



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation

Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Scholars Network

HHS-2013-ACF-OPRE-PD-0549

Application Due Date: 05/20/2013

Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Scholars Network

HHS-2013-ACF-OPRE-PD-0549

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**Department of Health & Human Services
Administration for Children and Families**

Program Office: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation
Funding Opportunity Title: Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Scholars Network
Announcement Type: Initial
Funding Opportunity Number: HHS-2013-ACF-OPRE-PD-0549
CFDA Number: 93.647
Due Date for Applications: **05/20/2013**

Executive Summary

Notices:

- **On January 1, 2012, the Administration for Children and Families implemented required electronic application submission via www.grants.gov for discretionary grant applications. Please see *Section III.3. Disqualification Factors*, *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission* and *Application Submission Options*, and *Section IV.3. Explanation of Due Dates and Times* for information on electronic application submission and the availability of exemptions allowing applicants to submit applications in paper format.**
- **This Fiscal Year (FY 2013) ACF has implemented a new application upload requirement. Each applicant applying electronically via www.grants.gov is required to upload only two electronic files, excluding Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files. Please see *Section IV.2 Content and Form of Application Submission* for detailed information on this requirement.**
- **Grants.gov Alert: Grants.gov has discovered an issue with the newest version of Adobe Reader XI. Applicants may encounter the following error that will prevent them from submitting their application: "At least one required Field was empty. Please fill in the required field (highlighted) before continuing." This error message may appear even if the applicant has completed all required fields.** While Grants.gov continues to investigate this issue, they recommend that if applicants encounter this issue, applicants should submit their application using any version below Adobe Reader XI. Please refer to the Adobe Software Version Compatibility, available on www.grants.gov at http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp#adobe811 for additional information about supported versions of Adobe Reader. Please be sure to read the Technical Alerts updates on this issue. They are available under "What's New at Grants.gov" on the Grants.gov homepage.

The Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) invites applications for university-affiliated Principal Investigators (PIs) to become members of the Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Scholars Network (the Scholars Network). The Scholars Network will be a collaborative enterprise of PIs who undertake research that is scientifically rigorous and policy-relevant to

family self-sufficiency programs.

This announcement will fund up to seven cooperative agreements with PIs who will work independently to enhance and improve family self-sufficiency research at the State and local levels through a variety of activities. These activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Undertaking a systematic, multidisciplinary examination of the current gaps in family self-sufficiency and stability programs and research. This review may take a variety of forms, but will focus on two key elements: (1) research on the institutional state of the field of State and local human services agencies, community-based organizations, and systems of support for children and families and (2) contributions to child and family well-being of stability and instability within and across various domains and disciplines (i.e., economics, sociology, demography, education, family life).
- Identifying and executing research and program evaluation activities in collaboration with State and local human services agencies and community-based organizations to capitalize on the ability of States and localities to be laboratories for social policy research and innovation.
- Developing a multidisciplinary community of scholars by collaborating with other members of the Scholars Network and affiliated researchers.
- Engaging in dissemination activities to both the policy and research communities.
- Working with the affiliated Data Center for Family Self-Sufficiency (the Data Center; See Funding Opportunity Announcement HHS-2013-ACF-OPRE-PD-0548) to develop and implement activities that will result in improved use of program evaluation and administrative data.

There will be high expectations for members of the Scholars Network. Scholars will work collaboratively to develop new knowledge, design and implement a cooperative research plan, and quickly respond to field-initiated research opportunities as they emerge. Much of the collaborative work of the Scholars Network will be conducted through a Steering Committee with substantial involvement from the ACF/OPRE Program Officer.

Members of the Scholars Network will have the opportunity to engage with ongoing ACF/OPRE research priorities and develop complementary research projects as appropriate.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Awards under this funding opportunity announcement are authorized under Section 1110 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1310). Section 1110 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1310) grants the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services the authority to use appropriated funds to make grants, contracts, or jointly financed cooperative agreements to “States and public and other organizations and agencies for paying part of the cost of research” or “which will aid in effecting coordination of planning between private and public welfare agencies or which will help improve the administration and effectiveness of programs carried on or assisted under the Social Security Act and programs related thereto.”

Description

A. BACKGROUND

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) shifted the landscape of the cash welfare system in a number of ways. What was a centralized system under the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program became a decentralized, State-based approach that discouraged cash assistance, imposed sanctions and lifetime limits on assistance, and encouraged States to reduce cash welfare while maintaining the level of funding by providing funds for other social services. Along with the shift to a State-run block grant program was a corresponding reduction in Federal oversight under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

Much attention has been paid to the changes in policy, structure, and operations of the welfare system caused by PRWORA. However, PRWORA also significantly impacted the roles of both Federal and State governments in developing, executing, and funding research and evaluation activities. In the 17 years since PRWORA's passage, only modest attention has been paid to the effect that PRWORA has had on State agency data collection capacity, State-generated research, and related State-specific evaluation issues. The scant State- and locally-focused research that has been conducted has generally lacked a singular research structure and conceptual framework to synthesize and integrate evidence. Additionally, recent State and local fiscal constraints have further reduced the capacity of States and localities to engage in and support research and evaluation activities.

ACF/OPRE has a long history of supporting research and evaluation of important social policy issues. Within OPRE, the portfolio of research on economic independence focuses on three major areas: (1) TANF, the safety net, and family economic stability and self-sufficiency; (2) employment and the labor market; and (3) education and training. In addition to these three major areas, OPRE undertakes cross-cutting research, evaluation, and dissemination activities. Through sponsorship of research and evaluation contracts and grants, including support for quantitative and qualitative research on policy and program data, OPRE's portfolio of research in family self-sufficiency and stability is designed to expand knowledge about effective programs to promote economic well-being among low-income families.

In order to leverage these ongoing research and evaluation activities, OPRE is developing a multifaceted approach to formalizing research in family self-sufficiency and stability. A critical component of this approach is the creation of a network of scholars of family self-sufficiency and stability research – the Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Scholars Network (the Scholars Network).

B. BASIC STRUCTURE AND PURPOSE OF THE SCHOLARS NETWORK

ACF/OPRE invites university-affiliated Principal Investigators (PIs) to apply for cooperative agreements to help develop and participate in the Scholars Network. The Scholars Network will be a systematic effort to better understand family self-sufficiency and stability from a multidisciplinary point of view and to comprehensively and responsively address concerns of State and local policymakers and program administrators.

These cooperative agreements are intended to fund each PI for approximately 20 percent of full-time (one day per week) and may be extended up to four times for a total of five years of funding through annual non-competitive continuation awards.

Each PI will be given support, through this cooperative agreement, to pursue an **individual research agenda** that expands knowledge about a specific set of issues related to family self-sufficiency and stability. PIs are encouraged to focus on issues of regional or State interest and take advantage of existing data and defined geographic areas of study.

Members of the Scholars Network are expected to focus on applied research and activities to make research accessible for public policy purposes, although primary data collection is an allowable activity if the data are being collected to serve an applied need.

It is anticipated that PIs supported under this grant will benefit not only from the opportunity to conduct independent research but also from participation in the diverse projects of ACF/OPRE. Thus, PIs are encouraged to capitalize on ongoing evaluation opportunities sponsored by ACF/OPRE (www.acf.hhs.gov; www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/), including the potential for additional, complementary data collection. ACF/OPRE will welcome PI feedback that supports ACF/OPRE research, evaluation, and policy analysis functions.

During the first year of the grant, members of the Scholars Network will also work together to develop **ideas and ideas and proposals for collaborative research** among the Scholars Network. Planning and implementation of the collaborative aspects of the Scholars Network will be based on the recommendations of a Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will be chaired by the ACF/OPRE

Program Officer and consist of each PI grantee. Ex officio members will include the PI of the affiliated Data Center and researchers from the Advancing Welfare and Family Self-Sufficiency Research Support contract.

