



— REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS —
Spark of Change | Counter-Narratives | Health Equity Grants

Due: March 3, 2022
Up to 10 awards, with awards of up to \$5,000 each

Background

As a community foundation, the [Partnership for Better Health](#) strives to serve as a catalyst, advocate, and collaborator to establish health as a shared priority, toward ensuring that everyone has what they need for good health. Our mission is to champion and invest in ideas, initiatives and collaborations that improve the health of the people and communities in our region. We work closely with key stakeholders throughout Central and Western Cumberland County, Perry County, Northern Adams County and Greater Shippensburg.

Through the leadership of our inaugural Director of Health Equity, Dr. Marcellus C. Taylor, the Partnership for Better Health is developing a full complement of health equity strategies. We are embracing a powerful definition of health equity developed by the Health Equity Leadership & Exchange Network (HELEN):

Health equity exists when all people, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, geographic location, or other social constructs have fair and just access, opportunity, and resources to achieve their highest potential for health.

This definition serves as a visionary framework for our transformative journey of health equity. We invite community members, mission-driven organizations, coalitions, government agencies, businesses and all other groups committed to these principles to join with us.

New Spark of Change Grants

Spark of Change grants are mini grants that are intentionally focused on addressing health equity challenges, finding solutions, and amplifying voices at the neighborhood level. Neighborhoods have a shared history and collective community characteristics that set them apart. Applicants for **Spark of Change** grants must narratively demonstrate how their project will impact a specific neighborhood in our service area.

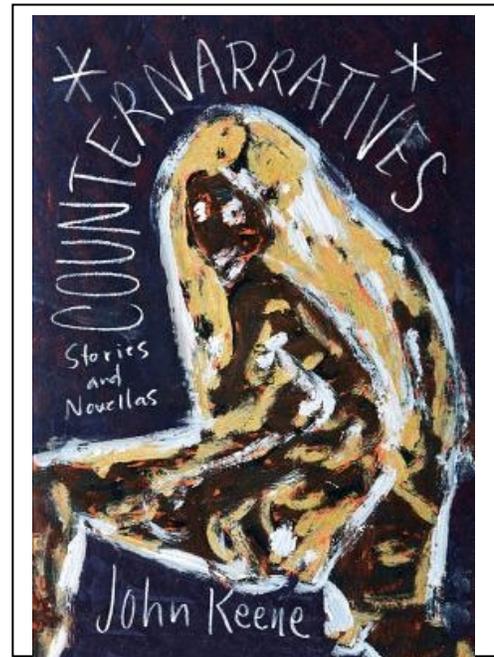
Harvey Milk, the late famous activist and community leader once noted, “If we wish to rebuild our cities, we must first rebuild our neighborhoods.” If we are to effectively address the

negative impact that health inequity has created, we must allow space for intentional neighborhood-based solutions. Our organization welcomes applicants to submit proposals for **Spark of Change** grants that purposefully engage neighborhood members as partners and leading advocates in the change process.

Spark of Change grants center on the use of counter-narratives to broaden our understanding of existing health inequities in our region and potential solutions to those inequities.

The Center for Intercultural Dialogue offers this definition for counter-narratives.

“Counter-narrative refers to the narratives that arise from the vantage point of those who have been historically marginalized. The idea of “counter” itself implies a space of resistance against traditional domination. A counter-narrative goes beyond the notion that those in relative positions of power can just tell the stories of those in the margins. Instead, these must come from the margins, from the perspectives and voices of those individuals. A counter-narrative thus goes beyond the telling of stories that take place in the margins. The effect of a counter-narrative is to empower and give agency to those communities. By choosing their own words and telling their own stories, members of marginalized communities provide alternative points of view, helping to create complex narratives truly presenting their realities.”



Artwork by John Keene

Rationale

“Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity,” states Nigerian writer, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

The use of counter-narratives intentionally allows for the capturing of dialogue which is vital for story development and communal understanding. By utilizing this approach as a driving method for greater voice and understanding, it empowers marginalized communities to share their lived experiences and have those experiences influence change. Potential applicants can use a wide range of different methods to engage small groups of community members in thoughtful conversations and actions centered on the social and political determinants of health, health inequities, social and racial justice challenges, and more. Spark of Change grants are intended to lift new voices, ideas and experiences. They will build a more inclusive and grounded community understanding of paths towards greater health equity.

