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GUIDANCE FOR USE

Administration for Children and Families UNIFORM PROJECT DESCRIPTION

WHAT IT IS:

The Uniform Project Description (**UPD**) is a series of options, implemented in the electronic Announcement Module (AM) template, from which Program Office (PO) staff select the requirements of the Project Description and the Project Budget and Budget Justification that applicants will submit in response to a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) issued by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). The UPD is approved for use in all discretionary ACF FOAs used in the competitive award of grants and cooperative agreements. A modified version of the UPD is used to solicit a project description, budget, and budget justification from applicants designated to receive non-competitive continuation, earmark, or solicited single-source awards.

The UPD is not approved for use to solicit application requirements under an FOA for mandatory, or formula, federal funds.

HOW THE UPD IS USED:

PO staff should choose only those options that are necessary to elicit sufficient information from applicants so that objective reviewers and staff may determine whether an applicant has appropriately responded to the stated evaluation criteria in the FOA. POs will use some but not all of the options available in the UPD.

- For example, most FOAs would include the text option entitled “Approach.” Only FOAs that award grants requiring a match or cost share would include the text option for “Commitment of Non-Federal Resources.”
- Text options, including their titles, may not be modified in any way. Though the UPD is a generic project description and budget justification, a few text options may be tailored for the specific FOA’s requirements. Text boxes are available for those options.
- Text boxes allowing the PO to tailor an option for a specific program are available only for the following options:
 - ◆ **Letter of Intent.** This option may only be modified to include the method of submission for the Letter of Intent (LOI). The purpose of an LOIs is to project the number of applications so that the PO can plan for an appropriate number of reviewers that will be required for the competition. PO staff may only modify the LOI option by adding the method of submission, i.e., mailing address and/or

email address. UUPOs may not request any information in addition to the approved description.

- ◆ **Expected Outcomes.** A text box is available to allow the PO to define specific outcomes as they relate to the goals of the offered program. The outcomes must relate to the program goals described in *Section I. Program Description* of the FOA.
- ◆ **Approach.** A text box is available that allows the PO to include specific directions for applicants that will tailor the part of the project description to the requirements of the specific program described by the FOA.
- ◆ **Program Performance Evaluation Plan.** A text box is available to allow the PO to include specific data points that an applicant would be expected to use when developing a plan for ongoing evaluation of their program performance. This is a plan for ongoing self-evaluation.
- ◆ **Funded Activities Evaluation Plan.** A text box is available to allow the PO to include specific data points that the applicant should include in their plan for a rigorous evaluation of funded activities. This is a plan for a third-party evaluation.
- ◆ **Legal Status of Applicant Entity.** This is a two-part option: The first part of this option offers POs the opportunity to list the types of documentation required so that an applicant may support their eligibility to receive an award. The second part provides optional, standard language selections for non-profit status documentation.
- ◆ **Additional Eligibility Documentation.** The text box is available for the PO to specify documentation required of otherwise eligible applicants that is related to a programmatic eligibility requirement.
- ◆ **Business Plan.** This option may be tailored to include specific requirements for a business plan, which is an integral part of applications under some specific programs.
- ◆ **Project Budget and Budget Justification.** A text box is available to allow the PO to include a reminder of costs that should be included in the proposed project's budget and budget justification, e.g. travel costs and per diem for project staff to attend required meetings with PO staff in Washington, DC. The text box may also be used to provide instruction on how an applicant should fill in the standard government-wide application budget forms (SF 424A and 424C) for programs that are interoperable.

The UPD is installed in ACF's Announcement Module System, which houses the electronic template for all ACF discretionary FOAs. It is not possible to alter the approved text of the UPD

so that, other than these few options, any revisions or additions to UPD text options, is not possible.