During the second year, and continuing through the fifth and final year of these cooperative agreements, ACF/OPRE may decide to provide additional support to members of the Scholars Network for coordinated and collaborative research developed through the activities of the Scholars Network.

Requirements for both the **individual research plan** and **ideas and proposals for collaborative research** are outlined in *Section IV.2*).

Capacity-building is central to the mission of the Scholars Network, and each PI will be expected to individually reach out to and work with a broad range of stakeholders (i.e., national human services organizations, State and local policymakers and program operators, university-based researchers, applied research experts, and research firms) on family self-sufficiency and stability issues and collaborate with other members of the Scholars Network to disseminate findings to the policy and research communities through newsletters, working papers, special reports, journal articles, briefings, etc.

There will be high expectations for the members of the Scholars Network to interact effectively by sharing research insights, cooperating in the design and implementation of a collaborative research plan, and responding to the needs of the Scholars Network and public policy priorities and opportunities for this project.

C. GOALS OF THE SCHOLARS NETWORK AND STEERING COMMITTEE

The primary goals of this program are to enrich ACF/OPRE's ongoing family self-sufficiency and stability research agenda and improve the integration and application of research evidence and program evaluation into the practices and program operations in the areas of family self-sufficiency and stability.

The PI grantees will achieve these goals through activities including, but not limited to (as further outlined in *Section IV.2*):

- Undertaking a systematic, multidisciplinary examination of the current gaps in family self-sufficiency and stability programs and research. This review may take a variety of forms, but will focus on two key elements: (1) research on the institutional "state of the field" of State and local human services agencies, community-based organizations, and systems of support for children and families and (2) contributions to child and family well-being of stability and instability within and across various domains and disciplines (i.e., economics, sociology, demography, education, family life).
- Identifying and executing research and program evaluation activities in collaboration with State and local human services agencies and community-based organizations to capitalize on the ability of States and localities to be laboratories for social policy research and innovation.
- Developing a multidisciplinary community of scholars by collaborating with other members of the Scholars Network and affiliated researchers.
- Engaging in dissemination activities to both the policy and research communities.
- Working with the affiliated Data Center to develop and implement activities that will result in improved use of program evaluation and administrative data.

The Scholars Network will interface with and engage in ongoing ACF and HHS research priorities, and, as described in the Background portion of this section, planning and implementation of the collaborative aspects of the Scholars Network will be based on the recommendations of a Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee's goals will be to:

- Plan the design and execution of collaborative research.
- Make recommendations regarding level of effort of the collaborative research.
- Publish results, conclusions, and interpretations of the collaborative research.

II. Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Estimated Total Funding:	\$700,000
Expected Number of Awards:	7
Award Ceiling:	\$100,000 Per Budget Period
Award Floor:	\$75,000 Per Budget Period
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$100,000 Per Budget Period

Length of Project Periods:

60-month project with five 12-month budget periods

Additional Information on Awards:

Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds.

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period. Please see *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors*.

Note: For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, grantees 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 required amount of match or cost share. **A grantee's failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.**

The initial award will be made for the first 12-month period. Non-competing continuation awards for the subsequent 12-month budget periods will be subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress by the recipient, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Federal government. Applicants will receive instructions on how to submit non-competing continuation applications during the first budget period to request funds for the second budget period.

Description of ACF's Anticipated Substantial Involvement Under the Cooperative Agreement

Cooperative agreements are assistance mechanisms that differ from regular project grants in that they require substantial programmatic involvement of ACF/OPRE above and beyond the levels required for traditional program management of grants.

The ACF/OPRE Program Officer will be the Division of Economic Independence (DEI) Family Self-Sufficiency Research Team Leader and the ACF/OPRE team will include additional social science research analysts as necessary and appropriate. Specifically, the ACF/OPRE Program Officer will cooperate with the PIs as a partner in the Scholars Network by:

- Directing all functions of the Steering Committee, including reviewing and commenting on each stage of the program before subsequent stages are started.
- Promoting collaborative relationships/partnerships and facilitating the exchange of information (i.e., identifying technical assistance and training needs, emerging issues, research findings, available resources, model programs, and data collection and distribution) among grantees for purposes related to the Scholars Network.

- Providing necessary information related to and assisting in the analysis, interpretation, and reporting/dissemination of findings in the scientific literature and other appropriate media.
- Supporting collaboration with ACF offices and programs and facilitating ACF program-generated research.
- Reviewing all activities to ensure objectives are being met.

The above responsibilities are in addition to, not in lieu of, the levels of involvement normally required for program stewardship of Federal grant funds. In general, ACF/OPRE staff will collaborate with the recipients of the cooperative agreements in identifying the final research questions and study designs for this award and will approve study designs and analytical approaches before they are implemented. ACF/OPRE staff will review and provide feedback regarding research plans and products to ensure that they are relevant and translatable to the policy and practice communities.

Work supported under the cooperative agreements must acknowledge the ACF/OPRE Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Scholars Network in a manner agreed upon and approved by the ACF/OPRE Program Officer. No work shall be published or disseminated without this acknowledgement.

Please see *Section IV.5 Funding Restrictions* for limitations on the use of federal funds awarded under this announcement.

III. Eligibility Information

III.1. Eligible Applicants

Eligibility under this announcement is limited to accredited public, State-controlled, and private institutions of higher education, including Historic Black Colleges and Universities, Tribally-controlled Colleges and Universities, and Hispanic Serving Institutions, applying on behalf of an individual faculty member who will serve as a PI. Institutions must be fully accredited by one of the regional accrediting commissions recognized by the Department of Education and the Council of Post-Secondary Accreditation and provide proof of accreditation at the time of application (see *Section VIII. Other Information* for an application checklist).

Given the research goal of undertaking a systematic, multidisciplinary examination of the current gaps in family self-sufficiency and stability programs and research and focusing on two key elements: (1) research on the institutional “state of the field” of State and local human services agencies, community-based organizations, and systems of support for children and families and (2) contributions to child and family well-being of stability and instability within and across various domains and disciplines (i.e., economics, sociology, demography, education, family life), it is important that researchers across a variety of academic fields, who focus their work on family self-sufficiency and stability, receive the appropriate support and build collaborative networks. This award will also support new researchers, new ideas, and growth in the field of family self-sufficiency and stability. Accredited universities and institutions of higher education provide the infrastructure to support these researchers.

Individuals, foreign entities, and sole proprietorship organizations are not eligible to compete for, or receive, awards under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Other*.

Faith-based and community organizations that meet eligibility requirements are eligible to receive awards under this funding opportunity announcement.

III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: No

III.3. Other

DUNS Number and System for Award Management Eligibility Requirements (SAM.gov)

All applicants must have a DUNS number (www.dnb.com) and be registered with the System for Award Management (SAM, www.sam.gov) and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete, and should a grant be made, throughout the life of the award. Finalize a new, or renew an existing, registration at least two weeks before the application deadline. This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application or receive an award. Maintain documentation (with dates) of your efforts to register or renew at least two weeks before the deadline. See the SAM Quick Guide for Grantees at: https://www.sam.gov/sam/transcript/SAM_Quick_Guide_Grants_Registrations-v1.6.pdf.

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal grant funds from any HHS Agency, or receive subawards directly from recipients of those grant funds to:

- Be registered in the SAM prior to submitting an application or plan;
- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV; and
- Provide its active DUNS number in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV.

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and
- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

APPLICATION DISQUALIFICATION FACTORS

Applications from individuals, foreign entities, or sole proprietorship organizations will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Award Ceiling Disqualification

Applications that request an award amount exceeding the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period, as stated in *Section II. Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

Application Submission Disqualifications

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at www.Grants.gov. Applicants that do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents to the Internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow these applicants to submit an application in paper format. Information on requesting an exemption from electronic application submission is found in *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options*.

