

California Commission *for* Behavioral Health

# Innovation Partnership Fund

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# An Invitation to Brave Space

By Micky ScottBey Jones



Together we will create *brave space*.  
Because there is no such thing as a “safe space” —  
We exist in the real world.  
We all carry scars and we have all caused wounds.

In this space  
We seek to turn down the volume of the outside world,  
We amplify voices that fight to be heard elsewhere,  
We call each other to more truth and love.  
We have the right to start somewhere and continue to grow.  
We have the responsibility to examine what we think we know.

We will not be perfect.  
This space will not be perfect.  
It will not always be what we wish it to be.  
But  
It will be *our brave space together*,  
*and*  
*We will work on it side by side.*

# CONTEXT

This conversation builds on a thoughtful and evolving dialogue the Commission has engaged over the past several meetings regarding the Innovation Partnership Fund.

Those discussions and the *Call for Concepts* have surfaced key ideas, themes, and questions to help guide and spark the next phase of deliberation

Themes raised by Commissioners and the public.....







# Goals for our discussion today

- 1 **Ground the work in shared goals and values** that reflect the Commission's commitment to equity, community partnership, and system transformation;
- 2 **Explore the impact the Innovation Partnership Fund will have** at the individual, community, and system levels;
- 3 **Discuss the potential structure and approach of the Fund**, including how it can support innovation, scale, and sustainability; and
- 4 **Identify the critical questions the Commission must answer** together throughout the design process to ensure the Fund is inclusive, effective, and transformative.

Innovation Partnership Fund

# Developing the framework

10-minute sprint discussions on framework components to solicit initial input and feedback to further refine the Innovation Partnership Fund.





# Areas of discussion and consideration

- Clarify the vision and goals
- Define investment pillars
- Fund structure and types of support
- Governance and decision-making
- Capacity-building and technical assistance
- Data, metrics, and outcomes
- Financial sustainability and policy change
- Communications and storytelling



# Clarify the Vision and Goals

Ground the Innovation Partnership Fund in a shared “north star”—what do we hope to achieve at the system, community, and individual level?

## Framing Ideas

- Catalyze bold, community-driven innovations in behavioral health.
- Expand equitable access, engagement, and outcomes for underserved populations, especially youth and older adults.
- Support transformational models that integrate lived experience, cultural relevance, and system redesign.

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# Which of these statements speaks to you the most?



Catalyze bold, community-driven innovations in behavioral health.

Expand equitable access, engagement, and outcomes for underserved populations, especially youth and older adults.

Support transformational models that integrate lived experience, cultural relevance, and system redesign.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

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Which of these statements speaks to you the most?

Catalyze bold community-driven innovations in behavioral health.

Expand equitable access, engagement, and outcomes for underserved populations.

Support transformational models that integrate lived experience, cultural relevance, and system redesign.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

Do we need to create a bigger table?

Need to create the space for being different and new organizations to be built.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

What outcomes should be measured?



# DISCUSSION PROMPTS

What overarching outcome should this Fund aim to achieve?

What gaps or inequities are we trying to close?

How do we want to describe success 5 years from now?

# Define Investment Pillars

Establish funding priorities or “pillars” to guide selection and ensure balance across innovation types and communities.

## Potential Pillars (*Examples*)

- **Access Expansion:** Reaching underserved or unserved populations.
- **Community-Defined Practices:** Centering culturally rooted and non-clinical models.
- **System Innovation:** Reimagining delivery, payment, or workforce structures.
- **Peer-Led Innovation:** Elevating lived expertise in design and delivery, specific to youth and older adults.
- **Cross-Sector Solutions and Partnerships:** Integrating behavioral health with housing, education, justice, etc.

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# What other pillars are important to consider?

transpiration  
leader bold  
creative  
fast  
inspiration  
focus



The screenshot displays the Mentimeter web interface. At the top, the Mentimeter logo is visible. Below it, a large QR code is shown for quick access. To the right of the QR code, the text 'Menti' and 'New presentation' are displayed. Below this, a section titled 'Choose a slide to present' shows a list of four slides, each with a thumbnail image and a title. The first slide is titled 'Which of these attributes are most important to you?' and the second is 'What is the most important skill?'. At the bottom right, a small icon indicates '0/1' and a person icon.



# DISCUSSION PROMPTS

Which pillars are most urgent or underfunded today that could have an impact with new funding?

Should the Commission reserve portions of funding for specific pillars?

How does the Commission ensure innovation reflects both risk-taking and relevance?

# Fund Structure and Types of Fiscal Support

Determine how funding will be deployed to support a diverse range of ideas and organizations.

## Framing Ideas

- **Grant tiers:** Planning, piloting, and scaling grants.
- **Size and duration:** E.g., \$250k for pilot, up to \$5M for scale.
- **Eligibility:** CBOs, counties, tribal governments, collaboratives, etc.
- **Flexible funding:** Support for operations, staffing, outreach, tech, etc.

# Example of Fund Structure

**Seed Grants (\$100K–\$500K):** For early-stage ideas and smaller community-based organizations.

**Growth Grants (\$500K–\$1.5M):** For proven models looking to expand or replicate.

**Challenge Prizes:** Open competitions for specific problems (e.g., older adult isolation and youth suicide prevention).