OTHER INFORMATION COLLECTIONS IN FOAs:

- **Pre-Award Information Collections:** It is acceptable to include references and URLs to program-specific application forms and formats in ACF FOAs in conjunction with the UPD only when those collections have received approval OMB/OIRA approval under the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act.
- FOAs that include forms, formats or other requests for information that are not approved information collections, may not be included in ACF FOAs. Division of Grants Policy (DGP) will identify any such collections during the FOA compliance review.
- **Post-Award Information Collections, Other than Reporting:** If a PO requires a specific set of questions, or domains, for evaluation of a project **post-award**, DGP will assist the PO in determining whether the collection requires OMB/OIRA approval. Here are two examples of the types of situations for information collections that are not covered by the UPD and would require a separate clearance:
 1. The initial year of the project is dedicated to a planning process, while the remaining project period is dedicated to implementation. Prior to award of the second budget period's funds, **the PO requires the submission of a separate implementation plan for approval.** The request for the **implementation plan** would be considered a separate information collection if it meets the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act by applying to 10 or more respondents. In this case, there would need to be 10 or more grantees.
 2. As part of the project, a successful applicant organization will act as an intermediary that awards sub-grants. **As a term of the award, the grantee must receive approval from the PO for its plan to award sub-grants.** The collection of information involved in the required submission of the sub-grant plan is not part of the UPD or of the application submission, therefore it is not a cleared collection. And, since there are specific requirements that must be included in the plan for it to be approved by the PO, it is considered a separate information collection that must be cleared by OMB under the PRA requirements.
- **Program-specific Reporting Requirements:** All reporting requirements that are in addition to ACF's standard form for Program Performance Reporting (PPR) are required to have OMB/OIRA approval if the reporting requirements apply to 10 or more respondents.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT (PRA)

Whenever information is solicited from the public, or from a non-Federal agency, the requesting Federal agency must implement the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

(PRA) [44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3520] <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/laws/paperwork-reduction/>.

A NOTE CONCERNING INFORMATION COLLECTIONS in MANDATORY and/or FORMULA FOAs:

The UPD is not approved for use in FOAs announcing the availability of mandatory or formula funds. However, the Paperwork Reduction Act requirements still apply to these information collections. Under these FOAs, the number of respondents applies to both applicants (pre-award information collection) and to grantees (post-award information collection/reporting).

In mandatory/formula FOAs, eligibility is limited to a pre-designated group of applicants so that the number of respondents is usually the same for application as for reporting requirements. Because each FOA for mandatory awards is unique, separate clearances from OMB/OIRA under the PRA are required for their information collections. **There is no generic UPD for mandatory FOAs.** It is advisable that PO staffs contact ACF's OMB/PRA Liaison in the Office of Policy, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) concerning the currency of, or need for, OMB clearances under the PRA.

PO staff should begin this process well before submission of a draft mandatory/formula FOA for compliance review. Lack of the required clearances will delay the FOA in the compliance review and might delay approval and publication.

For more information on the requirements of the PRA, please contact:

For FOA content and UPD usage questions: Please contact your designated DGP Contact	For OMB/OIRA clearance related questions: Robert Sargis Reports Clearance Officer OPRE
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Project Description Options

Instructions to Drafters: *The Project Description is a series of standardized and generic text options that can be used, as needed, to inform applicants of the requirements for developing a project description, budget, and budget justification in response to a specific FOA. It is the single OMB-cleared information collection to be used by applicants under ACF FOAs. Most program-specific project description requirements can be integrated into the UPD text options that allow such additions.*

The Project Description-Budget/Budget Justification

Use the available options and text boxes to provide clear instruction to applicants on what applicants must submit in their applications. A copy of the full Project Description is available in the Help tab.

If the FOA was pre-populated from an older FOA, be sure to double-check that everything the applicant must submit is indicated under this section. New options may have been added to the Project Description and/or Budget Justification since the older FOA.

Project Description and Budget/Budget Justification requirements must appear only in this section of the FOA.

Please Note:

- **Letters of Intent** and their method of submission are included in the Project Description. Drafters need only add an email or mailing address. **Drafters may not add requirements!**
- Do not re-write or add to the requirements of the standard Project Summary/Abstract.
- Do not use the Review Criteria in Section V.1. to communicate application requirements.
- Program-specific project description requirements must be added to the text box under, "Approach."
- **Do not try to link parts of the FOA internally.** The links will not work properly. You may only add references to other sections of the FOA.

