

Connecting the Community for Maternal Health Challenge

- [Overview](#)
- [Topic Areas](#)
- [Prize Winners](#)
- [More Information](#)

Overview

In 2022, the National Institutes of Health launched a \$3 million challenge competition to encourage community-based and advocacy organizations in the United States to develop the infrastructure and capabilities necessary to conduct maternal health research. In addition to competing for cash prizes, participating organizations received training and mentoring in writing research proposals and building maternal health research infrastructure.

Final winners were announced in September 2024.

Topic Areas

NICHD sponsored this challenge as part of NIH's [Implementing a Maternal health and PRenancy Outcomes Vision for Everyone \(IMPROVE\) Initiative](#). The initiative supports research to reduce preventable causes of maternal deaths and to improve health for women before, during and after delivery. IMPROVE includes a special emphasis on health disparities and populations disproportionately affected, such as African American/Black women, American Indians/Alaska Natives, Asian Pacific Islanders, Hispanics/Latinas, very young women, women of advanced maternal age, and people with disabilities.

The three-phase challenge was open to non-academic, 501(c)(3) organizations based in the United States, including advocacy, community, and faith-based organizations.

Prize Winners

Gathering Phase

- The Abundance Project, Colorado
- The Afiya Center, Texas
- AHIMA Foundation Team, Illinois

- Arizona Perinatal Trust, Arizona
- Atlanta Birth Center, Georgia
- Buffalo Prenatal Perinatal Network, Inc., New York
- Central Jersey Family Health Consortium, New Jersey
- Doula CO-OP of Reno, Nevada
- Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Hawaii, Hawaii
- Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies, The Montana Coalition, Inc., Montana
- HealthConnect One, Illinois
- Hispanic Health Council, New Jersey
- Nuturely, Oregon
- Postpartum Support International, Iowa
- The Weitzman Institute, Connecticut

Proposal Phase

- The Abundance Project, Colorado
- AHIMA Foundation Team, Illinois
- Atlanta Birth Center, Georgia
- Buffalo Prenatal Perinatal Network, Inc., New York
- Central Jersey Family Health Consortium, New Jersey
- Doula CO-OP of Reno, Nevada
- HealthConnect One, Illinois
- Nuturely, Oregon
- Postpartum Support International, Iowa

Research Phase

- First prize – Nuturely, Oregon
- Second prize – Central Jersey Family Health Consortium, New Jersey
- Third prize
 - The Abundance Project, Colorado
 - Atlanta Birth Center, Georgia
 - Buffalo Prenatal Perinatal Network, Inc., New York
 - Claris Health, CA (formerly AHIMA Foundation Team, Illinois)
 - Doula CO-OP of Reno, Nevada
 - HealthConnect One, Illinois

More Information

- Final winners announcement: <https://www.nichd.nih.gov/newsroom/news/090524-winners-connecting-community-maternal-health-challenge>
- IMPROVE Initiative Connecting the Community Research Showcase (July 11, 2024)
 - [Webinar recording](#)
- Proposal Phase winners announcement: <https://www.nichd.nih.gov/newsroom/news/062223-community-challenge-IMPROVE>
- Submission portal: <https://www.herox.com/CommunityMaternalHealth>
- [Connecting the Community for Maternal Health Challenge Webinar Series](#) (September 8, 15, and 22, 2022)
- NIH news release: <https://www.nichd.nih.gov/newsroom/news/090122-maternal-health-research>
- Notice of intent to announce: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-HD-22-039.html>