**Catalyst Investments:** Public-private partnerships to attract philanthropic or corporate co-investment.





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## Which categories are most important?

1st | Seed Grants (\$100K–\$500K)

2nd | Growth Grants (\$500K–\$1.5M)

3rd | Challenge Prizes

4th | Catalyst Investments



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Which of these statements speaks to you the most?

Catalyst build community relationships in the local health.

Expandable access, engagement, and outcomes for underserved populations.

Support transitional models that integrate local experience, culture, resources, and systems.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

Do we need to create a bigger table?

Need to create programs to bring different voices and organizations to the table.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

What outcomes should be measured?

# DISCUSSION PROMPTS

Should you include different tracks for readiness levels (early-stage vs. scaling)?

How do you make funding accessible to smaller, community-led groups?

Should fiscal intermediaries or collaboratives be supported to carry out regional efforts?

# Governance and Decision-Making

Ensure fund decisions are inclusive, transparent, and accountable to the communities served.

## Framing Ideas

- Utilize Program Advisory Committee to iterate and develop framework.
- Transparent scoring criteria co-designed with community.
- Inclusion of equity guardrails in decision-making, this may include prioritizing applications or concepts that focus on the lowest Healthy Places Index quartiles to ensure focus on underserved and low-income populations.
- Create mechanism for feedback from community, including individuals with lived experience, providers, community leaders, and technical experts.



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# What aspect of governance is most important to you

All responses to your question will be shown here

Each response can be up to 200 characters long

Turn on voting to let participants vote for their favorites



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Choose a slide to present

Which of these statements speaks to you the most?

Catalyze bold, community-driven innovations in behavior/health.

Expand equitable access, engagement, and outcomes for underserved populations.

Support transformational models that integrate lived experience, cultural relevance, and system redesigns.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

Do we need to create a bigger table?

Need to create the space to bring different and new organizations to the table.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

What outcomes should be measured?

# DISCUSSION PROMPTS

What governance model builds public trust and legitimacy?

How do we ensure meaningful community voice in decision-making?

How does the Commission engage CalHHS, DHCS, HCAI, and CDPH as part of process?

# Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance

Level the playing field so emerging or community-led organizations can compete, grow, and succeed.

## Framing Ideas

- Grant-writing support and office hours.
- Fiscal sponsorship and compliance help.
- Evaluation, storytelling, and communications coaching.
- Peer learning communities and mentorship.



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# Do we need to create a bigger table?

Need to create the space to bring different and new organizations to the table.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

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# DISCUSSION PROMPTS

What TA supports should be built into the Fund from the start?

Should TA providers be procured as a core part of Fund infrastructure?

How do we support capacity without overburdening grantees?

# Data, Metrics & Outcomes

Define what success looks like early and how the Fund will learn and improve over time.

## Framing Ideas

- **Access metrics:** New populations reached, service touchpoints created.
- **Engagement & outcomes:** Retention in care, user-reported improvement.
- **System change:** New policies adopted, practices institutionalized.
- **Learning & feedback:** Stories of change, qualitative and quantitative insight.

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## What outcomes should be measured?

All responses to your question will be shown here

Each response can be up to 200 characters long

Turn on voting to let people vote for their favorites



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What outcomes should be measured?

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# DISCUSSION PROMPTS

What's the right balance  
between rigor and  
flexibility in evaluation?

Should you co-develop  
metrics with grantees?

How can you ensure  
evaluation uplifts  
community knowledge?



# Financial Sustainability and Policy Change

Ensure that impactful innovations live beyond the grant term and influence broader system changes.

## Framing Ideas

- Blend and braid private and philanthropic investments strategically.
- Connect innovations to Medi-Cal reimbursement pathways.
- Align with CalAIM, Prop 1 implementation, BH-CONNECT, etc.
- Create data sandbox to enable quick learning to drive policy change.
- Real-time feedback loop to assess what is working and what is not working.

# DISCUSSION PROMPTS

What would make an innovation “stick” beyond the grant period?

How do you link local innovation to system-wide reform?

Should sustainability be a scoring criterion or a TA focus?

# Communication and Storytelling

Share what works, lift-up community voices, and build public will for behavioral health transformation.

## Framing Ideas

- Fund grantees to develop storytelling and community media.
- Create an innovation portfolio website or digital hub.
- Host statewide showcases, webinars, and convenings.
- Build narrative power for equity, inclusion, and dignity in care.

# DISCUSSION PROMPTS

How do you elevate the voices of people closest to the work?

Should storytelling be a deliverable or supported through TA?

How do you ensure learning is shared with state and local leaders?

## Innovation Partnership Fund

# Next Steps

- Convene Program Advisory Committee
- Engage community and public
- Consult with state partners
- Develop framework for Commission approval





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What gives you HOPE?

leader  
bold focus  
creative  
fast  
transpiration inspiration



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What outcomes should be measured?

What gives you HOPE?

What aspect of governance is most important to you?

0/1





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# Thank you!