If necessary, Drafters may use the formatting section to illustrate how an applicant should fill in certain items on SF-424s. If certain items in the SF-424 are referenced, be sure to check the form so that the references are correct. The most recent versions of the SF-424 family are available at Grants.gov under the Forms/424-Family.

The Project Description Overview

Purpose

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. The project description should be concise and complete. It should address the activity for which federal funds are being requested. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. In preparing the project description, information that is responsive to each of the evaluation criteria in Section V.1. must be provided. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

General Expectations and Instructions

ACF is particularly interested in specific project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing

should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant-funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

General Instructions for Preparing a Full Project Description

Introduction

Applicants must prepare the project description according to the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria that will be used by reviewers and found in *Section V.1.* of this announcement. The topics listed in this section provide an overview of what the project description must include while the evaluation criteria in *Section V.1.* identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

Check Box: Letter of Intent

Instructions to Drafters: Letters of Intent are optional.

Use the text box to provide applicants with the method of submission only (name, address, phone, email, fax number, etc.). Please note that the due date for the Letter of Intent must be included in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.*

Do not add requirements for the Letter of Intent.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to notify ACF of their intention to submit an application under this announcement. Please submit the letter of intent by the deadline date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3 Submission Dates and Times.* The letter of intent should include the following information: number and title of this announcement; the name and address of the applicant organization; and/or Fiscal Agent (if known); and the name, phone number, fax number and email address of a contact person. Letter of intent information will be used to determine the number of expert reviewers needed to evaluate applications. The letter of intent is **optional**.

Failure to submit a letter of intent will not impact eligibility to submit an application and will not disqualify an application from competitive review.

Text Field: Letter of Intent

Check Box: Table of Contents

Instructions to Drafters: Check the box to include in the FOA.

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers.

Check Box: Project Summary/Abstract

Instructions to Drafters: Please do not add additional information collection to the Summary/Abstract by including it in other sections of the FOA, including the evaluation criteria.

Provide a summary of the application's project description. The summary must be clear, accurate, concise, and without reference to other parts of the application. The abstract must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the abstract:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax)
- E-Mail Address
- Web Site Address, if applicable

The project abstract must be single-spaced and limited to one page in length.

Check Box: Objectives And Need For Assistance

Instructions to Drafters: Check the box to include in the FOA.

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance, including the nature and scope of the problem, must be demonstrated, and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly and concisely stated. Supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies or needs assessments should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as needed. In developing the project description, the applicant may volunteer or be requested to provide information on the total range of projects currently being conducted and supported (or to be initiated), some of which may be outside the scope of the funding opportunity announcement.

Check Box: Expected Outcomes

Instructions to Drafters: *This option requests applicants to define their projected outcomes in relation to the overall goals for the FOA. Outcomes are the impact received from activities a grantee and its partner(s) implement; they are what program participants or the target population receive as a result of the funded activities. Outcomes should relate to the overall goals of the program, as described in Section I. Program Description.*

FOAs that require identification of specific outcomes for applicants must include that information in Section I. of the FOA. Program goals may not be introduced in this section, which is the request for the Project Description.

Identify the outcomes to be derived from the project. Outcomes should relate to the overall goals of the project as described in Section I. Program Description. If research is part of the proposed work, outcomes must include hypothesized results and implications of the proposed research.

Text Field: **Expected Outcomes**

Check Box: Approach

Instructions to Drafters: *This text option provides an opportunity to describe program-specific requirements of the project description that are the critical elements used by objective reviewers in the application review process.*

Using the text box, include specific instructions for applicants on the program-specific requirements for their project descriptions so that this text option is tailored to the requirements described by the FOA. There are no limits on the amount of text Drafters may input; however, it is not advisable to repeat standard requirements for all applicants that appear earlier in the template.

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors that might

accelerate or decelerate the work and state your reason for taking the proposed approach rather than other approaches. Describe any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement.

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the outcomes to be achieved for each function or activity in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. For example, each project task could be assigned to a row in the first column of a grid. Then, a unit of time could be assigned to each subsequent column, beginning with the first unit (i.e., week, month, quarter) of the project and ending with the last. Shading, arrows, or other markings could be used across the applicable grid boxes or cells, representing units of time, to indicate the approximate duration and/or frequency of each task and its start and end dates within the project period.