The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the Overview and in Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times. Electronic applications submitted to www.Grants.gov after 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from www.Grants.gov, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. That is, applications submitted to www.Grants.gov, on or after 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this

announcement.

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the Grants.gov validation check, will not be received at or acknowledged by ACF.

Each time an application is submitted via www.Grants.gov, the application will receive a new date and time-stamp email. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*. Paper applications received after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not received approval of an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.** See "Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission" in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*.

Applications that are disqualified under any of these circumstances will receive written notification by letter or by email.

Any applications received from entities other than accredited public, State-controlled, and private institutions of higher education will be disqualified from competitive review and award under this announcement.

Any applications received from public, State-controlled, and private institutions of higher education that do not include proof of accreditation by one of the regional accrediting commissions recognized by the Department of Education and the Council of Post-Secondary Accreditation will be disqualified from competition and from receiving awards under this announcement.

IV.1. Address to Request Application Package

IV.1. Address to Request Application Package

Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Scholars Network

c/o Mathematica Policy Research

1100 1st Street, NE, 12th Floor

Washington, DC 20002

Phone: (866) 666-4252

Email: ScholarsNetworkFOA@mathematica-mpr.com

Electronic Application Submission:

The electronic application submission package is available at www.Grants.gov.

Applications in Paper Format:

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at the ACF Funding Opportunities Forms webpage at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to www.Grants.gov.

Standard Forms that are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794d):

Available at the [Grants.gov Forms Repository](http://www.Grants.gov) website and at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms.

Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service for assistance at 1-800-877-8339 (TTY - Text Telephone or ASCII - American Standard Code For Information Interchange).

Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission

FORMATTING ACF APPLICATIONS

FOR ALL ACF APPLICATIONS:

Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)

The AOR is an individual(s), named by the applicant/recipient organization, who is authorized to act for the applicant/recipient and to assume the obligations imposed by the federal laws, regulations, requirements, and conditions that apply to grant applications or awards. Each applicant must designate an AOR.

AOR authorization is part of the registration process at www.Grants.gov, where the AOR will create a short profile and obtain a username and password from the Grants.gov Credential Provider. AORs will only be authorized for the DUNS number registered in the System for Award Management (SAM).

Point of Contact

In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to answer any questions pertaining to the application.

Application Checklist

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

Follow the instructions provided in this application formatting section to ensure that your application does not exceed the page limitations and can be printed efficiently and consistently for the competitive review.

Accepted Font Styles:

All applicants must use 12-point font in Times New Roman (TNR).

Page Limitations for Application Submissions

Applicants must observe the page limitations listed later in this section. Page limitations do not include OMB-approved Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms

All applications must be double-spaced and in Times New Roman, 12-point font. An application that exceeds the cited page limitation for double-spaced pages in the Project Description file or the Appendices file will have the extra pages removed and these pages will not be reviewed.

Page limitations apply to electronically submitted and paper format applications. For applications that are single-spaced and/or one-and-a-half spaced (in whole or in part, except for the exempted elements listed later in this section) and/or use a font smaller than TNR, 12-point, ACF will use a formula to determine the

actual number of pages. The formula counts the number of characters an applicant uses when following the instructions and using 12-point TNR and then compares the resulting number with that of the submitted application. For example, an applicant using TNR, 11-point font, with 1-inch margins all around, and single-spacing, would have an additional 26 lines, or 1500 characters, which is equal to 4/5 of an additional page. Extra pages resulting from this formula will be removed and will not be reviewed.

Be sure to print the Project Description and Appendices documents on paper and count the number of pages for each file before submission. Keep the printed copy as a hard copy of your application for your files.

Copies Required

Applicants must submit one complete copy of the application package electronically. Applicants submitting electronic applications need not provide additional copies of their application package.

Applicants submitting applications in paper format must submit one original and two copies of the complete application, including all Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. The original copy must have original signatures.

Signatures

Applicants submitting electronic applications must follow the AOR Authorization and E-Biz POC instructions provided at www.Grants.gov.

The original of a paper format application must include original signatures.

Accepted Application Format

With the exception of the required Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms, all application materials must be formatted so that they will print out onto 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins all around.

The Project Description and Appendices files must be numbered separately. The font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable. Do not scan more than one page of a document on a single page. Application pages with two or more pages of a document scanned to it will be removed and will not be reviewed.

Elements Exempted from Double-Spacing Requirements

The following elements of the application submission are exempt from the double-spacing requirements listed earlier in this section: the one-page Project Summary/Abstract, required Assurances and Certifications, required Standard Forms, required OMB-approved forms, resumes, logic models, proof of legal status/non-profit status, contracts, and the Budget Justification. These items may be single-spaced. The Project Summary/Abstract is required to be one single-spaced page in 12-point font with 1-inch margins. The Budget Justification may be single-spaced but must be in 12-point font. Resumes must be in 12-point font, but are not required to be double-spaced. The font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable.

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically unless they have requested and received an exemption that will allow submission in paper format. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* for information about requesting an exemption.

Electronic applications will only be accepted via www.Grants.gov. **ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile.**

Application Upload Requirements

Each applicant is required to upload ONLY two electronic files, excluding Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional

files.

ACF strongly recommends that electronic applications be uploaded as Portable Document Files (PDFs). One file must contain the entire Project Description and Budget Justification; the other file must contain all documents required in the Appendices. Details on the content of each of the two files, as well as page limitations for each, are listed later in this section.

To adhere to the two file requirement, applicants may need to convert and/or merge documents together using a PDF converter software. Many recent versions of Microsoft Office include the ability to save documents to the PDF format without need of additional software. Applicants using the Adobe Professional software suite will be able to merge these documents together. ACF recommends merging documents electronically rather than scanning multiple documents into one document manually, as scanned documents may have reduced clarity and readability.

However, ACF understands that all applicants may not have access to this software. Grants.gov offers a listing of several free PDF conversion programs. These programs can be found on Grants.gov by clicking on ‘Applicant Resources’ on the far left side of the home page, and then by following the link to ‘Download Software’ near the top of the screen, or by clicking [HERE](#). Free PDF software is available on this page that will allow users to convert and merge PDF documents. As an example, ACF is providing written instructions on downloading and using one type of free software listed at Grants.gov at the following link: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/pdf995_instructions_for_video.pdf. ACF does not endorse any of the software listed on Grants.gov, and applicants are not required to use a specific type of PDF conversion software to submit an application.

NOTE: Applications submitted via www.Grants.gov will undergo a validation check. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* for more information. The validation check can affect whether the application is accepted for review. If an application fails the Grants.gov validation check and is not resubmitted by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review. If an applicant resubmits their application to Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date and the application does not pass the validation check, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review.

Required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved Forms

Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, such as the SF-424 application and budget forms and the SF-P/PSL (Project/Performance Site Location), are uploaded separately at Grants.gov. These forms are submitted separately from the Project Description and Appendices files. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for the listing of required Standard Forms, OMB-approved forms, and required assurances and certifications.

Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by www.Grants.gov

Limit file names to 50 characters and do not use special characters (example: &,-,*,%/,#) including periods (.), blank spaces, and accent marks, within application form fields, and file attachment names. An underscore () may be used to separate a file name.

Use only file formats supported by ACF

It is critical that applicants submit applications using only the supported file formats listed here. While ACF supports all of the following file formats, **we strongly recommend that the two application submission files (Project Description and Appendices) are uploaded as PDF documents in order to comply with the two file upload limitation.** Documents in file formats that are not supported by ACF will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

ACF supports the following file formats:

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)

- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Corel WordPerfect (.wpd)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

Do Not Encrypt or Password-Protect the Electronic Application Files

If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they are encrypted or password protected, the affected file will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. This removal may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.

