



PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

PARTNERS FOR HEALTH EQUITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Kresge Foundation awards \$100,000 grant to the Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts to build climate resilience, improve health

The [Kresge Foundation](#) has awarded the [Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts](#) a \$100,000 grant to advance policy solutions aimed at improving climate resilience and equitably reducing health risks in low-income communities. The Springfield Climate Justice Initiative, a new project of the [Live Well Springfield](#) coalition convened by the Public Health Institute, is one of 15 community-based collaborations nationwide receiving grant funding as part of the planning phase of Kresge's [Climate Change, Health and Equity](#) initiative.

The Springfield Climate Justice Initiative will focus on planning and implementing strategies identified in the [2017 Strong, Healthy, & Just: Springfield Climate Action & Resilience Plan](#) for reducing GHG emissions and improving climate resilience in Springfield, Massachusetts. Our planning will focus on developing front-line residents' capacity to accelerate municipal action on the top GHG emissions reduction strategies included in the Climate Action Plan.

With this funding, the collaborators who worked together to develop the city's Strong, Healthy & Just Plan—the [Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts](#), [Pioneer Valley Planning Commission](#), [Arise for Social Justice](#), and the City of Springfield —will work with partners from other sectors to develop multi-year work plans to address community-defined health and climate priorities. Our new partners in this Live Well Springfield initiative are [Way Finders](#), [Ener-G-Save](#) and the City of Springfield's new Sustainability Coordinator. Specific activities will include building the capacity of residents and stakeholders related to climate action and its health equity impacts, conducting additional research to rank and prioritize climate actions as well as identifying the health equity impacts of proposed actions.

“With a ten-year opportunity to avert the worst consequences of our climate crisis, this grant will give us the opportunity to build, nurture and develop community leadership and advocacy to accelerate implementation of the city's 2017 climate plan,” said Jessica Collins, Executive Director of the Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts.

“Climate change is impacting people in real ways – today. The good news is that community leaders across the country are making smart choices about how they can combat climate change while improving people’s lives and well-being, Lois DeBacker, managing director of the foundation’s Environment Program, said. “Our newly awarded grants will help more communities proactively tackle the health risks that climate change introduces or exacerbate.”

Following the one-year planning phase, Kresge will award multi-year grants to up to 12 planning grant recipients.

The organizations will be supported by the [Institute for Sustainable Communities](#), which serves as the national program office for the planning phase of the community-based strategy of the Climate Change, Health & Equity initiative. ISC's mission is to help communities around the world address environmental, economic and social challenges to build a better future shaped and shared by all.

For more information on the Climate Change, Health & Equity initiative, visit www.kresge.org/CCHE.

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About The Kresge Foundation:

The Kresge Foundation was founded in 1924 to promote human progress. Today, Kresge fulfills that mission by building and strengthening pathways to opportunity for low-income people in America’s cities, seeking to dismantle structural and systemic barriers to equality and justice. Using a full array of grant, loan, and other investment tools, Kresge invests more than \$160 million annually to foster economic and social change. For more information visit kresge.org.

About the Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts

Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts (PHIWM) provides skills, expertise, and experience to create successful public health campaigns and sustainable system changes to improve health and well-being in Western MA. Through partnerships, we build on community assets and build community capacity to positively impact social determinants of health. PHIWM convenes the Live Well Springfield coalition, **which** brings together over 30 organizations working together to build and sustain a culture of health in Springfield. www.publichealthwm.org/