When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

Text Field: Approach

Check Box: Project Timeline and Milestones

Instructions to Drafters: *This text option requests that applicants provide a project management plan, including a project timeline, and a description of key milestones in their proposed project.*

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function, or activity, in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. For example, each project task could be assigned to a row in the first column of a grid. Then, a unit of time could be assigned to each subsequent column, beginning with the first unit (i.e., week, month, quarter) of the project and ending with the last. Shading, arrows, or other markings could be used across the applicable grid boxes or cells, representing units of time, to indicate the approximate duration and/or frequency of each task and its start and end dates within the project period.

When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

Check Box: Program Performance Evaluation Plan

Instructions to Drafters: *This evaluation request refers to a plan that will be submitted as part of the application for funding. **This does not include evaluations that are post-award.***

*Two options for evaluation plans are offered for requests of evaluation plans as part of the application submission. Drafters may select **one or both** of the evaluation options. Text boxes are available so that Drafters may provide examples that are specific to the FOA.*

NOTE: *Drafters may include a selection under "LOGIC MODEL" as the requirement for a logic model is referenced in the description for the evaluation plan.*

Applicants must describe the plan for the program performance evaluation that will contribute to continuous quality improvement. The program performance evaluation should monitor ongoing processes and the progress towards the goals and objectives of the project. Include descriptions of the inputs (e.g.,

organizational profile, collaborative partners, key staff, budget, and other resources), key processes, and expected outcomes of the funded activities. The plan may be supported by a logic model and must explain how the inputs, processes and outcomes will be measured, and how the resulting information will be used to inform improvement of funded activities.

Applicants must describe the systems and processes that will support the organization's performance management requirements through effective tracking of performance outcomes, including a description of how the organization will collect and manage data (e.g. assigned skilled staff, data management software) in a way that allows for accurate and timely reporting of performance outcomes. Applicants must describe any potential obstacles for implementing the program performance evaluation and how those obstacles will be addressed.

Text Field: Program Performance Evaluation Plan

Check Box: Funded Activities Evaluation Plan

Instructions to Drafters: *This evaluation request refers to a plan that will be submitted as part of the application for funding. **This does not include evaluations that are post-award.***

*Two options for evaluation plans are offered for requests of evaluation plans as part of the application submission. Drafters may select **one or both** of the evaluation options. Text boxes are available so that Drafters may provide examples that are specific to the FOA.*

NOTE: *Drafters must also include a selection under "LOGIC MODEL" as the requirement for a logic model is referenced in the description for the evaluation plan.*

Applicants must describe the plan for rigorous evaluation of funded activities. The evaluation may be supported by a logic model. The evaluation must assess processes and progress towards the goals and objectives of the project, and whether the project is having the expected effects and impacts. The evaluation plan must specify expected outcomes and any research questions. The plan must discuss how the results of this evaluation will provide greater understanding and improvement of the funded activities. The plan must include a valid and reliable measurement plan and sound methodological design. Details regarding the proposed data collection activities, the participants, and data management, and analyses plans must be described. Applicants must describe any potential obstacles foreseen in implementation of the planned evaluation and how those obstacles will be addressed.

Text Field: Funded Activities Evaluation Plan

Check Box: Geographic Location

Instructions to Drafters: Check the box to select this option.

Describe the precise location of the project and boundaries of the area to be served by the proposed project. Maps or other graphic aids may be attached.

Check Box: Legal Status of Applicant Entity

Instructions to Drafters: *This is a two-part text option:*

Part 1 may be used alone. Part 1 consists of checking the box to include the title of "Legal Status, etc...." and the lead-in sentence "Applicants must provide the following documentation of their legal status:"

*In the **Part 1 text box**, list the specific types of documentation required from an applicant in order to certify their legal status and/or eligibility. This may include, but is not limited to, items such as, Governing Board Membership Documentation, Tribal resolutions, assurances from a governing Board, articles of incorporation.*

Applicants must provide the following documentation of their legal status:

Text Field: Legal Status of Applicant Entity

PART 2: Legal Status of Applicant Entity: Non-profit status.