FORMATTING FOR PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS:

The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format. Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order for a paper format application to be accepted for review. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* later in this section under *Application Submission Options* for more information.

Signatures

An original signature of the AOR is required only on the original copy of paper format application submissions. A point of contact on matters involving the application must be identified on the SF-424 at item 8f. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR.

Format Requirements for Paper Applications

All application materials must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins. Applications must be in two sections. The first section must contain the entire Project Description and Budget Justification, and the second section must contain all required Appendices. The pages of the two sections must be separately and sequentially numbered.

All copies of mailed or hand-delivered paper applications must be submitted in a single package. If an applicant is submitting multiple applications under a single FOA, or multiple applications under separate FOAs, each application submission must be packaged separately. The package(s) must be clearly labeled for the specific FOA it addresses by FOA title and by Funding Opportunity Number (FON).

Because each application will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, maps, brochures, or any other items that cannot be processed easily on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Do not bind, clip, staple, or fasten in any way separate sections of the application. Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the federal government for review. All application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes.

Instructions on the order of assembly for paper application submissions are available later in this formatting section.

Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications

See *Section IV.6. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper format application submissions.

Page Limitations and Content of the Application for All Submission Formats:

Applicants are advised to include all required forms and materials. Applicants are strongly advised to use headings and subheadings that correspond to the evaluation criteria and the Approach section of the Project Description.

1. Application File One: Limited to 40 pages.

All listed elements are required and must be addressed within the 40 page limit. Any pages submitted in excess of the 40 page limit will be removed prior to review.

- a. Project Description including:**
 - i. Table of Contents
 - ii. Project Summary/Abstract
 - iii. Approach
 - iv. Project Sustainability Plan
 - v. Plan for Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information
- b. Project Budget and Budget Justification**

2. Application File Two: Limited to 20 pages.

All listed elements are required (except item “d,” which is optional) and must be addressed within the 20 page limit. Any pages submitted in excess of the 20 page limit will be removed prior to review.

- a. Legal Status of Applicant Entity:** Proof of accreditation
- b. Resume/CV for one PI**
- c. Time Commitments:** Descriptions of intended time commitment to the Scholars Network and other, non Scholars Network-related time commitments
- d. Other Relevant Work (Optional):** Up to three examples of work that is similar in nature to the work the PI is proposing to engage in as part of the Scholars Network

Required Standard Forms (SFs) and/or OMB-approved Forms should be submitted separately from the two application files described above, per the instructions in this funding opportunity announcement.

While required forms and application materials are discussed throughout this announcement, a full checklist of them can be found in *Section VIII. Other Information.*

Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications

Applicants seeking grant or cooperative agreement awards under this announcement must submit the listed Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications with the application. All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at [ACF Funding Opportunities Forms](#) or at the [Grants.gov Forms Repository](#) unless specified otherwise.

Forms / Assurances / Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes / Description
DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	A DUNS number is required of all applicants. To obtain a DUNS number, go to http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform . Active registration at the Systems Award Management (SAM) website must be maintained	A DUNS number and SAM registration are eligibility requirements for all applicants. See <i>Section III.3. Other</i> for information on obtaining a DUNS number and registration at http://www.sam.gov .

	throughout the application and project award period. SAM registration is available at http://www.sam.gov .	
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance and SF-P/PSL - Project/Performance Site Location(s)	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs	Submission is required for all applicants when applying for a non-construction project. Standard Forms must be used. Forms must be submitted by the application due date.	Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project. By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.
SF-424 Key Contact Form	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
Proof of Accreditation for public, State-controlled, or private institution of higher education	Referenced in <i>Section III.1 Eligibility Information</i>	Required for all applications. This is not a SF or OMB-approved Form and must be submitted as a part of Application File Two.
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	If applicable, submission of this form is due at the time of application.	If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.

Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Certification	An example of a standard MOE is available at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms . Submission required for all applicants.	Required for all applications.
Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification/IRB Certification/Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)	Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> . If the information is not available at the time of application, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Form is available at http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html . General information about the HHS Protection of Human Subjects regulations can be obtained at http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/ . Applicants may also contact OHRP by email (ohrp@csophs.dhhs.gov) or by phone (240-453-6900).
Certification Regarding Lobbying	Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Submission of this Certification is required for all applications.

The Project Description

The Project Description Overview

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 requested evaluation criteria 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

Applicants should develop 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 that are required to submit a full project description shall prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria. The topics listed in this section provide a broad overview of what the project description should include while the Criteria in *Section V.1.* identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

Table of Contents

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers.

Project Summary/Abstract

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.

Approach

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.

In his/her application for first year funds, each PI should submit both an **individual research plan** as well as **ideas and proposals for collaborative research** that will serve as the basis for the discussion and development of collaborative research efforts.

The approach taken must include, but not is not necessarily limited to:

1. A discussion of the individual research plan. The applicant must make evident that he/she has a thorough understanding of of family self-sufficiency, stability, and safety net issues and propose research questions that he/she is willing to address independently, with financial support from this cooperative agreement. The PI applications must discuss and present:

a. Personnel qualifications, expertise, and experience, including:

- Research experience in broader family self-sufficiency and stability issues and also in the specific area of proposed individual research.
- The ability to conceptualize and carry out tasks and activities set forth in this funding opportunity announcement and produce products as required (a management plan).
- Experience in successfully managing projects of this scope and type and ensuring staff successfully complete assignments and work effectively and efficiently together.
- Experience effectively collaborating with other researchers, scholars, and key stakeholders.
- An understanding of the complexities and complications associated with different types and uses of research evidence.

b. The technical approach, including:

- The background and significance of the proposed research questions, including conceptual framework, any preliminary studies, and a brief analysis of the key trends (i.e., social, demographic, economic) that provide a basis for the proposed research questions.
- Data sources, methodology, design, and analyses to be used in the proposed research and the factors considered in determining the optimal approach.
- Potential challenges, and methods to address those challenges, relevant to the research.
- The disciplinary contribution to the Scholars Network's multidisciplinary orientation made by the PI and the proposed research.
- The effect(s) that the proposed research will have on the field and the specific aims of the research.
- An appropriate plan and timeline for obtaining IRB approval and clearance if such clearance is necessary.

c. Availability of necessary resources, including:

- The ability to access appropriate data and resources to support the proposed research.
- The ability to ensure a genuinely interdisciplinary approach to the research, and, where appropriate, the necessary links to organizations and scholars engaged in research and government policymaking.
- The ability and capacity to assemble and synthesize the alternative approaches and competing stakeholder participation and interests necessary to work across multiple research and evaluation areas relevant to family self-sufficiency and stability.

d. A detailed project timeline, including milestones and end products of value.

2. A discussion of ideas and proposals for collaborative research among the Scholars Network. The applicant must identify areas of research in which he/she would be willing to cooperate with other

members of the Scholars Network. The PI applications must discuss and present:

a. Contributions to the multidisciplinary and collaborative concept of the Scholars Network, including:

- Questions of substantive public policy significance and ideas for collaborative research. It is sufficient to provide a brief discussion of these ideas; a detailed plan for conducting and/or managing the research is not required.
- The PI's contribution to a collaborative research effort around these questions, including his/her methodological or disciplinary contribution to the multidisciplinary Scholars Network.

b. A communication and engagement plan, including:

- Identification of appropriate ACF offices, programs, and potential key stakeholders at the Federal, State, and/or local levels.
- Potential communication and engagement challenges and methods to address them.
- Resources (time or otherwise) available to provide “rapid response” research and program evaluation support to ACF/OPRE, key stakeholders, and the Scholars Network.
- Mechanisms to present activities or findings, as appropriate, to Federal staff or to the larger social services research community as part of the Scholars Network.
- Innovative methods of dissemination of information that the Scholars Network might utilize and that show sensitivity to different strategies that may be appropriate for different audiences, such as policymakers, practitioners, and academics.

