

Partnering with the State of Arizona on Upcoming Funding Opportunities for the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

A guide for Arizona's Tribal Nations — Two pathways to engage with the State

As **AHCCCS, ADHS, and OEO** prepare to release and post upcoming funding opportunities, we are committed to ensuring Arizona's Tribal Nations have clear, accessible, and actionable information about the **two available pathways** for engagement with the State. This guide explains each pathway in detail, *including key requirements, expectations, and considerations*, so that Tribal Nations can make informed decisions about which option best aligns with their priorities and supports the needs of their communities.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY

- ✓ **Tribal** Nations & Health Departments
- ✓ **Tribal** Higher Ed Partners, CTED, AHEC
- ✓ **Tribally** Operated Health Facilities (638, IHS, TBHA, etc.)
- ✓ **Tribal** Community Based Organizations
- ✓ **Inter**-Tribal Organizations
- ✓ **Tribal** Provider Consortia & Associations
- ✓ **Urban** Indian Health Orgs (serving rural)

1 TWO PATHWAYS TRIBAL NATIONS COULD ENGAGE WITH THE STATE

PATHWAY 1

Government-to-Government



A direct, government-to-government engagement pathway in which Tribal Nations work collaboratively with **AHCCCS** through formal consultation to pursue eligible funding under the **Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)**. This approach is grounded in respect for Tribal sovereignty and emphasizes ongoing coordination, transparency, and tailored support.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

- **Designated Point of Contact:** Participating Tribal Nations are assigned a dedicated AHCCCS liaison who serves as the primary contact for all RHTP-related communication and coordination.
- **Structured Consultation Process:** Engagement begins with formal consultation meetings to discuss Tribal priorities, funding opportunities, and alignment with RHTP goals.
- **Pre-Proposal Support:** AHCCCS provides one-on-one guidance to help Tribal Nations assess project eligibility, clarify requirements, and identify the most appropriate funding approach.
- **Proposal Development Assistance:** Ongoing technical assistance is available during the agreement development process, including review of draft materials, feedback on program design, and support in strengthening proposals.
- **Budget Planning & Review:** AHCCCS works collaboratively with Tribal Nations to develop and refine budgets, ensuring alignment with program guidelines and federal funding requirements.
- **Compliance & Reporting Support:** Guidance on federal and state compliance expectations, including documentation, performance metrics, and quarterly reporting.
- **Ongoing Engagement & Capacity Support:** Regular check-ins, office hours, and participation in Tribal Health Summits ensure continued communication and problem-solving.

What “Dedicated Agency Support” means

- ✓ Consistent access to a dedicated AHCCCS staff who understand your Nation's project and priorities
- ✓ Proactive outreach to provide updates, reminders, and resources
- ✓ A collaborative, partnership-based approach

PATHWAY 2 Vendor / Contractor Partnership



A competitive procurement pathway in which Tribal Nations partner with a vendor or contractor who submits an application for RHTP funding **on behalf of the partnership**. This pathway allows Tribal Nations to leverage external expertise (i.e., grants management and reporting infrastructure) and existing relationships while still playing an active role in shaping project design and outcomes.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

- **Evaluation Incentive:** Proposals that demonstrate meaningful Tribal engagement may receive up to a 5% bonus in evaluation scoring, as defined in the procurement criteria.
- **Partnership Formation:** Tribal Nations identify and enter into agreements with a preferred vendor or contractor.
- **Defined Roles & Responsibilities:** Prior to application submission, the Tribal Nation and vendor establish clear roles, including decision-making authority and responsibilities for implementation.
- **Application Submission by Vendor:** The vendor or contractor leads the preparation and submission of the application, incorporating Tribal Nation input.
- **Competitive Procurement Process:** Applications are evaluated through a formal scoring process. Selection is not guaranteed.
- **Case-by-Case Technical Assistance:** AHCCCS may provide limited technical assistance during the procurement process, depending on capacity.

What “Meaningful Tribal Engagement” means

- ✓ Early and ongoing involvement of the Tribal Nation in project design and planning
- ✓ Clear documentation of Tribal input and how it shapes the proposal
- ✓ Defined benefits for the Tribal community
- ✓ Evidence of partnership, such as letters of support

① Key Considerations

- Flexibility to work with trusted partners, but involves competitive bidding
- The Tribal Nation’s role may vary by partnership structure
- The up to 5% evaluation bonus does not guarantee award



2 KEY DIFFERENCES AT A GLANCE

The table below summarizes the key differences to help you compare pathways at a glance

