

LC Application FAQ for Applicants

1) What is a Learning Collaborative?

- A **Learning Collaborative** is an initiative in which organizations come together to study and apply quality improvement methods to a focused topic area. Organizations often work together over a 12-month period or longer, participate in **Learning Sessions** led by subject matter and quality improvement experts, and actively engage in **Action Periods** between learning sessions to implement practices and strategies. Organizations report on the results and improvements that occur during the action periods and often receive expert consultation and implementation support, *thereby reducing the time required to move innovations into practice*. It provides the structure to foster a collaborative environment of open communication, peer support, learning, and sharing as well as opportunities for brainstorming and problem-solving to support the implementation of evidence-based practices and strategies. *Through co-learning and knowledge creation, the collaborative can address gaps in practice or the translation of evidence to practice and achieve common goals.*
- ESCALATE Learning Collaboratives will focus specifically on supporting and empowering the implementation of an HIV stigma-reduction initiative at your organization that is aimed at reducing the impact of HIV stigma – and other types of stigma or discrimination that can exacerbate the experience of HIV stigma – on a population that your organization serves.

2) Who should be on your team?

- Each organization participating in a Learning Collaborative will need to identify a primary point of contact, who we will refer to as the Stigma Reduction Change Agent, who can implement policy, staffing, and other changes at the organization. This person will communicate regularly with the ESCALATE Learning Collaborative team as well as the rest of the organization's Stigma Reduction Team.
- In addition to the Stigma Reduction Change Agent, each organization will need to identify 3 to 5 members of the organization who will form a "Stigma Reduction Team" and be actively engaged in this work.
 - This team must include at least one individual who **represents members of the population** on which your stigma-reduction activities focus as well as people representing a **wide range of roles and seniority** within your organization.
 - We also recommend that your team include **client-facing staff**, such as frontline staff, patient educators/navigators, and providers.

3) How much time will it take?

- ESCALATE will offer two Learning Collaboratives over the next four years. Each one will be convened over an 14-month period, with the first beginning in October 2021 and the second in winter 2023.
- During that time, we estimate that the Stigma Reduction Change Agent for each organization will need to dedicate 8-10 hours per month to participating in the Learning Collaborative while other Stigma Reduction Team members will need to devote 6-8 hours per month, including regular meetings.

- *This is above and beyond the work that you will do implementing your stigma reduction initiative which will vary according to the intensity of your efforts.*
- Successful participation in the learning collaborative will require engagement in live, virtual meetings; check-ins with LC Liaisons (coaches); Affinity Group Webinars, and evaluation activities, including regularly meeting with your team and completing quality improvement forms.

4) What will you do?

- Participate in 4.5 hour long, interactive **Learning Sessions** every 3-4 months with *Learn, Share* and *Compare* components that allow you to:
 - *Learn* from other organizations in the collaborative and from stigma subject matter experts with academic, professional and lived experience;
 - *Share* about your organization's stigma reduction initiative progress, challenges and successes; as well as
 - *Compare* (or benchmark) your organization's progress against other organizations in the Learning Collaborative as a whole by reporting on common metrics.
- Engage in 3-4 month long **Action Periods** in between each Learning Session, during which your organization will:
 - Implement a stigma reduction initiative that your organization has planned and/or already begun;
 - Meet regularly to ensure progress and implement the initiative;
 - Discuss challenges and solutions; and
 - Receive support from the Learning Collaborative during the Action Periods via
 - Two check-ins with LC Liaisons (coaches);
 - Affinity Group Webinars on topics specific to smaller groups of organizations;
 - A Learning Collaborative Newsletter; and
 - Quality improvement tracking and evaluation.

5) What will you get out of it?

- Support for implementing strategies to address HIV stigma
- Opportunities to learn from experts and other organizations implementing stigma reduction initiatives focused on the same populations and types of stigma
- Coaching to overcome hurdles
- Co-learning, knowledge creation and support from like-minded organizations
- Tools to evaluate your progress and assess improvements
- Stronger, more effective, more responsive stigma reduction initiatives
- *Reduced time from innovation to practice*
- *Ability to address gaps in practice, translate evidence to practice, and achieve common goals*

6) What if your organization is not selected to participate in the Learning Collaborative?

- If your organization is accepted into the 2021-2023 Learning Collaborative you may be accepted into either the ESCALATE Training or the ESCALATE Technical Assistance (TA) program
- If your team doesn't have the bandwidth to participate in any of these efforts right now, you can sign up for membership of our Learning Community with whom we will share our newsletter and webinar content.

- Participating in the Learning Community can help you prepare for and be better positioned to be accepted into the second Learning Collaborative in 2023.

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