Initial applications submitted in response to this funding opportunity announcement should contain both an individual research plan and ideas and proposals for collaborative research that do not exceed one year but include a basic outline of potential multi-year individual and collaborative research activities. Actual out-year plans will be proposed in annual non-competing applications due no later than the beginning of the fourth quarter of the project budget period.

Legal Status of Applicant Entity

Applicants must provide the following documentation of their legal status:

Applicants must provide proof of accreditation. Please see *Section III.1 Eligibility Information; Section IV.2 Content and Forms, Certifications, and Assurances;* and the Application Checklist in *Section VIII. Other Information.*

Project Sustainability Plan

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.

Protection of Sensitive and/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.

The Project Budget and Budget Justification

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).

Special Note: *The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 (Pub.L. 112-74), enacted December 23, 2011, 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 \$179,700 (<http://www.opm.gov/oca/12tables/html/ex.asp>). This amount reflects an individual's base salary **exclusive** of fringe 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 narrative budget justification for the first year of the proposed project. The narrative budget justification should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

1. Applicants must include an individual research budget for the first year of the cooperative agreement that includes:

- Relevant research costs and expenses.
- Costs for necessary administrative data and other partnerships with State and local human services groups.
- Costs related to a communication and engagement plan, as outlined in the Approach portion of *Section IV.2*. (There will be a much greater level of communication among members of the Scholars Network than is normal for individual project grants.)
- Costs related to mandatory travel: As a condition of their grants, PIs will be required to attend two meetings per year of the Steering Committee. Steering Committee meetings will be held in the Washington, DC area. Each DC-area meeting will be approximately two-and-a-half to three days in length. During these meetings, the Steering Committee will decide upon the operating policies of the Scholars Network, discuss ongoing research, formulate the collaborative research plan, and discuss the implications of the research with interested parties outside of the Scholars Network who may be invited by the Steering Committee as the occasion warrants. The first Steering Committee meeting will be held as part of the required grantee kick-off meeting. ACF/OPRE anticipates this meeting will be two-and-a-half days in length and will be held in August 2013.
- Costs related to interim meetings facilitated via appropriate technology (i.e., conference calls, webinars, etc.) should also be included.

2. PIs should not submit an itemized budget for the collaborative research ideas, but should demonstrate that they have time available for agenda planning and cooperative efforts. (A description of time commitments is required as part of Application File Two.)

Applicants should not submit budget information that goes beyond the first year of the cooperative agreement.

General

Use the following guidelines for preparing the budget and budget justification. Both federal and non-federal resources (when required) shall be detailed and justified in the budget and budget narrative justification. "federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant funds for which you are 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.

Personnel

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.

Fringe Benefits

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.

Travel

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.

Supplies

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.

Contractual

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 Part 92 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 \$100,000. 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.

Other

Description: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: local travel; insurance; food; medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional services costs; 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.

Indirect Charges

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.

Paperwork Reduction 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 11/30/2012. 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.

Application Submission Options

Electronic Submission via www.Grants.gov

- Additional guidance on the submission of electronic applications can be found at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp.
- If applicants encounter any technical difficulties in using www.Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov Contact Center at: 1-800-518-4726, or by email at support@grants.gov, to report the problem and obtain assistance. Hours of Operation: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Grants.gov Contact

Center is closed on federal holidays.

- Applicants should always retain Grants.gov Contact Center service ticket number(s) as they may be needed for future reference.
- **Contact with the Grants.gov Contact Center prior to the listed application due date and time does not ensure acceptance of an application. If difficulties are encountered, the Grants Management Officer listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* will determine whether the submission issues are due to Grants.gov system errors or user error.**

Application Validation at www.Grants.gov

After an application has been successfully submitted to www.Grants.gov, it still must pass a series of validation checks. After an application is submitted, Grants.gov generates a submission receipt via email and also sets the application status to "Received." This receipt verifies that the application has been successfully delivered to the Grants.gov system.

Next, Grants.gov verifies the submission is valid by ensuring it does not contain viruses, the opportunity is still open, and the applicant login and applicant DUNS number match. If the submission is valid, Grants.gov generates a submission validation receipt via email and sets the application status to "Validated."

If the application is not validated, the application status is set to "Rejected." The system sends a rejection email notification to the applicant and the applicant must re-submit the application package. See "What to Expect After Submitting" at www.Grants.gov for more information.

Each time an application is submitted, or resubmitted, via www.Grants.gov, the application will receive a new date and time stamp. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which are transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

Applicants will be provided with an acknowledgement from Grants.gov that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, a series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission

ACF recognizes that some applicants may have limited or no Internet access, and/or limited computer capacity, which may prohibit them from uploading large files at www.Grants.gov. To accommodate such applicants, ACF offers an exemption from required electronic submission. The exemption will allow applicants to submit hard copy, paper applications by hand-delivery, applicant courier, overnight/express mail couriers, or by other representatives of the applicant.

To receive an exemption from required electronic application submission, applicants must submit a written request to ACF that must state that the applicant qualifies for the exemption for one of the two following reasons:

- Lack of Internet access or Internet connection, or
- Limited computer capacity that prevents the uploading of large documents (files) at www.Grants.gov.

Applicants may request and receive the exemption from required electronic application submission by either:

- Submitting an email request to electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov, or
- Sending a written request to the Office of Grants Management Contact listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* in this announcement.

Requests for exemption from required electronic application submission will be acknowledged with an approval or disapproval.

Requests that do not state one of the two listed reasons will not be approved.

An exemption is applicable to all applications submitted by the applicant organization during the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) in which it is received. Applicants need only request an exemption once in a FFY. Applicants must request a new exemption from required electronic submission for any succeeding FFY.

Please Note: electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov **may only be used to request an exemption from required electronic submission.** All other inquiries must be directed to the appropriate Agency Contact listed in *Section VII.* of this announcement. Queries or requests submitted to this email address for any reason other than a request for an exemption from electronic application submission will not be acknowledged or answered.

All exemption requests must include the following information:

- Funding Opportunity Announcement Title,
- Funding Opportunity Number (FON),
- The listed Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number,
- Name of Applicant Organization and DUNS Number,
- AOR name and contact information,
- Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving the application (i.e., the Point of Contact), and
- The reason for which the applicant is requesting an exemption from electronic application submission. The request for exemption must state one of the following two reasons: 1) lack of Internet access or Internet connection; or 2) lack of computer capacity that prevents uploading large documents (files) to the Internet.

Exemption requests must be received by ACF no later than two weeks before the application due date, that is, 14 calendar days prior to the application due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*. If the fourteenth calendar day falls on a weekend or federal holiday, the due date for receipt of an exemption request will move to the next federal business day that follows the weekend or federal holiday.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

Paper Format Application Submission

An exemption is now required for the submission of paper applications. See the preceding section on "Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission."

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.6.* of this announcement for address information for paper format application submissions.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* in this announcement.

IV.3. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications: **05/20/2013**

Explanation of Due Dates

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors*.

Electronic Applications

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via www.Grants.gov is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via www.Grants.gov unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.

Instructions for electronic submission via www.Grants.gov are available at: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp.

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period prior to the due date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged.

Mailed Paper Format Applications

The deadline for mailed paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications

Applications that are hand-delivered by applicants, applicant couriers, by overnight/express mail couriers, or other representatives of the applicant must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview* and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays). Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.6. Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:

- Applications submitted electronically via www.Grants.gov are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.
- Paper format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

Extensions and/or Waiving Due Date and Receipt Time Requirements

ACF may extend an application due date and receipt time when circumstances make it impossible for

applicants to submit their applications on time. These events include natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or when there are widespread disruptions of electrical service, or mail service, or in other rare cases. The determination to extend or waive due date and/or receipt time requirements rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. Agency Contacts*.

