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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 that Program Office (PO) staff will use to select required elements of the Project Description and the Project Budget and Budget Justification for Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs) issued by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). Applicants that apply for funding must submit an application in response to all options selected by the PO.

The UPD is approved for use in all discretionary FOAs published by ACF to solicit applications for the competitive award of grants and cooperative agreements.

#### HOW THE UPD IS USED:

The UPD is a generic project description, however, certain text options may be tailored for program-specific requirements, and text boxes are available for those options. Otherwise, POs will have the option to select check boxes linked to standard language and optional standard language text options, that including their titles, may not be modified in any way.

POs should only choose standard language options that are necessary and important for response by applicants. This is to ensure that there is sufficient information in applications for objective review. Evaluation criteria in the FOA should be reflective of the standard language options chosen by the POs.

Text boxes allowing the PO to include program specific language are available for the following text options only:

- ◆ **Letter of Intent.** This text box may be used to include the method of submission for the Letter of Intent (LOI). The purpose of an LOI 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.
- ◆ **Legal Status of Applicant Entity.** This is a three-part section: Part 1 provides a text box to list the types of required legal status documentation from entities other than non-profit, for-profit, or small business. Part 2 provides optional standard language selections for non-profit status documentation. Part 3 provides optional standard language selections for for-profit or small business legal 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.
- ◆ **Objectives.** This text box may be used to specify requirements for the objectives of the project, and how they relate to the overall purpose of the program.
- ◆ **Approach.** A text box is available that allows the PO to include specific directions for

applicants that will tailor the project description to the requirements of the specific program described by the FOA.

- ◆ **Organizational Capacity.** This text box may be used to give further instructions on organizational capacity requirements. .
- ◆ **Program Performance Evaluation Plan.** A text box is available to allow the PO to include specific instructions related to the FOA. The instructions must not contradict the standard language and should not be used to collect additional data from the applicant.
- ◆ **Funded Activities Evaluation Plan.** A text box is available to allow the PO to include specific instructions related to the FOA. The instructions must not contradict the standard language and should not be used to collect additional data from the applicant. This is a plan for a third-party evaluation.
- ◆ **Logic Model:** This text box may be use to provide program specific requirements for applicants to prepare a logic model.
- ◆ **Business Plan.** This text box may be used to include specific requirements for a business plan, which is an integral part of applications under certain programs.
- ◆ **Project Budget and Budget Justification.** A text box is available to include program specific budget items and requirements. For example, recipient travel costs to Washington, DC for required meetings with PO staff.

The UPD is installed in the ACF Announcement Module System, which houses the electronic template for all ACF discretionary FOAs. Other than these noted options, which have text boxes to allow the PO to enter program specific information, it is not possible to alter the approved text of the UPD.

#### **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 approval under the requirements of the PRA.
- ◆ 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 work with OPRE to identify any such collections during the FOA review process.
- ◆ **Post-Award Information Collections, Other than Reporting:** If a PO requires a specific set of questions for evaluation of a project **post-award**, DGP will work with OPRE to assist the PO in determining whether the collection requires OMB approval.
- ◆ **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 approval if the reporting requirements apply to 10 or more respondents.

- ◆ In cases where the PO expects grantees to collect and report on specific data or variables, the PO may be required to submit a request for full OMB approval of an Information Collection prior to publishing the FOA. The PO should consider whether to pursue generic OMB clearance (a somewhat shorter process) for expanding on the Program Performance Report (PPR) requirements for their grantees.

**PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT**

Whenever information is solicited from the public, or from a non-Federal agency, the requesting Federal agency must implement the requirements of the PRA of 1995 [44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3520]: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/USCODE-2016-title44/pdf/USCODE-2016-title44-chap35.pdf>.

