

## Project Overview

# AHEAD 2.0: Strengthening and Diversifying the WIC Workforce (IBCLC) Subgrant Funding

**Request for Proposals:** Apr. 3, 2023

**Proposals Due:** Apr. 28, 2023

**Final Decision:** May. 12, 2023

**Organization:** National WIC Association (NWA)

**NWA Contact:** Stacy Davis, [sdavis@nwica.org](mailto:sdavis@nwica.org)

## AHEAD 2.0: Strengthening and Diversifying the WIC Workforce (IBCLC) Subgrant Funding

### Project Background & Overview

#### *NWA Overview*

NWA is the nonprofit voice of WIC, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). WIC is a government program that provides nutrition education, breastfeeding support, referrals to health care and social services, and nutritious foods for qualifying parents, pregnant people, and young children. Through our work, we support more than 12,000 WIC agencies and the 6.3 million mothers, babies, and young children enrolled in the program. NWA provides education and support to WIC staff and drives program innovation and advocacy.

#### *Project Background*

The strength of WIC depends on the strength and diversity of its workforce. The workforce includes Registered Dietitians (RDs), International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs), Breastfeeding Peer Counselors, Competent Professional Authorities (CPAs), and Competent Paraprofessionals Authorities (CPPAs).

The [National WIC Association](#) aims to strengthen the WIC program's network of RDs and IBCLCs for the purpose of not solely training individuals to provide vital nutrition and breastfeeding education and support, but to ensure WIC professionals are diverse and reflective of the communities they serve.

### Eligibility

The goal of this opportunity is for NWA to provide subgrant opportunities to State or Local WIC Agencies. The State and Local WIC Agencies will utilize the subgrants to fund scholarships for their staff to complete the requirements needed to apply for and sit the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) exam in 2023 or 2024. State and Local Agencies are eligible to apply for the AHEAD 2.0: Strengthening and Diversifying the WIC Workforce (IBCLC) subgrant if WIC staff members in their Agency:

- Identify as a member of an underserved, underrepresented, marginalized community (e.g., neurodivergent, reside and serve a rural or urban community, identify as LGBTQ+, male, or Black, Indigenous, Person of Color, or disabled, etc.).
- Will fully meet the requirements to apply and sit for the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) exam in 2023 or 2024.

Priority will be given to applicants who assist WIC participants with limited access to the services of an IBCLC and/or have breastfeeding initiation rates below the national breastfeeding initiation rate (see [CDC Breastfeeding Report Card](#)). State and Local Agencies can request funding between \$1,000.00 and \$10,000.00 per eligible WIC staff member. The number of WIC staff members supported will be determined by the availability of funds.

The AHEAD 2.0: Strengthening and Diversifying the WIC Workforce for IBCLCs subgrant application is to be via email. For more information, please contact Stacy Davis, [sdavis@nwica.org](mailto:sdavis@nwica.org).

## Proposal Requirements

Proposals must be submitted in PDF format by **April 28, 2023 by 5:00 PM ET**, and should be no longer than 12 pages. Submit your proposal and questions to the Senior Manager of Health Equity and Community Partnerships, Stacy Davis, at [sdavis@nwica.org](mailto:sdavis@nwica.org). Your proposal should include the following:

### *Agency Profile*

Please provide the following information:

- Name of the individual completing the proposal along with title and contact information (e.g., work address, phone number, and email address),
- Agency name and location (city and state)
- Brief description of community (i.e., rural, urban, suburban)
- Length of time to process, approve and execute contracts

### *Statement of Interest and Need*

The statement of interest and need should describe in detail the following:

1. Describe how diversifying IBCLCs at your State or Local WIC Agency would positively impact the community served. Draw on any available demographic data to demonstrate how diversifying the breastfeeding workforce is important in your community.
2. The staff members which the State or Local Agency intends to support. Please include a short bio each staff member .
3. The level of funding you are requesting and how you anticipate this funding will be used. Examples of support include, costs of college course fees, lactation-specific continuing education credits, conferences, textbooks, professional memberships to United States Lactation Consultant Association, the International Lactation Consultant Association, or any state or local lactation consultant professional association, and/or IBLCE examination fees only. (Note: This information should also be included in the budget.)

### *Proposal*

Provide a description of the organization and any other relevant information which speaks to the demographics of WIC staff and participants. Describe the plans for how each subgrant recipient will utilize the funds to obtain their IBCLC credential.

