



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

Maryland Walkability Virtual Academy (Maryland WVA)

(January 1, 2022 – September 30, 2022)

Maryland WVA Team Application

Informational Webinar: Monday, October 4, 2021, 11:00 am ET

<https://chronicdisease.zoom.us/j/3753846737>

Phone: +1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 375 384 6737

Applications Due: Friday, November 5, 2021, by 11:59 p.m. ET

(Submit via https://marylanddoh.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bvkrkCHMtyzC646)

A. PURPOSE

The Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Control (CCDPC) at the Maryland Department of Health (MDH), in collaboration with the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD), seeks applications from interdisciplinary community teams, which could be governmental or non-governmental organizations, to participate in the Maryland Walkability Virtual Academy (Maryland WVA) to increase walking and walkability in their communities. Physical inactivity is a risk factor for chronic diseases and leading cause of death and debilitation for heart disease, stroke, hypertension, obesity, type 2 diabetes, and some types of cancer. According to the 2019 BRFSS, only 52.2% of Maryland adults participated in at least 150 minutes of physical activity weekly.¹

The purpose of the academy is to prepare interdisciplinary teams from Maryland communities to pursue policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) supports for walking and walkability. This virtual academy will provide teams with the most up-to-date academic and applied learning methods and will reinforce and support implementation of significant national public health policy statements promoting walking and walkability, such as the *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition, Step It Up! Surgeon General's Call to Action (SG CTA) to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities*, the *Community Preventive Services Task Force's Built Environment Recommendations* (also known more commonly as the *Community Guide*), and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's [Activity Friendly Routes to Everyday Destinations](#) and [Active People Health Nation](#) initiatives. The CCDPC and NACDD are interested in applicant teams who can commit to **all** project deliverables outlined in this request for the Maryland WVA Team application and produce measurable PSE outcomes after attending the virtual academy.

¹ 2019 Maryland Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Regular physical activity can lead to reductions in chronic disease risk and burden. Walking is an easy, cost-efficient, and common form of physical activity that can help many more people meet the *2019 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd Edition* and obtain health benefits. Most people can walk or “move”, including many people with disabilities who are able to walk or move with assistive devices such as wheelchairs or walkers. Improved walkability and movability can make communities safer, support social cohesion, reduce air pollution, and benefit local economies. To promote walkability and movability throughout Maryland, CCDPC will partner with NACDD to provide training to interdisciplinary community teams (governmental or non-governmental organizations) to participate in the Maryland WVA to create more equitable access to opportunities for walking, improved walkability, movability, community, and transportation design, policies, and practices.

The CCDPC seeks collaborative applications from local governmental and non-governmental organizations in any of the 24 Maryland jurisdictions. All trainings will be virtual and occur biweekly between January 2022 and June 2022; trainings will be provided at no cost to the participant by an expert course faculty team.

All members of the teams selected must commit to participate in each of the following project activities:

- **(OPTIONAL)** Attend an informational webinar on Monday, October 4, 2021, at 11:00 am ET to learn about course expectations, anticipated homework activities, and team action planning.
- Attend 100% of the 12 virtual Maryland WVA sessions starting January 12, 2022, through June 22, 2022 (Please refer to Appendix A for complete Maryland WVA timeline).
- Participate fully and actively in each session and complete homework assignments and team presentations as assigned throughout the course.
- Develop a team action plan inclusive of evidence-based PSE strategies that align with those in the SG CTA, Community Guide, and Appendix C;
- Begin implementation of action plan strategies; and
- **(OPTIONAL)** Join NACDD’s national Walkability Alumni Network for ongoing bi-monthly peer engagement Community of Practice (CoP) meetings

Applicant teams must include at least four (representatives from public health, planning, transportation, and an elected official), but no more than eight, team members. Either the required Public Health representative or the required Planning representative for each community team will assume the role of **Team Lead**, representing the community team and serving as a primary point-of-contact for CCDPC/NACDD throughout the project. (Please refer to Section C below for more details on the “required” and “additional” team make-up). In addition to overseeing team participation in project activities listed above, Team Leads also must commit to:

- Participate in one Team Lead group orientation call on TBD date in December with CCDPC/NACDD
- Assist CCDPC/ NACDD with progress reporting activities.

Olubukola Alonge, MD, MPH is the MDH representative and will provide state-based support, leadership, and resources to the community team(s). She will serve as the **State Expert Advisor** to the

community teams throughout the project process, will attend the Maryland WVA with the selected teams, and will be a full project participant. Dr Alonge can be reached via email at Olubukola.alonge@maryland.gov or via phone at 410-767-6739.

The virtual academy will provide applied learning and skill-building instruction to support achievement of related PSE strategies for increasing walking and walkability, including design and infrastructure improvements, as supported by the SG CTA and Community Guide. This institute will be facilitated by a nationally renowned cadre of faculty within a structured, team-based, and practical learning atmosphere. The Walkability Virtual Academy will occur between January 12, 2022, and September 30, 2022, with the structured trainings ending by June 22, 2022.

