

## **2022-2023 Behavioral Health + Economics Network**

### *Request for Applications*

#### **Introduction**

The National Council for Mental Wellbeing (National Council) is pleased to invite its state association members to apply to participate in the 2022-2023 Behavioral Health + Economics Network (BHECON) project. The goal of the project is to support state associations both in their educational and advocacy efforts intended to improve the lives of people living with serious mental illness and to strengthen states' behavioral health delivery systems. Each selected state association partner will receive a monetary stipend, and other support from National Council, in addition to raising the profile of their organization within their state and nationally. The deadline for submission of proposals is 8:00 PM ET on August 24, 2022.

#### **About BHECON**

The Behavioral Health + Economics Network is a vehicle for uniting diverse stakeholders to strengthen state behavioral health delivery systems. Led by the National Council along with its state association partners, BHECON optimizes public visibility through state forums and educational advocacy events, and uniting collaborative groups in data-driven dialogue around educational advocacy.

The National Council initiated BHECON in 2016 and has since engaged twelve states in hosting successful statewide forums and educational advocacy events. This year, BHECON is focusing its efforts on addressing the intersection of behavioral health and criminal justice from a five-step approach: 1) Prevention from Entering the System, 2) Pre-Entry, 3) In the System, 4) Re-Entry, and 5) Prevention from Recidivism.

The National Council is soliciting applications from its state association partners to participate in the next iteration of this initiative. BHECON activities are generously supported by Otsuka and Johnson & Johnson.

#### **Program Expectations**

Each participating state association partner that is selected will agree to:

**Host Forums:** In cooperation with the National Council, selected state association partners agree to host at least one (1) statewide forum over a period of one year that will leverage state specific opportunities that address the intersection of behavioral health and criminal justice to improve the health and lives of individuals with serious mental illness, that may include co-occurring disorders, crisis response, and access to treatment.

\*NOTE: Due to funding restrictions, BHECON support is available for multiple issues related to serious mental illness (including co-occurring substance use disorders). However, BHECON-funded activities cannot focus exclusively on the opioid epidemic or addiction issues.

**Host Educational Advocacy Event:** In cooperation with the National Council, selected state association partners agree to host one (1) educational advocacy event. This event is a strategic way to educate policymakers about the issues identified during the forums and to generate media attention about these issues. The event may take any type of form that gives participants ready access to educate legislators and advocate for important issues; this can include meetings with state legislators or organization Hill Days.

**Involve Diverse Stakeholders:** In addition to providers of mental health services, state association partners agree to engage with stakeholders from a diverse array of fields. These stakeholders may include but are not limited to: representatives from the criminal justice system (e.g., judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys), law enforcement officials (e.g., sheriffs, police officers), substance abuse treatment providers, veterans and veterans' services organizations, children and adolescent services organizations, primary care providers, hospitals, medical associations, mental health consumers, key policymakers, and state administrators.

**Attend BHECON Forum During the National Council's 2023 Annual Conference:** State association partners agree to attend a forum sponsored by BHECON during the National Council's Annual Conference between May 1-3, 2023, in Los Angeles, CA. The forum will feature presentations and panel discussions on using research data to support advocacy, building strategic partnerships, and future trends and innovations in behavioral health.

### **Role of the National Council**

**Funding Support:** The National Council will provide a \$10,000 stipend to the selected state association participants (the stipend is shared if there are multiple partners/co-applicants) to cover staff and travel costs related to forums, educational advocacy events, and other approved activities. Separate from the stipend, the National Council will cover pre-authorized costs associated with the forums/events, which may include catering, event space rental, A/V charges, and other associated expenses.

**Additional Support:** Additional support may be provided to state association partners including communications support and training or technical assistance related to the topics discussed at the BHECON project forums.

**BHECON Website:** The National Council will maintain the BHECON website with information showcasing state partners, events and activities, important research, or user-friendly data summaries to support states' advocacy efforts. Resources may include fact sheets, social media posts, shareable infographics, advocacy toolkits, and/or other types of communications to support public education and

state advocacy efforts of BHECON participants. National Council maintains sole discretion in sharing information on National Council's media channels.

### **How to Apply**

Applications may be submitted online and are due no later than 8:00 PM ET on August 24, 2022. The application content can be found on pages 4-5 of this document. Applications are intended to take no more than 30 minutes to complete. To submit your online application, please go to:

<https://forms.office.com/r/yfKmJyNVje>

For questions about this program or the application process contact Aaron Polacek at [AaronP@thenationalcouncil.org](mailto:AaronP@thenationalcouncil.org).

**2022-2023 Behavioral Health + Economics Network  
Application Questions**

**Section I Background Information**

<b>Organizational Information</b>	
Applicant Organization Name	
Co-Applicant Organization Name (Optional)	
Applicant Organization Mailing Address	
How many, if any, CCBHCs are members of your State Association?	
Is your organization a <a href="#">National Council member?</a>	
If your organization is NOT a National Council member, identify a co-applicant organization on this effort who is a National Council member.	

\*Note: Eligible applicant organizations are [National Council state association members](#) OR non-members applying in partnership with a National Council state association member.

<b>Applicant and Team Member Information</b>	
Applicant First and Last Name	
Applicant Title	
Applicant Email Address	
Staff Lead First and Last Name	
Staff Lead Title	
Staff Lead Email Address	
Name(s) and Title(s) of Additional Team Members who will be participating in BHECON	

**Section II Short Answer**

1. Why does your organization/state want to participate in BHECON? What are your state association’s advocacy priorities? (250-word limit)
  
2. Have you previously worked with the criminal justice system, including law enforcement and the courts, in addressing issues such as diversion and re-entry of people with serious mental illness into community-based treatment? If yes, provide clear examples and descriptions. (250-word limit)
  
3. As identified above, BHECON 2022-2023 is focusing its efforts on addressing the intersection of behavioral health and criminal justice from a five-step approach: 1) Prevention from Entering the System, 2) Pre-Entry, 3) In the System, 4) Re-Entry, and 5) Prevention from Recidivism. Can you describe your interests and activities that intersect with at least three of these steps? (500-word limit)

**Section III BHECON Participation Checklist and Applicant Confirmation**

<p>By checking the boxes on the right, I affirm that my organization will fulfill these program requirements and have held any associated dates on team calendars, as needed.</p>	<p>Program Requirements</p> <p>I affirm that my organization will complete the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify a staff lead</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Participate in one (1) kick-off call with the National Council (specific date TBD, tentative date during the week of October 10, 2022)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Participate in forum planning calls, as needed</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Host at least one (1) forum within a period of one (1) year following the kick-off call</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Host at least one (1) educational advocacy event</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Attend the BHECON Forum during the National Council's Annual Conference between May 1-3, 2023, in Los Angeles, CA.</li></ul>
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