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

<p>For questions about FOA content and how to use the UPD: Please contact your designated Division of Grants Policy (DGP) Contact.</p>	<p>For OMB clearance related questions: Molly Jones ACF PRA Reports Clearance Officer Office of Planning, Research &amp; Evaluation (OPRE) mary.jones@acf.hhs.gov (202) 205-4724</p>
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## **The Project Description**

*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 the content that 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 included under this section. New options may have been added to the Project Description and/or Budget Justification since the older FOA was published.*

#### **Please Note:**

*Anything that the applicant is required to address in their application must be included in this section.*

- *Program-specific project description requirements must be added to the text box under, "Approach." However, ensure that all UPD options are reviewed in advance of adding program-specific information under "Approach." These application requirements may already be addressed elsewhere as an option in the UPD.*
- *Do not create internal hyperlinks to connect different FOA sections. The links will not work properly. Instead, add cross-references to other sections of the FOA. For example, "See Section V.1. Criteria."*
- *Use "must" instead of "should" when discussing mandatory program requirements.*

*If necessary, use the formatting section to illustrate how an applicant should fill in certain items on the SF-424. If certain items in the SF-424 are referenced, be sure to check the form to ensure the references are correct. The most recent versions of the SF-424 family are available at [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) under the Forms/424-Family. Drafters can provide further instruction on the SF-424A and/or SF-424C in the text box in the Project Budget and Budget Justification section.*

## **The Project Description Overview**

### **General Expectations and Instructions**

The Project Description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for financial assistance. It must address all activities for which federal funds are being requested and all application requirements as stated in this section. The Project Description must explain how the project will meet the purpose of the FOA, as described in *Section I. Program Description*. As a reminder, reviewers will be evaluating this section in accordance with *Section V.1. Criteria*.

The Project Description must be clear, concise, and complete. ACF is particularly interested in

Project Descriptions that convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project Descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting documents designated as required must be included in the Appendix of the FOA.

**Check Box: Letter of Intent**

**Instructions to Drafters:** *Select this option if an optional letter of intent (LOI) is requested for this announcement. Use the text box only to provide the method of submission (name, address, phone, email, fax number, etc.). Receipt of Letters of Intent by email is preferred.*

**Do not use the text box to request additional information in the LOI.**

*Selection of this option will automatically select the LOI in Section IV.4. Application Submission Dates and Times. The number of days from publication and the actual due date for the LOI must be included in Section IV.4.*

Applicants are strongly encouraged to notify ACF of their intention to submit an application under this announcement. Please submit a letter of intent by the deadline date listed in *Section IV.4. 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 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
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**Check Box: Table of Contents**

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers. The table of contents may be single spaced.

**Check Box: Project Summary**

**Instructions to Drafters:** *Select this option to request a Project Summary from applicants. The standard language includes all of the information that is requested in the Project Summary.*

Provide a summary of the application project description. It must be clear, accurate, concise, and without cross-references to other parts of the application. The summary 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 Summary:

- Project Title

- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax, Cell)
- Email Address
- Web Site Address, if applicable

The project summary must be single-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, and limited to one page in length. Additional pages will be removed and will not be reviewed.

**Check Box: Geographic Location**

**Instructions to Drafters:** *Check the box to include this option in the Project Description.*

Describe the precise physical location of the project and boundaries of the area to be served by the proposed project.

**Check Box: Legal Status of Applicant Entity**

**Instructions to Drafters:** *This is a three-part text option. Please read the instructions.*

**Part 1: Legal Status of Applicant Entity**

*Part 1 may be used alone only if non-profit organizations and for-profit organizations are NOT eligible. If non-profits are eligible, Part 1 must be used with Part 2. If for-profit organizations or small businesses are eligible, Part 1 must be used with Part 3. If both non-profit and for-profit organizations are eligible, all three Parts must be used.*

*Part 1 consists of checking the box to include the title of "Legal Status of Applicant Entity" and the lead-in sentence "Applicants must provide the following documentation." In the Part 1 text box, list the specific types of documentation required from an applicant in order to certify their legal status. This may include, but is not limited to, items such as the Governing Board Membership Documentation and Tribal Resolutions.*

**Do not list proof of non-profit status or documents listed under Part 3 in the Part 1 text box.**

Applicants must provide the following documentation:

Text Field: Legal Status of Applicant
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**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.*

**Note:** *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.*

## **Non-Profit Organizations**

**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 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 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 application submission.

**Part 3: Legal Status of Applicant Entity: For-Profit or Small Business Status**



Part 3 may not be used alone. Part 3 must be used in conjunction with Part 1 (title and lead-in sentence). Parts 1, 2, and 3 must be selected when non-profits and for-profits are both eligible.

There are two options available. Drafters must choose Option 1 if for-profits are eligible. Only choose option 2 if small businesses are eligible **and** the program statute does not have a special definition of small business. The Small Business Administration sets guidelines for which business concerns qualify as small businesses, and most other federal programs reference their regulations.

