



**Request for Proposals**  
**2024 Mental Health Peer Policy Fellow Grants**  
**Deadline: March 11, 2024, 11:59 p.m. CST**

*Note: An additional Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Mental Health Policy Fellow Program is being released simultaneously with this RFP. Organizations are permitted to submit proposals for both.*

The Hogg Foundation for Mental Health invites eligible organizations in Texas to respond to this RFP to fund peer policy fellow positions. The goal of this initiative is to increase the number and capacity of individuals with lived experience and organizations centered on and empowering the voices of lived experience engaging in mental health and substance use policy and advocacy in Texas.

The Hogg Foundation defines “lived experience” as someone who has personal or familial experience of receiving and/or coordinating mental health and/or substance use services within various systems in Texas (for example, state hospitals, the public mental health system, child welfare, schools, juvenile justice, etc.). The peer policy fellow is willing to share their experiences to advocate within the policy and advocacy workspace.

**The foundation is piloting a topic-focused policy fellow cohort. The foundation will be selecting and funding organizations engaged in or wanting to engage in state-level policy and advocacy work aimed at supporting child, youth, and family mental health and well-being.**

Depending on the quality of proposals received and funds available, the foundation plans to award up to five grants to eligible 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, governmental entities, or higher education institutions. Please read the following information carefully before submitting your proposal. Any additional information about the RFP will be posted on the foundation’s website [here](#). It is the applicant’s responsibility to refer to the website for the most current information.

**To assist proposal development, applicants will be offered up to 2 hours (including document review) of feedback and coaching** provided by consultant, Doug Smith (free of charge). *Coaching sessions are limited to the first 50 requests for both the policy fellow and peer policy fellow RFPs.* Sign up [here](#) to ensure availability and secure your session. Read our blog post, [Grant Coaching for Better Storytelling](#), to learn about this approach. **This service is completely optional and utilizing this service does not impact our rating of proposals.**

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### A. BACKGROUND

The Hogg Foundation for Mental Health was established in 1940 by the children of Texas Governor James Hogg through an endowment to The University of Texas at Austin. For over 80 years, the foundation has been working to improve the mental health and well-being of Texans through strategic grant making, research, and public policy engagement.

[Public policy](#) is an important component in changing systems that directly impact the mental health and well-being of Texans. Public policy encompasses a variety of activities including legislative and budgetary advocacy, policy analysis, strategy development, implementation planning, and research.

The foundation recognizes that individuals with lived experience are essential in informing legislative and administrative policy discussions and decision-making. The voices of lived experience serve as a valuable asset to policy discussions by going beyond what can be learned in a traditional educational setting.

Unfortunately, peer-led and peer-focused organizations often report challenges and barriers to developing the experience and skills needed to effectively participate in mental health and/or substance use policy development, analysis, and implementation. This grant program provides individuals with lived experience opportunities to develop policy and advocacy skills and serve as the often-missing voice at the table.

The grant program elevates the voice of individuals with lived experience in the mental health and substance use policy arena and builds their capacity to engage in policy and advocacy. Peer fellows also acquire the skills and expertise needed to act as mentors and leaders in the peer community. They can effectively influence policy and help others develop the knowledge and skills needed to advocate successfully. Additionally, organizations that employ a peer fellow benefit from an increased recognition of the value of including consumer voice in policy development as well as organizational decision-making.

Numerous organizations can greatly impact public policy, yet many are constrained by budgetary limitations and staff capacity. To address these challenges, the Hogg Foundation began funding the policy fellow program in 2010. A retrospective review of the program can be found [here](#).

The goal of this initiative is to increase lived experience in effective advocacy engagement focused on improving the mental health and well-being of Texans. Specific objectives include:

- Increase the capacity of organizations centered on the voice of lived experience to engage in effective advocacy on mental health and/or substance use policy;
- Increase the number and capacity of individuals with lived experience to engage in effective advocacy on mental health and/or substance use policy; and
- Strengthen collaboration and effectiveness of the mental health and substance use policy advocacy community in Texas.