Acknowledgement from www.Grants.gov

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to www.Grants.gov. This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Applicants should refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which serves as the official record of application's submission. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation check.

Applicants will be provided with an acknowledgement from www.Grants.gov that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, a series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

See "What to Expect After Submitting" at www.Grants.gov for more information.

Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:

Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from www.Grants.gov by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper format application

ACF will not provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

IV.4. Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs

This program is covered under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Executive Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

Applicants should go to the following URL for the official list of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in E.O. 12372 http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/.

Applicants from participating jurisdictions should contact their SPOC, as soon as possible, to alert them of their prospective applications and to receive instructions on their jurisdiction's procedures. Applicants must submit all required application materials to the SPOC and indicate the date of submission on the Standard Form (SF) 424 at item 19.

Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application due date to comment on proposed new awards.

SPOC comments may be submitted directly to ACF to: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants, 370 L'Enfant Promenade SW., 6th Floor East, Washington, DC 20447.

Entities that meet the eligibility requirements of this announcement are still eligible to apply for a grant even if a State, Territory or Commonwealth, etc., does not have a SPOC or has chosen not to participate in

the process. Applicants from non-participating jurisdictions need take no action with regard to E.O. 12372. Applications from Federally-recognized Indian Tribal governments are not subject to E.O. 12372.

IV.5. Funding Restrictions

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred solely to raise capital or obtain contributions, are considered unallowable costs under grants or cooperative agreements awarded under this funding opportunity announcement.

Note: Costs incurred for grant application preparation are not considered allowable costs under an award and may not be included in the project budget or budget justification.

Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

Purchase of real property is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

IV.6. Other Submission Requirements

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

Submission By Mail

Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Scholars Network
c/o Mathematica Policy Research
1100 1st Street, NE, 12th Floor
Washington, DC 20002

Hand Delivery

Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Scholars Network
c/o Mathematica Policy Research
1100 1st Street, NE, 12th Floor
Washington, DC 20002

Electronic Submission

See *Section IV.2* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov>.

For all submissions, see *Section IV.3* for information on due dates and times.

V. Application Review Information

V.1. Criteria

Please note: Reviewers will not access, or review, any materials that are not part of the application documents. This includes information accessible on websites via hyperlinks that are referenced, or embedded, in the application. Though an application may include web links, or embedded hyperlinks, reviewers will not review this information as it is not considered to be part of the application documents. Nor will the information on websites be taken into consideration in scoring of evaluation criteria presented in this section. Reviewers will evaluate and score an application based on the documents that are presented

in the application and **will not** refer to, or access, external links during the objective review.

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in this section. The corresponding point values indicate the relative importance placed on each review criterion. Points will be allocated based on the extent to which the application proposal addresses each of the criteria listed. Applicants should address these criteria in their application materials, particularly in the project description and budget justification, as they are the basis upon which competing applications will be judged during the objective review. The required elements of the project description and budget justification may be found in *Section IV.2* of this announcement.

Individual Research Plan

Maximum Points: 80

Personnel Qualifications, Expertise, and Experience (25 points)

- Extent to which:
 - The PI has adequate or promising research experience in broader family self-sufficiency and stability issues and also in the specific area of proposed individual research. The PI is appropriately trained and well-suited to carry out the proposed individual research plan and the work proposed is appropriate to the experience level of the PI.
 - The PI demonstrates the ability to conceptualize and successfully carry out tasks and activities as set forth in this funding opportunity announcement and produce products as required (a management plan).
 - The proposal demonstrates that the PI has substantial or promising experience in successfully managing projects of the scope and type and ensuring staff successfully complete assignments and work effectively and efficiently together.
 - The PI has a demonstrated or promising record of effective collaboration with other researchers, scholars, and key stakeholders.
 - The time commitment to the Scholars Network and other existing, non-related commitments are clearly indicated and are appropriate.
 - The PI's training and disciplinary background contribute to the multidisciplinary nature of the Scholars Network.

Technical Approach to Individual Research Plan (35 points)

- Extent to which:
 - The proposal addresses an important problem in the field of family self-sufficiency and stability and indicates the effect(s) that the proposed research will have.
 - The proposal utilizes appropriate data sources and methodologies. The conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses are adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project.
 - The proposal demonstrates a thorough understanding of the objectives for the project as evidenced by the appropriateness of background trends analyzed, methodologies proposed, and factors considered in determining the optimal approach to the research question/proposal.
 - The approaches proposed reflect a thorough understanding of potential challenges and methods to address those challenges to ensure successful completion of the tasks and overall study.
 - The proposal demonstrates a thorough understanding of family self-sufficiency, stability, and safety net issues.
 - If the proposed research project requires IRB approval and clearance, an appropriate plan

and timeline for obtaining such clearance is included.

- The proposal provides an adequate plan for the protection of sensitive and confidential information.

Availability of Resources Necessary to Perform Individual Research (15 points)

- Extent to which:
 - The PI has access to appropriate data and resources to support him/her in the proposed research.
 - The PI has the ability to ensure a genuinely interdisciplinary approach to the research and, where appropriate, has the necessary links to organizations and scholars engaged in research and government policymaking.
 - The PI has the ability and capacity to assemble and synthesize the alternative approaches and competing stakeholder participation and interests necessary to work across multiple research and evaluation areas relevant to family self-sufficiency and stability.

Appropriateness of the Proposed Budget, Timeline, and Sustainability Plan (5 points)

- Extent to which:
 - The applicant provides a detailed timeline, including milestones and end products of value. The proposal demonstrates a clear understanding of the time requirements and needs of all tasks.
 - The applicant provides an appropriate sustainability plan that details how the proposed approach will create project self-sufficiency and ensure project impact will continue after Federal assistance has ended.
 - The applicant provides a detailed budget that contains reasonable research, administrative data/partnership, communication, and travel cost estimates.

Ideas and Proposals for Collaborative Research

Maximum Points: 20

Contribution to Multidisciplinary and Collaborative Concept of the Scholars Network (15 points)

- Extent to which:
 - The PI contributes to the multidisciplinary concept of the Scholars Network.
 - The collaborative research ideas are likely to stimulate important research that has useful public policy implications.
 - The PI indicates his/her possible research contribution to the collaborative ideas presented.

Communication and Engagement Plan (5 points)

- Extent to which:
 - The proposed plan for communication with ACF/OPRE, ACF offices and programs, key stakeholders, and the Scholars Network is clear and adequate to ensure efficient and effective project management.
 - The proposed plan identifies appropriate ACF offices and programs and potential key stakeholders.
 - The approach proposed reflects a thorough understanding of potential communication and engagement challenges and methods to address them.
 - The applicant is prepared and available to provide “rapid response” research and program evaluation support to ACF/OPRE, key stakeholders, and the Scholars Network.
 - The proposal identifies mechanisms to present activities or findings, as appropriate, to Federal staff or to the larger social services research community as part of the Scholars

Network.

- The proposal includes innovative methods of presentation and dissemination of information that the Scholars Network might utilize and shows sensitivity to different presentation and dissemination strategies that may be appropriate for different audiences, such as policymakers, practitioners, and academics.

V.2. Review and Selection Process

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant or sub-recipient that does not have a DUNS number (www.dbn.com) and an active registration at SAM (www.sam.gov). See *Section III.3. Other*.

Initial ACF Screening

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets one of the following disqualification criteria as described in *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors*:

- Applications that are designated as late according to *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*,
- Applications that are submitted in paper format without prior approval of an exemption from required electronic submission (*Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*), or
- Applications with requests that exceed the award ceiling stated in *Section II. Award Information*.

For those applications that have been disqualified under the initial ACF screening, notice will be provided by postal mail or by email. See *Section IV.3. Explanation of Due Dates* for information on Grants.gov's and ACF's acknowledgment of received applications.