In the Part 3 text box, list the specific types of documentation required from an applicant in order to certify their legal status.

This option was added based on input from OGC to ensure that ACF is requesting proof of legal status for entities that are not non-profits.

### **For-Profits or Small Businesses**

#### **Check Box: Option 1: For-Profits and Small Businesses**

For-profit organizations (including small businesses) applying for funding must submit the following to provide proof of their legal status: Documentation establishing the power granted to the entity to enter into contractual relationships and/or accept awards (i.e. articles of incorporation, bylaws).

#### **Check Box: Option 2: Small Businesses**

Small businesses must submit a certification signed by the chief executive officer or designee that states that the entity qualifies as a small business under 13 CFR §§ 121.101-121.201.

Text Field: For Profit and Small Business Requirements

#### **Check Box: Additional Eligibility Documentation**

**Instructions to Drafters:** This option allows drafters to include requests for required documentation or credentials that will support the applicant's eligibility.

Documentation/credentials requested under this option should also be described in Section III.1. Eligible Applicants or in Section III.3. Other.

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: Need for Assistance**

**Instructions to Drafters:** Check the box to include language in the Project Description.

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. Supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned parties, may be included in the Appendix. Any relevant data based on planning studies or needs assessments should be included or referred to in the endnotes or footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as available.

**Check Box: Objectives**

**Instructions to Drafters:** Check the box to include language in the Project Description.

Clearly state the principal and subordinate objectives of the project. Applicants must address how the objectives stated relate to the overall purpose of the program and describe how objectives will be achieved.

Text Field: Objectives

**Check Box: Expected Outcomes**

**Instructions to Drafters:** Check the box to include language in the Project Description.

This option requests that **applicants** define their projected outcomes in relation to the overall goals for the FOA. FOAs that request specific outcomes for applicants must include that information in Section I. of the FOA.

Identify the outcomes to be achieved from the project. Outcomes should relate to the overall program 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.

**Check Box: Approach**

**Instructions to Drafters:** This text option provides the central requirements of the Project Description narrative. A text box is available so that Drafters may specify requirements that are the critical elements used by objective reviewers during the application review process.

Use the text box to specify instructions to applicants on the program-specific requirements of their project descriptions. Do not repeat standard language or the requirements for all applicants that appear earlier in the FOA template.

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed project will be accomplished. Applicants must account for all functions or activities identified in the application.

Cite potential obstacles and challenges to accomplishing project goals and explain strategies that will be used to address these challenges.

Text Field: Approach

**Check Box: Project Timeline and Milestones**

**Instructions to Drafters:** This 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 (for the entire project period) 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. When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

### **Organizational Capacity**

**Instructions to Drafters:** Check the boxes for the items that applicants must include in their application submission. This option assumes that at least one item in the checklist will be selected.

A text box is available after the checkboxes for any other items not listed in the checklist but is deemed important for applicants to include.

### **Optional - Suggested Standard Language**

Drafters may opt to include the following language in the Organizational Capacity text box with minor modification:

“Applicants must submit a list of their current and pending funded support for ongoing projects and proposals from all sources including Federal, State, local governments, public or private foundations, for-profit organizations, etc. All projects and proposals requiring a committed portion of time for the Project Director, Principal Investigator, or key personnel must be included. Indicate the total award amount, awarding entity, and amount of time staff will devote to each project.”

### **FOAs with Multiple Funding Sources**

POs should consider the inclusion of the following selections:

- ◆ 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;

Provide the following information on the applicant organization and, if applicable, on any cooperating partners:

- Organizational charts;
- Resumes;
- 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, contractors and/or subrecipients, 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.

Text Field: Organizational Capacity

**Check Box: Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds and Activities**

**Instructions to Drafters:** Check the box to include language in the Project Description.

*FOAs with multiple funding streams must have this box checked.*

Grantees are required to ensure proper oversight in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart D. These regulations set forth the following standards for effective oversight:

- Financial and Program Management
- Property (if applicable by program legislation)
- Procurement
- Performance and Financial Monitoring and Reporting
- Subrecipient Monitoring and Management
- Record Retention and Access
- Remedies for Noncompliance

Describe the framework (e.g., governance, policies and procedures, risk management, systems) in place to ensure proper oversight of federal funds and activities in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart D. The description must include: system(s) for record-keeping and financial management; procedures to identify and mitigate risks and issues (e.g., audit findings, continuous program performance assessment findings, program monitoring); and those key staff that will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities staff, and, if applicable, partner(s) and/or subrecipient(s).