The Hogg Foundation believes that mental health is not solely an individual responsibility, but also a product of community conditions. The places where people live, learn, work, play and pray can have a significant effect on improving mental health. Various systems and populations have unique challenges and barriers impacting mental health and well-being.

The foundation is piloting a cohort focused on state-level work aimed at supporting child, youth, and family mental health and well-being. Focusing on a specific population at one level of government creates an opportunity for cohesive collaboration on policy solutions.

## **B. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The foundation will fund up to five organizations to employ and mentor a full-time peer policy fellow for two years. Each grant includes funding for:

- Peer fellow salary – 95 percent of annual salary, which must be in the range of \$50,000 - \$60,000.
- Peer fellow fringe benefits – The foundation will pay 100 percent of fringe benefits.
- Mentor stipend – \$5,000 per year.
- Professional Development – \$3,000 per year to be used for the peer fellow.
- Travel – \$6,500 for the Fellow and Mentor to participate in the Federal Immersion trip to Washington, D.C. and one overnight trip within Texas during the second grant period.
- Overhead – 10 percent of the grant.

Fellowships are expected to support an individual with lived experience who is willing to share their story and experience to shape and advocate within the policy and advocacy workspace. The Hogg Foundation defines “lived experience” as someone who has personal or familial experience in receiving and/or coordinating mental health and/or substance use services within various systems in Texas (for example., state hospitals, the public mental health system, child welfare, schools, juvenile justice, etc.).

We recommend organizations applying for the peer policy fellow grant consider their available personnel and/or resources to support individuals with lived experience. Additionally, we recommend a peer fellow have two years of recent employment (paid or volunteer), a college degree, or peer specialist/recovery coach/family partner certification. ***However, a degree or certification are not required.*** The intent is for the individual to be prepared to succeed in the fellowship.

Throughout the two-year fellowship, the policy fellows focus on diverse and innovative policy projects and activities that align with their organization’s vision and mission. The policy fellows explore being researchers, writers, presenters, trainers, organizers, collaborators, and leaders.

While fellows' experiences will vary dependent on an organization's history and involvement in policy engagement, policy fellows are expected to participate in a set of policy activities, similar to those depicted in the program map below:

| YEAR 1  |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>POLICY ENGAGEMENT INTRODUCTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Onboarding into host organization</li> <li>● Introduction to policy academy and fellow cohort</li> <li>● Understanding the influence points for mental health policy</li> <li>● Deep dive into the various systems: i.e. executive, legislative, judicial branches</li> </ul> | <p><b>LEGISLATIVE SESSION PREPARATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learning about the legislative and budget process</li> <li>● Identifying priorities, researching policy solutions, developing legislative relationships, building advocacy collaborations, preparing policy briefs and other support documents</li> <li>● Policy fellow cohort building and networking among host organizations</li> </ul> | <p><b>TEXAS LEGISLATIVE SESSION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Collaborate with diverse stakeholders on issues of mutual interest</li> <li>● Continue meeting with legislators and staff</li> <li>● Provide education and technical assistance</li> <li>● Assist with bill development and hearing preparation</li> <li>● Provide testimony (oral and/or written)</li> <li>● Respond to inquiries for information</li> </ul> |
| YEAR 2  |   |  |
| <p><b>TRANSITION TO INTERIM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Evaluate and summarize legislative session outcomes and impact</li> <li>● Post-session policy strategy development</li> <li>● Participate in agency rule-making process</li> <li>● Continue engagement with diverse stakeholder groups</li> </ul>                                      | <p><b>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continue professional development within host agency and through the policy academy</li> <li>● Begin preparing for career advancement – resume preparation, interview skills, job search strategies</li> </ul>  | <p><b>PROGRAM WRAP-UP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Monitor implementation of legislative priorities</li> <li>● Create transition materials for the work to continue after fellowship</li> <li>● Participate in 1-week Washington, D.C. federal immersion experience</li> <li>● Identify ways for policy fellows and host organizations to stay engaged and connected</li> </ul>  |

