, etc.

(b) Determine factors that affect adherence to voluntary guidelines, such as the National Committee for Clinical Laboratory Standards (NCCLS) guidelines for antimicrobial susceptibility testing, or CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports (MMWR) Recommendations and Reports, or locally derived laboratory practice standards.

(c) Work with local and national stakeholders to identify the need for