**Check Box: Program Performance Evaluation Plan**

**Instructions to Drafters:** *Drafters may select **one or both** of the evaluation options. This first option is an evaluation for quality improvement purposes. A text box is available so Drafters may provide details that are specific to the FOA.*

Applicants must describe a plan for the program performance evaluation that will contribute to continuous quality improvement. The program performance evaluation must monitor ongoing activities 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 activities, and expected outcomes of the funded activities. The plan must explain how the inputs, activities, and outcomes will be measured; how the resulting information will be used to inform improvement of funded activities; and any processes that support the overall data quality of the performance outcomes.

Applicants must describe the organizational systems and processes that will effectively track performance outcomes, including a description of how the organization will collect and manage data (e.g., assigned skilled staff, data management software, data integrity, etc.) 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. Applicants must include a timeline for how information from the quality improvement evaluation will be reviewed and applied to the ongoing project.

Text Field: Program Performance Evaluation Plan

**Check Box: Funded Activities Evaluation Plan**

**Instructions to Drafters:** *Drafters may select **one or both** of the evaluation options. This second option supports a more rigorous approach which may involve a significant portion of funds to implement meaningfully. If considering this option, please work with OPRE for assistance. A text box is available so that Drafters may provide details that are specific to the FOA. If drafters want to include language requiring a logic model to support the plan, it must be included as part of the program specific language in the text box.*

Applicants must describe the plan for rigorous evaluation of funded activities. The evaluation must assess activities 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, as well as 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, detailed timeline, and sound methodological design. Details regarding the proposed data collection activities, the participants, data management, data integrity, and analyses plans must be described. Applicants must describe any potential obstacles foreseen in implementing the evaluation and how those obstacles will be addressed.

Text Field: Funded Activities Evaluation Plan

**Check Box: Logic Model**

**Instructions to Drafters:** *Drafters may select to require a logic model. A text box is available so Drafters may provide details that are specific to the FOA.*

Applicants must submit a logic model for designing and managing their project. A logic model is a diagram that presents the conceptual framework for a proposed project and explains the links among program elements. Logic models must target the identified objectives and goals of the grant program. While there are many versions of logic models, for the purposes of this announcement, the logic model may include the connections between the following elements:

- Inputs (e.g., additional resources, organizational profile, collaborative partner(s), key staff, budget);
- Target population (e.g., the individuals to be served, identified needs);
- Activities, Mechanisms, Processes (e.g., evidenced-based practices, best practices, approach, key intervention and evaluation components, continuous quality improvement efforts);
- Outputs (i.e., the immediate and direct results of program activities);
- Outcomes (i.e., the expected short and long-term results the project is designed to achieve typically described as changes in people or systems), and
- Goals of the project (e.g., overarching objectives, reasons for proposing the project).

Text Field: Logic Model

**Check Box: Project Sustainability Plan**

**Instructions for Drafters:** *Check the box to include language in the Project Description.*

Applicants must propose a plan for project sustainability after the period of federal funding ends. Grantees are expected to sustain key elements of their grant projects, e.g., strategies or services and interventions, which have been effective in improving practices and outcomes.

Describe the approach to project sustainability that will be most effective and feasible. Provide a description of key individuals and/or organizations whose support will be required. Address the types of alternative support that will be required to maintain the program. If the proposed project involves key project partners, describe how their cooperation and/or collaboration will be maintained after the end of federal funding.

**Check Box: Business Plan**

**Instructions to Drafters:** *If a business plan is a required as part of 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.

Text Field: Business Plan

**Check Box: Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information**

**Instructions to Drafters:** *Select this option if applicants are required to collect any sensitive or confidential information.*

Provide a description of how protected personally identifiable information and other information that is considered sensitive, consistent with applicable federal, state, local, and tribal laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality, will be collected and safeguarded. The applicant must provide the methods and/or systems that will be used to ensure that confidential and/or sensitive information is properly handled and if applicable, address the process for subrecipient(s) and/or contractors. Also, provide a plan for the disposition of such information at the end of the project period.