While the program is focused on increasing and expanding advocacy to improve the mental health and well-being of Texans, it allows for flexibility in what the policy fellow does day-to-day, and which issues they work on. However, **the foundation is piloting a state-level focus on child, youth, and family mental health and well-being. Due to the nature of this grant and related legislative and policy-focused activities, preference will be given to organizations located in the Central Texas area.**

Organizations should consider their ability to provide the time and support to their fellow and mentor(s) to meet the expectation of participation in meetings and activities around the Central Texas area when applying. **An expectation of this grant is for both the fellow and the mentor(s) to actively participate in all cohort activities during the two-year period, including active participation in the [Hogg Mental Health Policy Academy](#).**

**The Hogg Mental Health Policy Academy** serves as a learning community for fellows and mentors, including **monthly meetings** that help build a sense of camaraderie. The Academy provides professional development opportunities on topics such as the basics of the legislative

process, the state's budget, and issue-specific presentations from experts in the field. *This will include increased presence at the Texas Capitol during the legislative session.* Other activities associated with the Academy may include additional meetings, retreats, webinars, site visits, presentations, and a federal immersion training hosted in Washington, D.C. **Organizations, mentors, and fellows will not be responsible for any costs related to Academy-related activities. All travel costs, including the Washington D.C. trip, for the fellow and a mentor are included in the grant.**

Throughout the two years, grant partners are expected to ensure the fellow has strong mentorship in both policy and mental health. Organizations may identify one mentor with both mental health and policy experience or two mentors sharing the mentoring responsibilities. **The mentor(s) may be selected from the organization's existing staff or contracted with from outside the organization.**

A mentor's skills, expertise, and accessibility are essential in the success of this program and selection of the mentor(s) is integral in the foundation's funding decision. **At time of application, organizations should have their mentor(s) identified. When identified, it is assumed the organization and mentor(s) have agreed upon the expectation of time and accessibility for the fellow and program.**

Additionally, each organization will identify a supervisor for the fellow who must be an employee of the organization. This individual may or may not be the fellow's mentor. This individual will be responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the fellow as an employee of the organization.

## **C. PROGRAM DETAILS**

### **1. Eligible Organizations**

Nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations, governmental entities, and higher education institutions in Texas are eligible to submit proposals. Applicants must be Texas-based or have offices, chapters, or affiliates in Texas. Examples of eligible organizations include nonprofits, advocacy organizations, colleges and universities, research-based organizations, and state, regional, and local government agencies.

Eligible organizations across the state are eligible to apply. Organizations outside of the Central Texas area should consider their ability to provide the time and support to their fellow and mentor(s) to meet the expectation of participation in meetings and activities around the Central Texas area when applying.

Organizations not currently engaged in policy, or policy organizations that have a desire to expand into mental health and/or substance use, may apply. This may include organizations focused on child welfare, education, juvenile justice, perinatal and infant health, early childhood, or other systems that would like to expand their work into policy and advocacy on the intersection of these systems and mental health.

### **2. Review and Selection Process**

Foundation staff will use a rating instrument to evaluate the merits of the proposals and select grant recipients.

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

- The organization’s recognition of the importance of individuals with lived experience in the development of policy;
- The project description’s alignment with the goals of the grant, including ability to meet participation expectations;
- How engaging in state-level policy work addressing child, youth, and family mental health aligns with the organization’s mission and vision;
- How the organization’s engagement in state-level policy work addressing child, youth, and family mental health aligns with or enhances the organization’s existing work;
- A fellow work plan with identified opportunities, including a range of policy and advocacy activities and anticipated issue area(s) of focus;
- The mentor(s) qualifications and experience in the areas of mental health and policy, including peer and recovery-related work; and
- The mentor(s) ability and accessibility to provide professional support to the fellow and participate in the program.

**3. Grant Term**

The grant term is for two years beginning July 1, 2024, and ends on June 30, 2026.

**4. Reporting Requirements**

The reporting requirements and due dates will be clearly stated in the statement of agreement between the grant partner and the foundation. The grant partner will be required to submit annual narrative and fiscal reports describing the implementation of the project during the designated grant period.