Objective Review and Results

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this announcement. Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. They are one element in the decision-making process.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested. ACF reserves the right to consider preferences to fund organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations, including those populations located in pockets of poverty. ACF will also consider the geographic distribution of federal funds in its award decisions.

ACF may refuse funding for projects with what it regards as unreasonably high start-up costs for facilities or equipment, or for projects with unreasonably high operating costs.

An attempt will be made to balance the members of the Scholars Network so that the Scholars Network will have a multidisciplinary composition with members representing a broad spectrum of family self-sufficiency and stability research topics and methodologies of interest and expertise. In addition, an attempt will be made to balance the members of the Scholars Network based on Scholar access to, familiarity with, and use of data sources. Awards will be made on the basis of the scientific merit of the research application and the need to create a balanced Scholars Network.

Applications may be funded based on: (1) the ranked order of applicants resulting from the competitive review, (2) staff review and consultations, (3) the combination of projects that best meets the topical priorities of ACF/OPRE, (4) the funds available, and (5) the best interests of the Federal government.

Approved but Unfunded Applications

Applications recommended for approval that were not funded under the competition because of the lack of available funds may be held over by ACF and reconsidered in a subsequent review cycle if a future competition under the program area is planned. These applications will be held over for a period of up to one year and will be re-competed for funding with all other competing applications in the next available review cycle. For those applications that have been deemed as approved but unfunded, notice will be given of such determination by postal mail.

V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Announcement of awards and the disposition of applications will be provided to applicants at a later date.

VI. Award Administration Information

VI.1. Award Notices

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Notice of Award (NOA) that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NOA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail or email. Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head. Any other correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk and may be reimbursed only to the extent that they are considered allowable as approved pre-award costs. Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.5. Funding Restrictions*.

VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to the uniform administrative requirements and cost principles of 45 CFR Part 74 (Awards And Subawards To Institutions Of Higher Education, Hospitals, Other Nonprofit Organizations, And Commercial Organizations) or 45 CFR Part 92 (Grants And Cooperative Agreements To State, Local, And Tribal Governments). The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is available at <http://www.gpo.gov>.

An application funded with the release of federal funds through a grant award does not constitute, or

imply, compliance with federal regulations. Funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with all applicable federal regulations.

Prohibition Against Profit

Grantees are subject to the limitations set forth in 45 CFR Part 74, Subpart E-Special Provisions for Awards to Commercial Organizations (45 CFR § 74.81_Prohibition against profit), which states that, "... no HHS funds may be paid as profit to any recipient even if the recipient is a commercial organization. Profit is any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs."

Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations

Grantees are also subject to the requirements of 45 CFR § 87.1(c), Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which says, "Organizations that receive direct financial assistance from the [Health and Human Services] Department under any Department program may not engage in inherently religious activities such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization, as part of the programs or services funded with direct financial assistance from the Department." Therefore, organizations must take steps to completely separate the presentation of any program with religious content from the presentation of the Federally funded program by time or location *in such a way that it is clear that the two programs are separate and distinct*. If separating the two programs by time but presenting them in the same location, one program must *completely* end before the other program begins.

A faith-based organization receiving HHS funds retains its independence from federal, state, and local governments, and may continue to carry out its mission, including the definition, practice, and expression of its religious beliefs. For example, a faith-based organization may use space in its facilities to provide secular programs or services funded with federal funds without removing religious art, icons, scriptures, or other religious symbols. In addition, a faith-based organization that receives federal funds retains its authority over its internal governance, and it may retain religious terms in its organization's name, select its board members on a religious basis, and include religious references in its organization's mission statements and other governing documents in accordance with all program requirements, statutes, and other applicable requirements governing the conduct of HHS-funded activities.

Regulations pertaining to the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which includes the prohibition against federal funding of inherently religious activities, "Understanding the Regulations Related to the Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Initiative" are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/about/regulations/>. Additional information, resources, and tools for faith-based organizations is available through The Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships website at <http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/index.html> and at the [Capacity Building Toolkits for Faith-based and Community Organizations](#).

Award Term and Condition under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to the requirements of Section 106 (g) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, as amended (22 U.S.C. § 7104). For the full text of the award term, go to <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/award-term-and-condition-for-trafficking-in-persons>. If you are unable to access this link, please contact the Grants Management Contact identified in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* of this announcement to obtain a copy of the term.

Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. §§ 8101-8106) requires that all organizations receiving

grants from any federal agency agree to maintain a drug-free workplace. By signing the application, the Authorizing Official agrees that the grantee will provide a drug-free workplace and will comply with the requirement to notify ACF if an employee is convicted of violating a criminal drug statute. Failure to comply with these requirements may be cause for debarment. Government-wide requirements for Drug-Free Workplace for Financial Assistance are found in 2 CFR part 182; HHS implementing regulations are set forth in 2 CFR § 382.400. All recipients of ACF grant funds must comply with the requirements in Subpart B - Requirements for Recipients Other Than Individuals, 2 CFR § 382.225. The rule is available at [Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace](#).

Debarment and Suspension

HHS regulations published in 2 CFR Part 376 implement the governmentwide debarment and suspension system guidance (2 CFR Part 180) for HHS' non-procurement programs and activities. "Non-procurement transactions" include, among other things, grants, cooperative agreements, scholarships, fellowships, and loans. ACF implements the HHS Debarment and Suspension regulations as a term and condition of award. Grantees may decide the method and frequency by which this determination is made and may check the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) located at <https://www.sam.gov/>, although checking the EPLS is not required. More information is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>.

Pro-Children Act

The Pro-Children Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. §§ 7181 through 7184, imposes restrictions on smoking in facilities where federally funded children's services are provided. HHS grants are subject to these requirements only if they meet the Act's specified coverage. The Act specifies that smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education or library services to children under the age of 18. In addition, smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility or portion of a facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of federally funded health care, day care, or early childhood development, including Head Start services to children under the age of 18. The statutory prohibition also applies if such facilities are constructed, operated, or maintained with federal funds. The statute does not apply to children's services provided in private residences, facilities funded solely by Medicare or Medicaid funds, portions of facilities used for inpatient drug or alcohol treatment, or facilities where WIC coupons are redeemed. Failure to comply with the provisions of the law may result in the imposition of a civil monetary penalty of up to \$1,000 per violation and/or the imposition of an administrative compliance order on the responsible entity.

HHS Grants Policy Statement

The HHS Grants Policy Statement (HHS GPS) is the Department of Health and Human Services' single policy guide for discretionary grants and cooperative agreements. ACF grant awards are subject to the requirements of the HHS GPS, which covers basic grants processes, standard terms and conditions, and points of contact, as well as important agency-specific requirements. Appendices to the HHS GPS include a glossary of terms and a list of standard abbreviations for ease of reference. The general terms and conditions in the HHS GPS will apply as indicated unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary that are specified in the Notice of Award (NoA). The HHS GPS is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/discretionary-competitive-grants>.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Applications funded by federal grant programs are subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, and are frequently requested under the FOIA. In accordance with the FOIA

requirement to proactively disclose frequently requested materials at 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(2)(D), and as part of on-going efforts to promote openness in government programs, ACF will post some of the top-ranked applications funded under this FOIA in its online FOIA Reading Room at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/e-reading-room>. As required under the FOIA, each of the top-ranked applications will receive appropriate redaction of specific information to protect personal privacy and competitively sensitive commercial information. Applications chosen for posting to the FOIA Reading Room will be placed on the internet website without further notice to the applicants.

VI.3. Reporting

Grantees under this funding opportunity announcement will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. The frequency of required reporting is listed later in this section. Final reports may be submitted in hard copy to the Grants Management Office Contact listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* of this announcement. Instructions on submission of reports electronically will be provided with award documents.