The Partnership for Better Health will consider a wide variety of projects that generate counter-narratives and engage people communally. Examples of grants include and are not limited to projects such as the following:

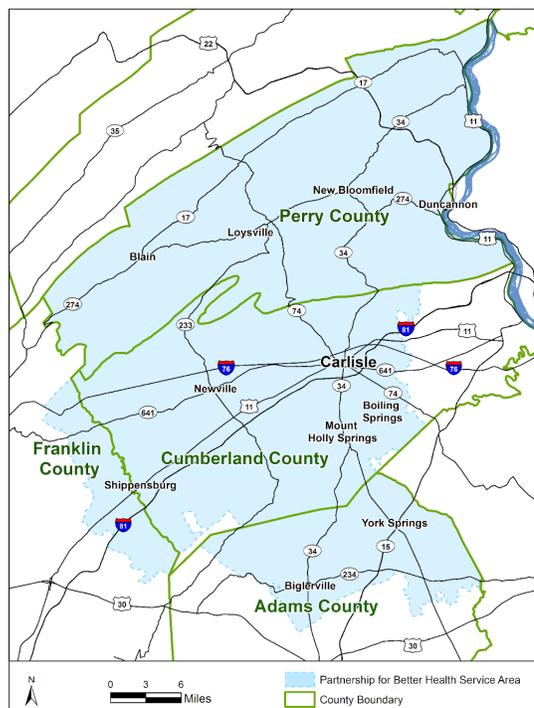
- A black-owned or operated Barbershop launches and documents one-on-one client dialogues about prevailing men’s health issues, including heart disease, diabetes and cancer.
- A refugee support group creates artwork that tells the story of their sense of place, in their new neighborhood of refuge.
- A GED class writes regular journal entries to describe the challenges of navigating non-traditional educational paths. Journal entries are compiled and shared with key audiences.
- A group of citizens creating video stories that chronicle their experiences regaining access to employment and quality jobs. What is working, what is not, what must change?
- A nonprofit board restructures its board membership and practices to be inclusive of a 25% to 70% client-based on its governing board. The people first served by the organization become the people leading and guiding the organization.

Please direct all Spark of Change grant questions to our Director of Health Equity, Marcellus C. Taylor, Ed.D (Marcellus@ForBetterHealthPA.org or 717-960-9009 x5).

Eligible Applicants

Community organizations who meet the below criteria are encouraged to apply.

1. Applicants must be a legal entity, preferred but not required to be registered as a nonprofit, 501(c)(3).
2. Applicants must be able to develop a project within our geographic regions and be able to report results based on the Partnership for Better Health’s [service area](#).



- Community organizations must demonstrate how their project utilizes counter-narratives to engage communities in discussions centered on social and political determinants of health, health inequities, social justice challenges, etc.

Timeline

Proposed Project Timeline	
Release of Request for Proposals	02/10/2022
Pre-Application Information Session	02/17/2022
Applications Due	03/03/2022
Selection Announced	4/01/2022
Anticipated Start Date	04/22/2022
Completion Date	6/22/2022

Applications are due by **March 3, 2022**, to the Partnership for Better Health.

A pre-application information session will be offered to interested applicants via Zoom on **Thursday, February 17th, at 1 pm.**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85892459815>

Meeting ID: 858 9245 9815

Application Process

Applications will be accepted through **March 3, 2022, with awards announced on April 1, 2022.** The Partnership for Better Health accepts all applications online. Our electronic system is used for each step of the grant process, including submission of your application and final grant report. Please review the steps below before applying for the first time.

Application Steps

- Visit our online [grants management system](#).
 - If you've never used our system before, select "Create New Account."
 - Should you encounter any challenges setting up your account, please email Marcellus (Marcellus@ForBetterHealthPA.org).
 - If you are a returning grantee, use your existing email address and password to access the system.
- On the next page, select "Apply" in the "Spark of Change" box.
- Complete the General Information Section:
 - Project Name
 - Project Description
 - Amount Requested – funding requests up to \$5,000 welcomed
 - Geographic Area
 - Funding Type (that best describes your application)
 - Fiscal Sponsor (indicate yes if another organization is a fiscal sponsor for your organization)
- Complete the remaining sections addressing the application requirements:

- Description of Project
- Target Population
- Timeline
- Program Success
- Budget
- W-9 Form (upload signed form)
- Electronic Signature
- Once you submit your application, you will receive an automatic email reply from our grants system.

Application Review & Selection Process

The Health Equity Impact Review (HEIR) Group will review and vote on each proposal using a standardized evaluation rubric.