**Check Box: Dissemination Plan**

**Instructions to Drafters:** *Select this option if applicants are required to disseminate any products as part of the awarded project.*

Applicants must propose a plan to disseminate reports, products, and/or grant project outputs so that project information is provided to key target audiences. Dissemination plans must include:

- Dissemination goals and objectives;
- Strategies to identify and engage with target audiences;
- Allocation of sufficient staff time and budget for dissemination purposes;
- A preliminary plan to evaluate the extent to which target audiences have received project information and have used it as intended.
- The timeline for dissemination

**Check Box: Third-Party Agreements**

**Instructions to Drafters:** *Five third-party agreements text options are available. The first two options are very similar, but the second option requests additional information from the applicant. Drafters may select as many of the available options as are applicable to the FOA.*

Third-party agreements include Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Letters of Commitment. Letters of Commitment and MOUs must both clearly describe the roles and responsibilities for project activities and the support and/or resources that the third-party (i.e., subrecipient, contractor, or other cooperating entity) is committing. The Letters of Commitment and MOUs must be signed by the person in the third-party organization with the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their organization. General letters of support are **not** considered to be third-party agreements.

*Check Box:* Applicants must provide Letters of Commitment or MOUs between recipients and third-parties (i.e., subrecipients, contractors, or other cooperating entities).

*Check Box:* Applicants must provide Letters of Commitment or MOUs between recipients and third-parties (i.e., subrecipients, contractors, or other cooperating entities). In addition to clearly describing the roles and responsibilities for project activities and support and/or resources that the third-party is committing, these agreements must detail work schedules and estimated remuneration with an understanding that a finalized agreement will be negotiated once the successful applicant is awarded the grant.

*Check Box:* Collaboration/consortia applicants must provide letters of commitment or

MOUs identifying the primary applicant and all collaborators that are responsible for project activities.

*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/or commercial leaders that support the project proposed for funding. All submissions must be included in the application package. At minimum, each letter of support must identify the individual writing the letter, the organization they represent, the date, and reason(s) for supporting the project.



## Budget and Budget Justification Information

### The Project Budget and Budget Justification

**Instructions to Drafters:** *There are three budget and budget justification selections followed by a text box to allow Drafters to provide further directions to applicants on filling out the SF-424A or the SF-424C. For example, Drafters might use the text box to remind applicants to include costs for project leadership/staff to travel to DC for required meetings. The text box is meant for Drafters to provide clarification and reminders for specific project costs.*

*The majority of the budget category sections are pre-selected. Select “Program Income” or “Construction” if these categories are applicable and allowed by the program.*

*FOAs with multiple funding streams must read the [DGP Policy on Multiple Funding Sources in FOA](#) for instructions on using this text box.*

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is entered on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C. Applicants are encouraged to review the form instructions in addition to the guidance in this section. The budget justification consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. Applicants must indicate the method they are selecting for their indirect cost rate. See Indirect Charges for further information.

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 Appropriations Act, 2018, (Division H, Title II, Sec. 202), 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 of an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary of the "Rates of Pay for the Executive Schedule" is \$189,600. 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 of the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards and subcontracts under an ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

- Provide a budget for the initial budget period only (typically the first 12 months of the project) using the SF-424A and/or SF-424C, as applicable.

Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for only the first budget period 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 SF-424A and/or SF-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 SF-424A and/or the SF-424C, as applicable, for the entire project period 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 full project period. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

Text Field: Project Budget and Budget Justification
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### General

Use the following guidelines for preparing the project budget and budget justification. The budget justification includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail. Applications should only include allowable costs in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart E.

#### Check Box: **Personnel**

**Description:** Costs of employee salaries and wages. See 45 CFR 75.430 for more information on allowable personnel costs. Do not include the personnel costs of consultants, contractors, and subrecipients under this category.

**Justification:** For each position, provide: the name of the individual (if known), their 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. Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application.

#### Check Box: **Fringe Benefits**

**Description:** Costs of employee fringe benefits which are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees in addition to regular salaries and wages. For more information on Fringe Benefits please refer to 45 CFR 75.431. Do not include the fringe benefits of consultants, contractors, and subrecipients.

Typically, fringe benefits amounts are determined by applying a calculated rate for a particular class of employee (full-time or part-time) to the salary and wages requested. Fringe rates are often specified in the approved indirect cost rate agreement. Fringe benefits may be treated as a direct cost or indirect cost in accordance with the applicant's accounting practices. Only fringe benefits treated as a direct cost should be entered under this category.