PART 2 MAY NOT BE USED ALONE! Part 2 must be used in conjunction with Part 1 (title and lead-in sentence).

There are three options available. Drafters will choose 1 of the 3 options.

**If non-profit organizations were selected as eligible applicants in FORECAST, the first text option will be pre-selected but may not be specific to the types of non-profit organizations eligible under this FOA.*

Check Box: **Option 1: 501(c)(3) and non-501(c)(3) non-profit organizations are eligible**

Non-profit organizations applying for funding are required to submit proof of their non-profit status. Proof of non-profit status is any one of the following:

- A reference to the applicant organization's listing in the IRS's most recent list of tax-exempt organizations described in the IRS Code.
- A copy of a currently valid IRS tax-exemption certificate.
- A statement from a state taxing body, state attorney general, or other appropriate state official certifying that the applicant organization has non-profit status and that none of the net earnings accrue to any private shareholders or individuals.
- A certified copy of the organization's certificate of incorporation or similar document that clearly establishes non-profit status.
- Any of the items in the subparagraphs immediately above for a state or national parent organization and a statement signed by the parent organization that the applicant organization is a local non-profit affiliate.

Unless directed otherwise, applicants must include proof of non-profit status in the *Appendices* file of the electronic application submission.

Check Box: **Option 2: Only 501(c)(3) organizations are eligible**

Non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations applying for funding are required to submit proof of their non-profit status. Proof of 501(c)(3) non-profit status is any one of the following:

- A reference to the applicant organization's listing in the IRS's most recent list of tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organizations described in the IRS Code.
- A copy of a currently valid IRS 501(c)(3) tax-exemption certificate.

Unless directed otherwise, applicants must include proof of non-profit status in the *Appendices* file of the electronic application submission.

Check Box: **Option 3: 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations are eligible**

Non-profit 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations applying for funding are required to submit proof of their non-profit status. Proof of 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) non-profit status is any one of the following:

- A reference to the applicant organization's listing in the IRS's most recent list of tax-exempt 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) organizations described in the IRS Code.
- A copy of a currently valid IRS 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) tax-exemption certificate.

Unless directed otherwise, applicants must include proof of non-profit status in the *Appendices* file of the electronic application submission.

Check Box: Additional Eligibility Documentation

Instructions to Drafters: *This is a new option that requests applicants to submit required documentation or credentials that will support their eligibility.*

Documentation/credentials requested under this option should also be described in Section III.1. Eligible Applicants or in Section III.1. Additional Information on Eligibility.

Applicants must provide the additional, required documentation, or required credentials, to support eligibility for an award, as described in *Section III. Eligibility Information* of this announcement:

Text Field: Additional Eligibility Documentation

Check Box: Logic Model

Instructions to Drafters: Select **one** of the logic model styles as a required part of the project description.

Applicants must submit a logic model for designing and managing their project. A logic model is a one-page diagram that presents the conceptual framework for a proposed project and explains the links among program elements. While there are many versions of logic models, for the purposes of this announcement the logic model should summarize the connections between the:

- Goals of the project (e.g., objectives, reasons for proposing the interventions, if applicable);
- Assumptions (e.g., beliefs about how the program will work and its supporting resources. Assumptions should be based on research, best practices, and experience);
- Inputs (e.g., organizational profile, collaborative partners, key staff, budget);
- Target population (e.g., the individuals to be served);
- Activities (e.g., approach, listing key intervention, if applicable);
- Outputs (i.e., the direct products or deliverables of program activities); and
- Outcomes (i.e., the results of a program, typically describing a change in people or systems).

Check Box: Logic Model

Applicants must submit a logic model for designing and managing their project. A logic model is a tool that presents the conceptual framework for a proposed project and explains the linkages among program elements. While there are many versions of the logic model, they generally summarize the logical connections among the needs that are the focus of the project, project goals and objectives, the target population, project inputs (resources), the proposed activities/processes/outputs directed toward the target population, the expected short- and long-term outcomes the initiative is designed to achieve, and the evaluation plan for measuring the extent to which proposed processes and outcomes actually occur.