**5. Evaluation**

The Hogg Foundation may fund an external evaluation, or one may be conducted by foundation evaluation staff to assess the impact of this grant program. The evaluator will gather and assess information about the implementation and results of grant-funded activities of some or all grant partners. Grant partners are expected to cooperate fully with evaluation efforts and may also be asked to provide stories from staff, service recipients, community members, and other stakeholders that illustrate the grant’s impact.

**D. KEY DATES AND SUBMISSION PROCESS**

**1. Key Dates (all times are Central Time)**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Grant Coaching (Optional)</b><br/>         Sign up here:<br/> <a href="https://utexas.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6xppl1KNVXM6VGm">https://utexas.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6xppl1KNVXM6VGm</a></p> | <p>Available Friday, February 2, 2024, through Friday, March 1, 2024.</p> |
| <p><b>Submit Webinar Questions (Optional)</b><br/>         Questions due to <a href="mailto:hogg-grants@austin.utexas.edu">hogg-grants@austin.utexas.edu</a></p>  | <p>No later than Friday, February 9, 2024, 5:00 pm</p>                    |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Webinar registration (Optional)</b><br>Register here:<br><a href="https://utexas.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_e5sfyiSkTHvo62O">https://utexas.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_e5sfyiSkTHvo62O</a> | No later than Monday, February 12, 2024      |
| <b>Webinar</b><br>Zoom link will be provided upon registration.   | Tuesday, February 13, 2024, 10:00 – 11:30 am |
| <b>Webinar Recording and Q&amp;As</b><br>Posted at <a href="https://hogg.utexas.edu/funding-opportunities">https://hogg.utexas.edu/funding-opportunities</a>                                | No later than Monday, February 19, 2024      |
| <b>Grants management system (Fluxx) registration</b><br><a href="https://hogg.fluxx.io">https://hogg.fluxx.io</a>   | No later than Friday, March 1, 2024          |
| <b>Proposal due date</b><br><a href="https://hogg.fluxx.io">https://hogg.fluxx.io</a>   | Monday, March 11, 2024, 11:59 pm             |

## 2. Registration and Submission Process

In order to submit a proposal, applicants must first register with the Hogg Foundation’s grants management system (Fluxx) at least five business days before the proposal due date. Applicants will be required to enter a federal tax identification number.

Please go to <https://hogg.fluxx.io> and follow the instructions on the right side of the screen. If you think you already have an account in Fluxx, enter your username and password to be sure you have access. If you are successful, that means you are already registered with the system and do not need to register again to submit a proposal. **If you do not have an account, create a new account by Friday, March 1, 2024.**

In the interest of furthering security on our grant application and management site [Fluxx](#), the Hogg Foundation has implemented multifactor authentication (MFA) for all logins. This will entail each person logging in to Fluxx to have their own account, which will need to be tied to a specific mobile device using either Google Authenticator or SMS texts. Instructions for setting up MFA on your Fluxx account can be found [here](#).

**Completed proposals must be submitted online in [Fluxx](#) by Monday, March 11, 11:59 p.m. CST.** Applicants will need to upload the required documents as separate files. The system will notify applicants if their documents were not successfully uploaded.

Applicants will receive an automatic email notification that their proposal was received. If the proposal is incomplete, the respondent will be notified via email to submit completed documents by a new due date.

For technical assistance with the online submission process, please contact grants management staff at [hogg-grants@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:hogg-grants@austin.utexas.edu).

### 3. Webinar for Applicants (Optional)

The foundation will host an optional, informational webinar for applicants **Tuesday, February 13, 2024, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. CST**. *Please note that this webinar will address both the **Policy Fellow Grant** and the **Peer Policy Fellow Grant** RFPs.*

Register online in advance of the webinar at [https://utexas.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_e5sfyiSkTHvo62O](https://utexas.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_e5sfyiSkTHvo62O) no later than **Monday, February 12, 2024**. A Zoom link will be provided.

Questions for the webinar should be e-mailed in advance **by Friday, February 9, 2024, 5:00 p.m. CST**. [hogg-grants@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:hogg-grants@austin.utexas.edu).