C. ELIGIBILITY and TEAM MAKE-UP

Eligible applicants for this application include interdisciplinary teams from geographical regions represented by the community teams, which will implement PSE supports for walking, walkability, and walkable communities. Preferred teams will include no more than eight (8) individuals each, with four (4) of the prospective team members representing the following required team positions:

- Public Health representative at the community level;
- Planning representative in the applicant community;
- Transportation representative (preferably in engineering) in the applicant community;
- Elected official in the applicant community with voting, programmatic, or policy decision-making capabilities pertaining to walkability, active living, community development/redevelopment, healthy community design, and/or transportation design.

Suggestions for additional team member(s) can be seen below (these **are not** required team positions):

- Business/Industry;
- Economic Development;
- Education;
- Parks, Recreation, and Trails;
- Public Housing;
- Public Transit;
- Law enforcement;
- Volunteer/nonprofit walkability-related advocacy organizations or foundations; and
- Others (please note that applicants are expected to explain in the application justification section the involvement of additional disciplines not listed here).

It is strongly recommended the transportation professional, or one of the other members (for example, the "required" elected official or the "additional" team member), have an engineering background and/or infrastructure-focused responsibility, such as a public works director. NACDD acknowledges in the past, teams including engineering and/or public works expertise and perspective have benefited greatly.

CCDPC will make team selections based upon the successful combination of the following criteria:

- Strength and diversity of team make-up, as outlined above;

- Past, current, and future PSE efforts targeting improved walkability through community design, and/or transportation design;
- Demonstrated capacity and level of readiness for implementing macro-level PSE changes; and
- Ability to target underserved population groups, and places; and
- Demonstrated geographic and population diversity.

Applicants are encouraged to consider past, current, and potential for future collaboration as well as anticipated level of influence to improve walking and walkability at population levels when developing their team. Each applicant team should have a designated **Team Lead** to serve as a primary point-of-contact for CCDPC/ NACDD throughout the project. *This must either be the Public Health or Planning representative from the community team.* Applicants who fail to develop the required team make-up may not be considered. The team must be in place at the time of application submission no later than November 5, 2021.

D. ANTICIPATED TIMELINE and DESCRIPTION

The anticipated project timeline and description is detailed in Appendix A. Team selection notices will be announced by December 6, 2021, (anticipated) for a project period beginning on January 12, 2022 and ending on September 30, 2022. NACDD has established a national Walkability Alumni Network CoP virtual peer group in which the Maryland WVA alumni teams will have the ability to join and further discuss course topics and related implementation with other alumni teams from across the country. CCDPC in collaboration with NACDD will also establish a progress reporting mechanism for Team Leads to report on team action plan outcomes.

E. PROJECT DELIVERABLES

The required Maryland WVA project deliverables for ALL participating teams are bulleted below:

Deliverables to be achieved during application process:

- Appointment of a community Public Health representative to the applicant team (required);
- Appointment of a community Planning representative to the applicant team (required);
- Designation of the Team Lead (either the Public Health or Planning representative) to serve as a primary point-of-contact for CCDPC/ NACDD throughout the project process (required);
- Appointment of a community Transportation representative (preferably in engineering) to the applicant team (required);
- Appointment of a community Elected Official for the applicant team (required); and
- Appointment of up to four additional team members from contributing disciplines (optional).

Deliverables to be achieved upon notice of award and throughout project:

- (Team Leads only) Once selected for participation, Team Leads to participate in one Team Lead group orientation call on TBD date in December with CCDPC/NACDD.
- Once selected for participation, complete all pre-course activities, such as the Team Contact Chart and Team Bios, in accordance with CCDPC/NACDD deadlines.

- Participate in **100%** of the sessions of the Maryland WVA, as well as participate fully in team homework and presentation assignments throughout the course. (Please see Appendix A for complete timeline).
- Complete daily evaluations for the MD WVA sessions and one overall course evaluation at the end of the course.
- Develop a Team Action Plan by July 15, 2022 including short- and long-term outcomes, inclusive of at least one (ideally more than one) PSE outcome targeting improved walkability through community design or transportation design strategies as outlined by guiding documents, such as the US Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities, the Community Preventive Services Task Force Recommendations to Increase Physical Activity (Community Guide), as well as other implementation resources outlined in Appendix C. (NACDD will provide related action plan template, training, and resource documents).
- Upon completion of the Maryland WVA, all team members will then be invited to become members of NACDD’s Walkability Alumni CoP peer group and may then voluntarily participate in this bi-monthly virtual Walkability CoP group, in efforts to foster ongoing peer engagement, sharing and learning, and provision of targeted technical assistance for implementation of outcomes. The eligible CoP group meeting dates for 2022 for MD WVA participants are outlined in Appendix A.
- Team Leads to voluntarily participate in semi-annual and/or annual online voluntary **progress reporting** to NACDD once Team Action Plans are developed and submitted. NACDD will establish online semi-annual voluntary progress reporting schedule. Additional progress reporting measures may be developed with CCDPC.

F. APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

Collaborative applications for this application must include the completed Maryland WVA **Team Application Form (Appendix B)** **AND** a **Letter of Commitment from each team member** indicating commitment for all aspects of the Maryland WVA project period (not just attendance in the virtual academy). Application forms submitted without the accompanying letters of commitment will **NOT** be reviewed.

The **Team Application Form** will consist of a multi-page, writable Word document with scoring sections and will include the components and specifications listed below. The scored components of the application cannot exceed five total pages:

- Designated space on Part A of the application form must define the community and target population to be reached, identify the names, and contact information of the community Planning representative, Public Health representative, required team members, and up to four additional team members (required component; not scored; does not count towards the page limit)
- Applicant teams must also indicate the Team Lead in designated space on the cover page(s) (required component; not scored; does not count towards the page limit);
- The scored components of the application form must not exceed five pages. It must be 1.5 or double-spaced, and must be typed using Calibri, size 11 font (required component; scored, does count towards page limit);

- The signature sheet of the application form must be signed by the community Planning *and* Public Health representatives for the application to be considered complete (required component; not scored; does not count towards the page limit); and
- Applications not using the appropriate form, or applications without all sections completed, will NOT be reviewed.

All Letters of Commitment must be submitted with the Team Application Form, indicating full commitment and participation in all project processes and activities, in collaboration with each other and CCDPC/ NACDD:

- One Letter of Commitment from each required team member on each required team member's respective agency letterhead. This letter of commitment does not count towards the page limit. The letter must demonstrate the following:
 - Commitment to collaborate throughout the project;
 - Commitment to accomplish the stated project deliverables (Section E) and within the project's anticipated timeline (Appendix A);
 - Commitment to ongoing collaboration and long-term implementation of PSE action plan strategies beyond the project period to make the community more walkable; and
 - Commitment to work closely with CCDPC/NACDD and the Team Lead throughout the project, including assisting the Team Lead with progress report activities as outlined in Section E and Appendix A.
- In addition to the items listed above, the Team Lead must additionally commit to the following in his/her Letter of Commitment:
 - Serve as the primary point-of-contact for CCDPC/ NACDD;
 - Distributing all relevant course materials — before, during, and after the course;
 - Assist CCDPC/NACDD with all necessary paperwork (such as Team Contact Chart and Team Bios) in advance of the course;
 - Establish the Team Action Plan by July 15, 2022, and initiate implementation; and
 - Provide CCDPC/NACDD with progress reporting of established working agreement and implementation process.

Please complete and submit the application using the provided link https://marylanddoh.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bvkrCHMtyzC646 to Olubukola Alonge, MD, MPH of CCDPC by 11:59 p.m. ET on November 5, 2021. A completed application will consist of:

- A completed Application Form *and* the letters of commitment from the required team representatives of Public Health, Planning, Transportation, and Elected Officials.
- Hard copy and fax applications will not be accepted.

All applications received by the deadline will receive a CCDPC email acknowledging receipt of application. Applications submitted after 11:59 p.m. ET on November 5, 2021, will NOT be reviewed.

G. SELECTION PROCESS

Community team applicants must demonstrate how they will participate in the project's required deliverables as described in section E, their capacity and commitment to implement one or more

suggested implementation strategies (examples provided in Appendix C) within their respective communities, and how soon their team can move towards PSE implementation.

All applications will be scored and reviewed by representatives of CCDPC and NACDD. The selection committee reserves the right to select community teams who demonstrate increased readiness for implementation.

H. CCDPC/NACDD PARTNERSHIP COMMITMENT

CCDPC/NACDD commits to providing regular and consistent communication, consultation, and project assistance and support to team awardees via email, conference calls, group webinars, and linkages to national expertise in accordance with the deliverables described in Section E and per the request of the team awardees.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS APPLICATION

- To learn more about NACDD’s Walkability Action Institute (*currently Walkability Virtual Academy since the start of the COVID pandemic*) project, please click [here](#).
- To learn more about NACDD, please visit www.chronicdisease.org.
- To read more about the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s [Active People Healthy Nation](#) and [Activity Friendly Routes to Everyday Destinations](#).
- For further information on the US SG CTA released in September 2015, please visit: http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/walking/call-to-action/index.htm?s_cid=bb-dnpao-calltoaction-005 and <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/calls/walking-and-walkable-communities/index.html>.
- For further information about the Guide to Community Preventive Services (The Community Guide), please visit: <https://www.thecommunityguide.org>.
 - For further information about the Preventive Services Task Force, please visit: <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/task-force/about-community-preventive-services-task-force>.
 - For further information about the Community Preventive Services Task Force’s Built Environment Recommendations, please visit: <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/physical-activity-built-environment-approaches>.
 - For further information about the Community Preventive Services Task Force’s Findings and Rationale Statement, please visit: <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/sites/default/files/assets/PA-Built-Environments.pdf>, with attention to Tables 1 and 2 on page 3.
- For questions about the Maryland WVA application process, please email Olubukola Alonge at olubukola.alonge@maryland.gov and Karma Harris at kedwards_ic@chronicdisease.org.