



**Administration for Children and Families**

Administration on Children, Youth and Families

Quality Improvement Center on Child Welfare Involved Children and Families Experiencing  
Domestic Violence

HHS-2016-ACF-ACYF-CA-1184

Application Due Date: 07/22/2016

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Overview
- Executive Summary
- I. [Program Description](#)
- II. [Federal Award Information](#)
- III. Eligibility Information
  - 1. [Eligible Applicants](#)
  - 2. [Cost Sharing or Matching](#)
  - 3. [Other](#)
- IV. Application and Submission Information
  - 1. [Address to Request Application Package](#)
  - 2. [Content and Form of Application Submission](#)
  - 3. [Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#)
  - 4. [Submission Dates and Times](#)
  - 5. [Intergovernmental Review](#)
  - 6. [Funding Restrictions](#)
  - 7. [Other Submission Requirements](#)
- V. Application Review Information
  - 1. [Criteria](#)
  - 2. [Review and Selection Process](#)
  - 3. [Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates](#)
- VI. Federal Award Administration Information
  - 1. [Federal Award Notices](#)
  - 2. [Administrative and National Policy Requirements](#)
  - 3. [Reporting](#)
- VII. [HHS Awarding Agency Contact\(s\)](#)
- VIII. [Other Information](#)

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

**Program Office:** Administration on Children, Youth and Families -  
Children's Bureau

**Funding Opportunity Title:** Quality Improvement Center on Child Welfare Involved  
Children and Families Experiencing Domestic Violence

**Announcement Type:** Initial

**Funding Opportunity  
Number:** HHS-2016-ACF-ACYF-CA-1184

**Primary CFDA Number:** 93.670

**Due Date for Applications:** 07/22/2016

### Executive Summary

*Notice:*

- **Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the entire funding opportunity announcement (FOA) carefully and observe the application formatting requirements listed in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*. For more information on applying for grants, please visit "How to Apply for a Grant" on the ACF Grants Page at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto>.**

The purpose of this FOA is to award a 5-year cooperative agreement to establish one Quality Improvement Center (QIC) to develop, implement, and support innovative collaborative models, policies, procedures, and system interventions targeted toward improving the safety, permanency, and well-being children in families that are: (1) pregnant and/or have young children, (2) involved in the child welfare system, and (3) experiencing domestic violence. The QIC on Child Welfare Involved Children and Families Experiencing Domestic Violence will generate and disseminate knowledge regarding best practices and effective and/or evidence-informed policies and strategies for collaborative response models, practices, and system interventions for these children and families.

The following are the objectives of the QIC:

- Collect, develop, and disseminate information that helps child welfare agencies, domestic violence programs, court professionals, and early childhood programs to better serve the needs of families that are: (1) pregnant and/or have young children, (2) involved in the child welfare system, and (3) experiencing domestic violence;
- Identify evidence-based and/or evidence-informed, promising, and innovative strategies that focus on building collaborative response models, practices, and system interventions - including the infrastructure necessary to support these services;
- Develop, support, and implement four to six projects in state, county, and/or tribal child

welfare systems to pilot identified collaborative response models and/or systems interventions to better serve the needs of these families;

- Assist selected project sites in assessing, developing and strengthening partnerships, policies, and procedures with domestic violence programs to implement services that are responsive to victims of domestic violence and their children, including, being trauma-informed and programmatically responsive to the safety needs of these families throughout their engagement with child welfare;
- Rigorously evaluate, through site-specific and, if applicable, a cross-site evaluation, the work of the four to six projects that will further build the knowledge in this field and allow for the transfer of knowledge and implementation of these piloted strategies in other child welfare systems; and
- Improve the safety, permanency, and well-being for pregnant and/or parenting families experiencing domestic violence involved in the child welfare system.

## I. Program Description

### Statutory Authority

The statutory authority is section 105(a)(6) of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) (42 U.S.C. 5106(a)(6)).