A recording of the webinar and all Q&As will be posted online by **Monday, February 19, 2024**.

### 4. Inquiries

The foundation's communication with applicants is limited to the webinar, formal e-mail correspondence, and the website. Foundation staff will not individually respond to phone calls or e-mails regarding the RFP.

RFP questions may be e-mailed to [hogg-grants@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:hogg-grants@austin.utexas.edu). Responses that may be relevant to other applicants will be posted on the foundation's website [here](#).

For any technical inquiries with online submission process, contact grants management staff at [hogg-grants@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:hogg-grants@austin.utexas.edu).

### 5. Award Notification

Award notifications will be made in April 2024.

## E. GRANT PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

The completed proposal must be submitted online in [Fluxx](#) and must include the following components:

1. Proposal Summary
2. Proposal Details
3. Project Staff
4. Peer Policy Fellow Job Description
5. Project Budget
6. Fiscal Documents
7. Letter of Support from Partner Organization (if applicable)
8. Letter of Approval from University Grant Office (if applicable)

### 1. Proposal Summary

This section is required of the Fluxx grant application and cannot be changed. All fields need to be completed. This will serve as your proposal cover letter.



## 2. Proposal Details

This will be completed in Fluxx. The proposal narrative will describe the project in full by answering the following:

- How does your organization reflect recognition of the importance of individuals with lived experience in the development of policy?
- Provide a detailed project description, including organizational goals and objectives.
- What is the organization's mission and vision, and how do they align with state-level policy and advocacy work focused on child, youth, and family mental health and well-being?
- Describe the organization's current work related to mental health and/or policy.
- How does the organization's engagement in state-level policy work addressing child, youth, and family mental health align with or enhance the organization's existing work?
- Provide a fellow work plan with identified opportunities, including a range of policy and advocacy activities and anticipated issue area(s) of focus.
- Describe the mentor(s) qualifications and experience in mental health and policy, including peer and recovery-related work, and their ability and accessibility to provide professional support to the fellow and participate in the program.

## 3. Project Staff

This component is provided and must be completed and saved in the electronic form in Fluxx. Identify all key project staff, including mentor(s) and supervisor. For each key staff, include their name and title and upload resumes.

## 4. Peer Policy Fellow Job Description

This component must be saved in Fluxx. Upload a draft of the policy fellow job description that will be used for recruitment.

## 5. Project Budget

A template for the project budget is provided in Fluxx and includes instructions on how to complete and submit the project budget. **Please note that all budget categories are templated for a pre-determined amount or percentage. The only variables in the budget that the applicant will determine are the policy fellow's salary and the fringe benefits.**

## 6. Fiscal Documents

Applicants must submit the following fiscal documents to assist the foundation in assessing the organization's fiscal soundness:

- IRS letter of determination of 501(c)(3) status or tax-exempt status
- Most recent IRS Form 990

These will need to be requested by the applicant from their organization's fiscal office. Upload the documents in Fluxx under the Fiscal Organization Documents tab.

## 7. Letter of Support from Partner Organization (if applicable)

Applicants with proposals involving a collaboration or partnership with another organization must submit a signed letter of support. For example, if a mentor is selected from outside their

organization, a signed letter of support from the mentor's organization must be submitted with the applicant's proposal.

The letter of support must be on the partner organization's letterhead and must be signed by the head of the organization, such as the executive director, president, or CEO. The applicant will upload the letter in Fluxx under the Application Documents tab under the Required Application Documents section.

#### **8. Letter of Approval from University Grant Office (if applicable)**

Applicants from, or partnering with, a higher education institution must submit a signed letter of approval on letterhead from the institution's grant office (such as the Office of Sponsored Projects or Grants and Contracts.) This letter must either approve the submission of the proposal or state that such approval is not required.

The grant office review and approval process may take several business days, so please check with your institution and plan accordingly. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit proposals to the grant office well before the proposal due date to allow sufficient time for review and approval.

The applicant will upload the letter in Fluxx under the Application Documents tab under the Required Application Documents section.