**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,

taxes, etc.

Check Box: **Travel**

**Description:** Costs of project-related travel (i.e., transportation, lodging, subsistence) by employees of the applicant organization who are in travel status on official business. Travel by non-employees such as consultants, contractors or subrecipients should be included under the Contractual line item. Local travel for employees in non-travel status should be listed on the Other line. Travel costs should be developed in accordance with the applicant's travel policies and 45 CFR 75.474.

**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 project staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops/conferences/grantee orientations should be detailed in the budget justification.

Check Box: **Equipment**

**Description:** "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit 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.) See 45 CFR 75.439 for more information.

**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 disposition of the equipment after the project ends.

Check Box: **Supplies**

**Description:** Costs of all tangible personal property, other than included under the Equipment category. This includes office and other consumable supplies with a per-unit cost of less than \$5,000. See 45 CFR 75.453 for more information.

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

Check Box: **Contractual**

**Description:** Costs of all contracts and subawards except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contracts or subawards with secondary recipient organizations (with budget detail), including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. Costs related to individual consultants should be listed on the Other line. Recipients are required to use 45 CFR 75.326-.340 procurement procedures, and subawards are subject to the requirements at 45 CFR 75.351-.353.

**Justification:** Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. Applicants must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold stated in 48 CFR Subpart 2.1. 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.

Indicate whether the proposed agreement qualifies as a subaward or contract in accordance with 45 CFR 75.351. Provide the name of the contractor/subrecipient (if known), a description of anticipated services, a justification for why they are necessary, a breakdown of estimated costs, and an explanation of the selection process. In addition, for subawards, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each subaward, by entity name, along with the same justifications referred to in these budget and budget justification instructions.

Check Box: **Construction**

**Instructions to Drafters:** Check the box to include this option in the Project Budget and Budget Justification information request.

**Description:** Costs of construction or renovation by applicant or contractor/subrecipient.

**Justification:** Provide a separate 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**

**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 (non-personnel), 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. Please note costs must be allowable per 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart E.

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

Check Box: **Indirect Charges**

**Description:** Total amount of indirect costs. This category has one of two methods that an applicant can select. An applicant may only select one.

- 1) 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 must enclose a copy of the current approved rate agreement. 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. Choosing to charge a lower rate will not be considered during the objective review or award selection process.

- 2) Per 45 CFR 75.414(f) Indirect (F&A) costs, “any non-Federal entity [i.e., applicant] that has never received a negotiated indirect costs rate, ... may elect to charge a *de minimis* rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. As described in Section 75.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time.”

**Justification:** This method only applies to applicants that have never received an approved negotiated indirect cost rate from HHS or another cognizant federal agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposal may request the 10 percent *de minimis* rate. When the applicant chooses this method, costs included in the indirect cost pool must not be charged as direct costs to the grant.

Check Box: **Program Income**

**Instructions to Drafters:** Check the box to include this option in the Project Budget and Budget Justification information request.

**Description:** The estimated amount of gross income, if any, expected to be directly generated by or earned from this project. Program income includes, but is not limited to, income from fees for services performed, the use or rental of real or personal property acquired under federally-funded projects, the sale of commodities or items fabricated under an award, license fees and royalties on patents and copyrights, and interest on loans made with award funds. See 45 CFR 75.307 for more information.

**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**

**Description:** Amounts of non-federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424. This line should be used to indicate required and/or voluntary committed cost sharing or matching, if applicable.

**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 or cost-sharing by statute**, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources (at or above the statutory requirement) in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching or cost-sharing amount (and any voluntary committed amount in excess) 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**, recipients are not expected to provide cost sharing or matching. However, recipients are allowed to voluntarily propose a commitment of non-federal resources. If an applicant decides to voluntarily contribute non-federal resources towards project costs and the costs are accepted by ACF, the non-federal resources will be included in the approved project budget. The applicant will be held accountable for all proposed non-federal resources as shown in the Notice of Award (NOA). **A recipient's failure to meet the voluntary amount of non-federal resources that was accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that was identified in 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.**

**Justification:** If an applicant is relying on cost share or 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).

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. Criteria* of this announcement.

### **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 60 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.