Check Box: Project Sustainability Plan

Instructions to Drafters: If the planned project period under the FOA is for 36 month, 48 months, or 60 months, this UPD text option must be selected for inclusion in the FOA. Additionally, **review of the plan for project continuance beyond grant support must be included in the evaluation criteria in Section V.1. Criteria.**

Policy: *HHS Action Transmittal, OG-AT-2009-01, "Evaluating Sustainability of HHS Projects," effective: 01/07/2009 (available in the Help tab).*

Provide a plan for sustainability that details how the proposed project approach will create project self-sufficiency and help to ensure that the impact of the project will continue after Federal assistance has ended. The applicant may include information on plans to secure additional financial resources.

Check Box: Business Plan

Instructions to Drafters: If a business plan is a required for the project description, select this option and use the text box to describe its required elements. Drafters may use this text box to provide definitions, descriptions, requirements, and/or any necessary instructions.

When Federal grant funds will be used to support a business operation, provide a business plan. The business plan shall include:

Text Field: Business Plan

Organizational Capacity

Instructions to Drafters: Check the boxes for the items that applicants must include in their application submission. This text option assumes that at least one item in the checklist will be selected. If no items are selected in the checklist, the text on staff and position data will not appear.

Applicants must submit the following information on the applicant organization and, if applicable, on any cooperating partner organizations:

- Organizational charts;
- Resumes (no more than two single-spaced pages in length);
- Curricula Vitae (CV);
- Biographical Sketches (short narrative description);
- College transcripts for graduate student research fellows;
- List of Board of Directors;
- Financial statements adhering to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), if available, submit statements for up to the two most recently completed fiscal years (this requirement does not apply to start-up organizations);
- Audit reports or statements from Certified Public Accountants/Licensed Public Accountants, if available, submit statements for up to the two most recently completed fiscal years (this requirement does not apply to start-up organizations);
- Copy or description of the applicant organization's fiscal control and accountability procedures;
- Evidence that the applicant organization, and any partnering organizations, have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of programs similar to that offered under this announcement;
- Evidence that each participating organization, including partners and/or subcontractors, possess the organizational capability to fulfill their role(s) and function(s) effectively;
- Copy or description of the applicant organization's personnel policies;
- Names of payment/performance Bond carriers used by the applicant organization (construction projects);
- Child care licenses and other documentation of professional accreditation;
- Information on compliance with federal/state/local government standards;

- Job descriptions for each vacant key position.

Check Box: Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information

Instructions to Drafters: Select this option if applicants are required to provide a plan to protect any sensitive or confidential information.

If any confidential or sensitive information will be collected during the course of the project, whether from staff (e.g., background investigations) or project participants and/or project beneficiaries, provide a description of the methods that will be used to ensure that confidential and/or sensitive information is properly handled and safeguarded. Also provide a plan for the disposition of such information at the end of the project period.

Check Box: Dissemination Plan

Instructions to Drafters: Check the box to include this option.

Provide a plan for distributing reports and other project outputs to colleagues and to the public. Applicants must provide a description of the method, volume, and timing of distribution.

Check Box: Third-Party Agreements

Instructions to Drafters: Three types of third-party agreements are offered for selection. Drafters may select as many of the available options as is necessary for the FOA. Though the term "letters of commitment" is often used instead of third-party agreements, the term approved in the information collection is "third-party agreements."

Check Box: Provide written and signed agreements between grantees and subgrantees, or subcontractors, or other cooperating entities. These agreements must detail the scope of work to be performed, work schedules, remuneration, and other terms and conditions that structure or define the relationship.

Check Box: Collaboration/consortia applicants must provide letters of commitment or MOU identifying the primary applicant that is responsible for administering the grant. The primary applicant must provide documentation of the commitments made by partnering organizations and describe in detail their roles and responsibilities as partners in the collaboration/consortia.

Check Box: A third-party agreement covering a loan transaction must contain, at a minimum, the following information: (1) purpose(s) for which the loan is being made; (2) interest rates and other fees; (3) terms of the loan; (4) repayment schedules; (5) Collateral security; (6) default and collection procedures; (7) signatures of the authorized officials of the lender and the borrower.