Please be sure to include the following information:

- Name of each subgrant recipient, length of employment with your WIC Agency and current title
- Detailed approach to obtaining the credential for each eligible subgrant recipient, including programs the recipient plans on enrolling in and any other support needed, estimated date of completion of IBLCE requirements and anticipated date of IBLCE examination.

**Proposals are due on Friday, April 28, 2023, by 5:00 PM ET.** All questions must be submitted via email to Stacy Davis, [sdavis@nwica.org](mailto:sdavis@nwica.org). **The deadline for question submissions is Friday, April 17, 2023.** An electronic copy of the proposal shall be emailed to Stacy Davis, [sdavis@nwica.org](mailto:sdavis@nwica.org).

### *Timeline*

The subgrant period will commence May 2023 and conclude in November 2024.

### *Budget*

Provide a detailed, comprehensive budget narrative, including the level of funding being requested and detailed expenses. Examples of allowable expenses include, costs of college course fees, lactation-specific continuing education credits, conferences, textbooks, professional memberships to United States Lactation Consultant Association, the International Lactation Consultant Association, or any state or local lactation consultant professional association, and/or IBLCE examination fees only.

State and Local Agencies can request funding between \$1,000.00 and \$10,000.00 per eligible WIC staff member. (Note: The number of WIC staff members supported will be determined by the availability of funds.)

### *Letter of Support*

Please include a completed letter of support from your State WIC Director.

The letter of support should be on official letterhead and include the following statement, *“Agency A is in good management standing with the B State WIC Agency and I support Agency A’s application for NWA’s AHEAD 2.0: Strengthening and Diversifying the WIC Workforce for IBCLCs subgrant project.”*

If the letter of support is not available by the April 28, 2023, deadline, please include an anticipated date of receipt with your proposal.

### **Selection Criteria & Process**

Successful proposals will demonstrate not only a need for support, but describe in detail how diversifying IBCLCs at your State or Local WIC Agency would positively impact the community served, and increase participant enrollment, and breastfeeding initiation, duration and exclusivity rates of the Agency.

We are seeking Agencies with limited lactation resources whose Agency and community would benefit from the additional credential lactation support and care. Priority will be given to applicants who assist families with limited access to the services of an IBCLC and/or have breastfeeding initiation rates below the national breastfeeding initiation rate (see [CDC Breastfeeding Report Card](#)).

The request for proposals was released on Monday, April 3, 2023. Those interested in applying can request a 30-minute meeting with the Senior Manager of Health Equity and Community Partnerships and project lead, Stacy Davis, by scheduling [here](#). Questions will be accepted between Monday, April 3 and Friday, April 14, 2023.

**Applications are due on April 28, 2023, by 5:00 PM ET.** NWA will review all submitted proposals that fulfill the requirements.

### **Key Points**

- An AHEAD 2.0: Strengthening and Diversifying the WIC Workforce (IBCLC) application or award cannot be deferred to a future exam. Staff members must sit for the exam in 2023 or 2024.
- An unfunded applicant may choose to proceed with the exam application at his/her/their own expense or wait and apply again at a later date.
- Recipients of the AHEAD 2.0: Strengthening and Diversifying the WIC Workforce subgrants may be asked to complete a survey about his/her/their experience to become a lactation consultant

for two (2) years following the receipt of exam results. Application for a subgrant award constitutes agreement to complete such a survey.

- Those awarded subgrants will be able to use the funds toward the costs of college course fees and Pathway 2 programs, lactation-specific continuing education credits, conferences, textbooks, professional memberships to United States Lactation Consultant Association, the International Lactation Consultant Association, or any state or local lactation consultant professional association, clinical mentorship fees, and/or IBLCE examination fees. (Note: Subgrant funds cannot be utilized for salary.)
- State and Local WIC Agencies with limited lactation resources will be given preference.
- State and Local WIC Agencies who apply will be notified via email upon receipt of the application and after determination of their result.

### **Timeline**

- RFP Available: April 3, 2023
- Question Period: April 3- April 14, 2023
- Proposals Due: April 28, 2023, 5:00 PM ET
- Subgrant Award Announcements: May 12, 2023

### **Important Information**

- [IBLCE Candidate Information Guide](#)
- [IBLCE Fee Guide 2023](#)
- [IBLCE Key Dates](#)

### **Resources**

- [North Carolina Agricultural and Technical University Pathway 2 Lactation Program](#) (North Carolina residents only)
- [Lactation Education Resources](#) (Contact Stacy Davis for discounted rates.)
- [United States Lactation Consultant Association](#)
- [International Lactation Consultant Association](#)