Performance Progress Reports (PPR)

Notice of Award documents will inform grantees of the appropriate performance progress report form or format to use. Grantees should consult their Notice of Award documents to determine the appropriate performance progress report format required under their award. Performance progress reports are due 30 days after the end of the reporting period.

Final program performance reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period. For awards that implement the use of the SF-PPR, that form may be found under "Reporting" at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>

Federal Financial Reports (FFR)

As of February 1, 2011, HHS began the transition from use of the SF-269, Financial Status Report (Short Form or Long Form) to the use of the SF-425 Federal Financial Report for expenditure reporting. SF-269s will no longer be accepted for expenditure reports due after that date. If an SF-269 is submitted, the ACF will return it and require the recipient to complete the SF-425.

The transition strategy is allowing individual HHS Operating Divisions to select--from a limited number of options--the approach that best fits their programs and business process. This transition does not affect completion or submission of the cash reporting to the HHS Division of Payment Management's Payment Management System (PMS). The primary features of this transition for recipients are that OPDIVs that previously required electronic submission of the SF-269 will receive the SF-425 expenditure reports electronically and, until further notice, OPDIVs that have been receiving expenditure reports in hard copy will continue to do so.

All expenditure reports will be due on one of the standard due dates by which cash reporting is required to be submitted to PMS or at the end of a calendar quarter as determined by the Operating Division. As a result, a recipient that receives awards from more than one OPDIV may be subject to more than one approach, but will not be required to change its current means of submission or be subjected to more than eight standard due dates.

Beginning with budget periods which end from January 1 - March 31, 2011, and for all budget periods thereafter, all affected ACF grantees will be required to submit an SF-425 report as frequently as is required in the terms and conditions of their award using due dates for reports to PMS.

For budget periods ending in the months of:	The FFR (SF-425) is due to ACF on:
January 01 through March 31	April 30
April 01 through June 30	July 30
July 01 through September 30	October 30
October 01 through December 31	January 30

Fillable versions of the SF-425 form in Adobe PDF and MS-Excel formats, along with instructions, are available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms, www.forms.gov, and on at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>. Further instructions will be provided, as necessary, with award terms and conditions that will address specific reporting periods and due dates on an award-by-award basis.

For planning purposes, ACF reporting periods for awards made under this announcement are as follows:

Program Progress Reports: Semi-Annually
Financial Reports: Semi-Annually

Awards issued as a result of this funding opportunity may be subject to the Transparency Act subaward and executive compensation reporting requirements of 2 CFR Part 170. See ACF's Award Term for Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting Requirement implementing this requirement and additional award applicability information at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/discretionary-competitive-grants>.

SF-428 Tangible Property Report and SF-429 Real Property Status Report

As of April 1, 2012, the Administration for Children and Families has been requiring the use of the SF-428 (Tangible Personal Property Form) as well as the SF-429 (Real Property Status Report).

The **SF-428** is a standard form used by awarding agencies to collect information related to tangible personal property (equipment and supplies) when required by a federal financial assistance award. The form consists of the cover sheet, SF-428, and three attachments to be used as required: Annual Report; Final (Award Closeout) Report and a Disposition Request/Report. A Supplemental Sheet, SF-428S, may be used to provide detailed individual item information.

The **SF-429** is a standard report used by recipients of federal financial assistance to report real property status (Attachment A) or to request agency instructions on real property (Attachments B, C) that has been/will be provided as Government Furnished Property (GFP) or acquired (i.e., purchased or constructed) in whole or in part under a federal financial assistance award (i.e., grant, cooperative agreement, etc.). This includes real property that was improved using federal funds and real property that was donated to a federal project in the form of a match or cost share donation. This report is used for awards that establish a federal Interest on real property.

Beginning with budget periods ending September 30, 2012, and for all budget periods thereafter, all ACF grantees are required to submit (as applicable) an SF-428 and SF-429 report as frequently as required in the terms and conditions of their award(s).

The forms are available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms.

VII. Agency Contacts

Program Office Contact

Sarah Sattelmeyer
Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Scholars Network
c/o Mathematica Policy Research
1100 1st Street, NE, 12th Floor
Washington, DC 20002
Phone: (866) 666-4252
Email: ScholarsNetworkFOA@mathematica-mpr.com

Office of Grants Management Contact

Tim Chappelle
Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Scholars Network
c/o Mathematica Policy Research
1100 1st Street, NE, 12th Floor
Washington, DC 20002
Phone: (866) 666-4252
Email: ScholarsNetworkFOA@mathematica-mpr.com

Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service for assistance at 1-800-877-8339 (TTY - Text Telephone or ASCII - American Standard Code For Information Interchange).

VIII. Other Information

Reference Websites

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on the Internet <http://www.hhs.gov/>.

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on the Internet <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>.

Administration for Children and Families - GRANTS homepage <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants>.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) <https://www.cfda.gov/>.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) <http://www.gpo.gov>.

United States Code (U.S.C.) <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/> .

All required Standard Forms (SF), assurances, and certifications are available on the ACF Grants-Forms page at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>.

Grants.gov Forms Repository webpage at

http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp.

Versions of other Standard Forms (SF) are available on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Grants Management Forms web site at

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms/.

For information regarding accessibility issues, visit the Grants.gov Accessibility Compliance Page at http://www07.grants.gov/aboutgrants/accessibility_compliance.jsp

Sign up to receive notification of ACF Funding Opportunities at www.Grants.gov

http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription.jsp.

Administration for Children and Families - Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation:

www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/

Application Checklist

Applicants may use the checklist below as a guide when preparing your application package.

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
Approach	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission</i>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Resume/CV for one PI	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission</i>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Time Commitments	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission</i>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

Other Relevant Work (Optional)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission</i>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	Referenced in <i>Section III.3. Other</i> in the announcement. To obtain a DUNS number, go to http:// fedgov.dnb.com/ webform . To register at SAM, go to http://www.sam.gov .	A DUNS number and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants. Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance and SF-P/PSL - Project/Performance Site Location(s)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . Found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/ grants-forms and at the Grants.gov Forms Repository at http://www.grants.gov/ agencies/ aforms repository information.jsp .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . Found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
SF-424 Key Contact Form	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . Found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/ grants-forms and at the Grants.gov Forms Repository at http://www. grants.gov/ agencies/ aforms repository information.jsp .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Proof of Accreditation for public, State-controlled, or private institution of higher education	Referenced in <i>Section III.1. Eligibility Information</i> and in <i>Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission</i>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

		<i>Times.</i>
Certification Regarding Lobbying	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . Found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms .	Submission is due with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . Found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms . If applicable, submission of this form is required if any funds have been paid, or will be paid, to any person for influencing, or attempting to influence, an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan.	If applicable, submission of this form is applicable, it is due prior at the time of application. It may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Certification	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . An example of a standard MOE is available at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms . Submission is due with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Submission is due by the application due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification/IRB Certification/Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . Additional information and necessary forms are available at http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html .	Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> . If the information is not available at the time of application, it must be submitted prior to

		the award of a grant.
The Project Description	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> . This is the title for the project narrative that describes the applicant's plan for the project.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
The Project Budget and Budget Justification	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i> of the announcement.	Submission of the Project Budget is required on the appropriate Standard Form (424A or 424C). The Budget Justification is a separate document that may be no longer than 10 pages and is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities"	Applicants should go to the following URL for the official list of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in E.O. 12372 http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spo/ as indicated in <i>Section IV.4. Intergovernmental Review</i> of this announcement. The Executive Order and CFR require that applicants submit all required application materials to their State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) and indicate the date of submission on the SF-424 at item 19.	Submission of application materials is due to SPOC by the application due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Table of Contents	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due as part of the Project Description by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

Project Summary/Abstract	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> . The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Project Sustainability Plan	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Plan for Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission</i>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

Appendices