Check Box: A third-party agreement covering an equity investment must contain, at a minimum, the following: (1) purpose(s) for which the equity investment is being made; (2) the type of equity transaction (e.g. stock purchase); (3) cost per share and basis on which the cost per share is derived; (4) number of shares being purchased; (5) percentage of ownership in the business; (6) term of duration of the agreement; (7) number of seats on the board, if applicable; (8) signatures of the authorized officials of the grantee and third party organization.

Check Box: Letters Of Support

Instructions to Drafters: Check the box to include this option.

Provide statements from community, public, and commercial leaders that support the project proposed for funding. All submissions should be included in the application package or by the application deadline.

Check Box: Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds

Instructions to Drafters: Check the box to include in the Project Description request for information.

Provide a plan describing how oversight of federal funds will be ensured and how grant activities and partner(s) will adhere to applicable federal and programmatic regulations. Applicants must identify staff that will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities, staff, and partner(s). Applicants must describe procedures and policies used to oversee staff and/or partners/contractors.

Describe organizational records systems that relate financial data to performance data by identifying the source and application of federal funds so that they demonstrate effective control over and accountability for funds, compare outlays with budget amounts, and provide accounting records supported by source documentation.

Budget and Budget Justification Options

Instructions to Drafters: Select an option that describes the budget development required for application submission under this FOA.

A text box is provided after the 3 options to allow PO Drafters to provide further directions to applicants on filling out the SF-424A or the SF-424C. **The text box may not be used to request additional budget information.**

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is input on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C. The budget justification is a line-item detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. Calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching or cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance).

Project budget calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching or cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance). See the table in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* listing the appropriate budget forms to use in this application.

Special Note: The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Pub.L. 113-235), enacted December 16, 2014, limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this announcement may not be used to pay the salary, or any percentage of salary, to an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary of the Federal Executive Pay scale is \$183,300. Please see <http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/2015/executive-senior-level>. This amount reflects an individual's base salary exclusive of fringe benefits and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties to the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards/subcontracts under a ACF grant or cooperative agreement.

- Provide a budget using the 424A and/or 424C, as applicable, for each year of the proposed project. Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for the first year of the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.
- Provide a budget justification using the 424A and/or 424C, as applicable, for each year of the proposed project. Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for each year of the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.
- Provide a budget using the 424A and/or the 424C, as applicable, for the proposed project that is being fully funded (the budget period and the project period are the same). Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

Text Field: Budget/Budget Justification

General

Use the following guidelines for preparing the budget and budget justification. When a match or cost share is required, both federal and non-federal resources must be detailed and justified in the budget and budget narrative justification. "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant funds for which the applicant is applying. "Non-federal resources" are all other non-ACF federal and non-federal resources. It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, federal budget; next column(s), non-federal budget(s); and last column, total budget. The budget justification should be in a narrative form.

Check Box: Personnel

Instructions to Drafters: Check the box to include these costs.

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application. For each staff person, provide: the title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Do not include the costs of consultants, personnel costs of delegate agencies, or of specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

Check Box: Fringe Benefits

Instructions to Drafters: Check the box to include these costs.

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes, retirement insurance, taxes, etc.

Check Box: Travel

Instructions to Drafters: Check this box to include these costs.

Description: Costs of project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. (This item does not include costs of consultant travel.)

Justification: For each trip show: the total number of traveler(s); travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops should be detailed in the budget.

Check Box: Equipment

Instructions to Drafters: Check the box to include these costs.

Description: "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation, shall be included in, or excluded from, acquisition cost in accordance with the organization's regular written accounting practices.)

Justification: For each type of equipment requested provide: a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use on the project; as well as use and/or disposal of the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy, or section of its policy, that includes the equipment definition.

Check Box: Supplies

Instructions to Drafters: Check the box to include these costs.

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

Check Box: Contractual

Instructions to Drafters: Check the box to include these costs

Description: Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contracts with secondary recipient organizations, including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

Justification: Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition. Recipients and subrecipients, other than states that are required to use 45 CFR § 75.331 procedures, must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold fixed at 41 U.S.C. § 134, currently set at \$150,000 (45 CFR § 75.329). Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc. available to ACF.