Feature	Government-to-Government	Vendor / Contractor Partnership
Process Type	Direct consultation with the agency you will be working with, by initiative	Competitive procurement that opens the door to partnerships with experienced organizations who bring established grant management systems, reporting infrastructure, and operational capacity
Technical Assistance (TA)	Dedicated TA throughout the full lifecycle (incl. program implementation support)	TA is available on a case-by-case basis; partner agencies with existing grant expertise can provide robust day-to-day administrative and compliance support, reducing the operational burden on your Nation
Application Support	Co-developed with AHCCCS: Pre-application consultation, budget & RGA development, application review	Vendor/contractor or Tribal Nation leads the application and budget development process, leveraging the partner’s grant writing experience and infrastructure to build a strong submission
Evaluation Bonus	N/A — direct pathway	Up to +5% evaluation bonus for demonstrated Tribal engagement, a tangible recognition of your Nation’s leadership role in shaping the program and community benefit

Engagement Evidence Required	Lead role through direct consultation	Defined through partnership agreement
Best Fit When...	Your Nation wants to directly shape scope, budget, and outcomes with the State	You have a trusted partner with strong grant management and reporting infrastructure, and want to maximize community benefit while reducing your Nation's administrative load




3 RHTP FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES ROLLOUT TIMEFRAME

The timeline below outlines when each pathway becomes available and key milestones for planning.

STAGE 0 SPRING 2026	STAGE 1 LATE SPRING – EARLY SUMMER 2026	STAGE 2 SUMMER – FALL 2026	STAGE 3 LATE FALL – EARLY WINTER 2026
<p>Early Engagement & Planning</p> <p>Tribal Nations may begin engaging with AHCCCS through the G2G pathway — consultation, project planning, and pre-application support.</p> <p><i>NOTE: This phase is specific to the G2G pathway; occurs prior to procurement release.</i></p>	<p>Procurements Go Public</p> <p>Agencies formally release procurement opportunities.</p> <p><i>NOTE: This marks the start of the competitive Vendor/Contractor Partnership pathway.</i></p>	<p>Award Decisions</p> <p>Applications are reviewed and awards are announced on a rolling basis.</p>	<p>Implementation Begins</p> <p>Awarded projects launch in partnership with the State.</p>

4 AGENCY OVERVIEW & FOCUS AREAS

This section provides a high-level overview of the State agencies leading key RHTP initiatives, along with their primary focus areas.

 <p>FOCUS AREAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral Health & SUD: Expanding clinical capacity and access to integrated, evidence-based behavioral health and SUD treatment in rural and Tribal communities • Telehealth & Digital Transformation: Increasing equitable access to care through telehealth expansion and digital infrastructure modernization • Rural Health Innovation: Supporting new or expanded access points for primary, preventive, and specialty care • Rural Health System Strengthening: Building resilient, integrated rural health networks through shared services and community-based care hubs 	 <p>FOCUS AREAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic Disease Prevention & Management: Strengthening regional capacity to prevent and manage chronic conditions and improve long-term health outcomes • Maternal & Child Health: Improving health outcomes for mothers and babies through coordinated prevention, early intervention, and continuity of care 	 <p>FOCUS AREAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Development: Recruiting, training, and retaining a skilled healthcare workforce to serve rural and Tribal communities
<p>CONTACT: Katie Pompay, RHTP State Project Officer; Katie.Pompay@azahcccs.gov</p>	<p>CONTACT: Celia Nabor, Assistant Director, Public Health Prevention Services; Celia.Nabor@azdhs.gov</p>	<p>CONTACT: Kathryn Belous, Workforce Strategies Administrator; Kathryn.belous@oeo.az.gov</p>

NEXT STEPS

- **Review Arizona's Notice of Award 12/29/2025:** Familiarize with the State's award notice, key funding parameters, and Rural Health Transformation Program and Standard Federal Terms and Conditions to inform your Nation's decision making. Click [here](#) or visit www.azahcccs.gov/AHCCCS/Initiatives/RHTP/ to learn more.
- **Review the Pathways:** Review the two engagement pathways and consider which option best aligns with your Nation's priorities and capacity.
 - **For Government-to-Government (G2G) Engagement:** Contact the relevant agency lead(s) listed above to express interest—ideally before procurements are publicly released. Request a pre-consultation meeting to begin discussing your Nation's priorities and potential project ideas.
 - **For Vendor / Contractor Partnership:** Begin identifying potential partners and establishing partnership agreements. Prepare supporting materials, such as letters of support and documentation of meaningful Tribal engagement.
- **Complete the Tribal Interest Form: Please use the QR code below.** This form allows Arizona Tribal stakeholders, or designees acting on behalf of a Tribe, to submit funding-aligned program requests for consideration under the Arizona Rural Health Transformation Program. Arizona recognizes Tribal sovereignty and approaches this interest form as a preliminary planning tool for deeper collaboration and transparency.
- **Register for the May 27th Ad-Hoc Tribal Consultation: Using the QR codes below,** register to attend the Ad-Hoc Tribal Consultation either in person or via Zoom. This consultation will be held at the Executive Tower in Phoenix.



Tribal Interest Form



Zoom Registration



In-Person Registration