Note: Whenever the applicant intends to delegate part of the project to another agency, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each delegate agency, by agency title, along with the same supporting information referred to in these instructions.

Check Box: Construction

Instructions to Drafters: Check the box to include these costs.

Description: Costs of construction by applicant or contractor.

Justification: Provide a detailed budget and narrative in accordance with the instructions for other object class categories. Identify which construction activities/costs will be contractual and those that the applicant will assume.

Check Box: Other

Instructions to Drafters: Check the box to include these costs.

Description: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: consultant costs, local travel; insurance; food (when allowable); medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional services costs (including audit charges); space and equipment rentals; printing and publication; computer use; training costs, such as tuition and stipends; staff development costs; and administrative costs.

Justification: Provide computations, a narrative description, and a justification for each cost under this category.

Check Box: Indirect Charges

Instructions to Drafters: Check the box to include these costs.

Description: Total amount of indirect costs. This category should be used only when the applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant federal agency.

Justification: An applicant that will charge indirect costs to the grant must enclose a copy of the current rate agreement. If the applicant organization is in the process of initially developing or renegotiating a rate, upon notification that an award will be made, it should immediately develop a tentative indirect cost rate proposal based on its most recently completed fiscal year, in accordance with the cognizant agency's guidelines for establishing indirect cost rates, and submit it to the cognizant agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposals may also request indirect costs. When an indirect cost rate is requested, those costs included in the indirect cost pool should not be charged as direct costs to the grant. Also, if the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

Check Box: Program Income

Instructions to Drafters: Check the box to include these costs.

Description: The estimated amount of income, if any, expected to be generated from this project.

Justification: Describe the nature, source and anticipated use of program income in the budget or refer to the pages in the application that contain this information.

Check Box: Commitment of Non-Federal Resources

Instructions to Drafters: Please note this change:

This option should appear in all FOAs in case an applicant includes a commitment of non-federal resources as a required or voluntary cost-share.

Description: Amounts of non-federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424.

Justification: If an applicant is relying on match from a third party, then a firm commitment of these resources (letter(s) or other documentation) is required to be submitted with the application. Detailed budget information must be provided for every funding source identified in Item 18. "Estimated Funding (\$)" on the SF-424.

Applicants are required to fully identify and document in their applications the specific costs or contributions they propose in order to meet a matching requirement. Applicants are also required to provide documentation in their applications on the sources of funding or contribution(s). In-kind contributions must be accompanied by a justification of how the stated valuation was determined. Matching or cost sharing must be documented by budget period (or by project period for fully funded awards). **A grantee's failure to provide a statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.**

Applications that lack the required supporting documentation will not be disqualified from competitive review; however, it may impact an application's scoring under the evaluation criteria in *Section V.1.* of this announcement.

For all federal awards, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR 75.306.

For awards that require matching by statute, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the amount required by the statutory match. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute, where "cost sharing" refers to any situation in which the recipient voluntarily shares in the costs of a project other than as statutorily required matching. These include situations in which contributions are voluntarily proposed by an applicant and are accepted by ACF. Non-federal cost sharing will be included in the approved project budget so that the applicant will be held accountable for proposed non-federal cost-sharing funds as shown in the Notice of Award (NOA). **A recipient's failure to provide voluntary cost sharing of non-federal resources that have been accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that have been shown as part of the approved project budget in the NOA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

Guidelines for Preparing a Project Description for an Abbreviated Application

Option: APPLICATIONS FOR NON-COMPETING CONTINUATION AWARDS

A full project description will not be required for non-competing continuation applications for non-construction programs unless requested in writing by [Insert name of ACF Program Office administering the program].

Option: Applications For Earmark, Supplemental, Single-Source and Emergency Awards

For a supplemental assistance request, explain the reason for the request and justify the need for additional funding. Provide a budget and budget justification **only** for those costs for which additional funds are requested.

Paperwork Reduction Act Disclaimer

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the Project Description is estimated to average 40 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection information. The Project Description information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, which expires XX/XX/XXXX. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.