### Description

#### BACKGROUND

#### Co-Occurrence of Child Maltreatment and Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is unfortunately too common and is often one of many risk factors among families who enter the child welfare system [1]. Estimates of the number of children who have been exposed to domestic violence each year vary. A recent multistage sample design of the 48 contiguous states estimated that 15.5 million American children live in dual-parent households in which physical domestic violence has occurred in the past year, and 7 million children are living in homes with ongoing severe physical domestic violence [2]. The Centers for Disease Control's National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey underscores the pervasiveness of this violence, the immediate impacts of victimization, and the lifelong health consequences. Women are disproportionately impacted. They experienced high rates of severe intimate partner violence, rape, stalking, and long-term chronic disease and other negative health impacts, such as post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms. One in 4 women (22.3 percent) have been the victim of severe physical violence by an intimate partner, while 1 in 7 men (14.0 percent) have experienced the same [3].

Data from the 2010 Infant Victimization in a Nationally Representative Survey of caregivers indicated that nearly 5 percent of infants (younger than 12 months old) have witnessed inter-parental physical or sexual assault [4]. Additionally, research suggests that nearly 30 million children in the United States will be exposed to some type of family violence before the age of 17, and there is a 30 to 60 percent overlap of child maltreatment and domestic violence [5]. According to the *Child Maltreatment 2013 report*, based on National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System data, 127,519, or 27.4 percent of unique child victims in 34

states reported had a domestic violence caregiver risk factor. We believe that this percentage does not capture all of the children who have been exposed to domestic violence [6].

The co-occurrence of domestic violence and child maltreatment can have significant effects on children. Challenges are seen at the individual child level including behavioral, emotional, cognitive and social difficulties [7]. The impact of domestic violence may trigger a “toxic stress response,” which can alter the architecture in the brain possibly leading to stress-related diseases and poorer health outcomes in adulthood [8]. Experiences of violence, trauma, and abuse can disrupt parent child attachment [9]. It is important to note that not all children exposed to violence will develop trauma or trauma symptoms; however, when assessing families for service delivery, their experiences must also be taken into consideration [10].

The support of family and community are essential to strengthening children’s capacity for resilience, their ability to recover from traumatic experiences, and thrive [11]. Two-generation interventions such as Child-Parent Psychotherapy, Kids' Club, and Moms Empowerment and Caring Dads can be effective in enhancing parent and child well-being and rebuilding the parent-child bond disrupted by abuse in the home [12].

In addition, research has demonstrated that collaborations between child welfare agencies and domestic violence programs can have immense impact on the lives of families and children struggling with co-occurring traumas, social disparities, and limited access to adequate resources in their communities [13]. A more coordinated approach that promotes integrated knowledge about domestic violence, training on trauma-informed responses, and joint policy planning enables child welfare agencies, court systems, and domestic violence programs to improve the safety, permanency, and well-being for child welfare involved pregnant and parenting families experiencing domestic violence [14].

### **Federal Policy Context**

CAPTA serves as one of the key pieces of legislation that guides child protection. Most recently reauthorized in 2010 (Public Law 110-320), this legislation emphasizes that addressing child abuse and neglect requires a comprehensive approach that integrates the work of social service agencies with linkages to multidisciplinary partnerships, including domestic violence service providers.

To further such a comprehensive approach, within the Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF), Children's Bureau (CB) is working with the Family Violence Prevention and Services Program (FVPS Program), within ACYF's Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB), to develop collaborative strategies and build integrated responses through targeted partnerships between child welfare agencies and domestic violence programs. The FVPS Program is guided by the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA; 42 USC § 10410-10414), which provides the primary federal funding stream dedicated to the support of emergency shelter and supportive services for victims of family violence, domestic violence, and dating violence, and their dependents.

### **The "Greenbook Project"**

The “Greenbook Project” was an interagency initiative by federal partners designed to explore the intersection between child maltreatment and domestic violence. From 2000 through 2007,

the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Justice funded six demonstration sites across the country to implement the principles and recommendations outlined in the “Greenbook Project.” The demonstration sites brought together domestic violence organizations, child protection agencies, juvenile courts, and other partners in implementing the recommendations on collaboration, systems change, and practice found in the *Effective Intervention in Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment Cases: Guidelines for Policy and Practice: Recommendations for the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (1998, Reno NV)* [15]. Sites co-located staff, implemented multidisciplinary case planning, focused on batterer accountability, made changes to screening and referral processes, and trained staff to increase agency capacity to better serve these families. Evaluations noted that the most effective sites implemented systemic policy and practice changes.

Work in this area is critical as challenges still exist. The QIC offers the opportunity to further this work by incorporating knowledge from prior initiatives, advancements made in implementation science, the effects of trauma, collaboration, and on the co-occurrence of child maltreatment and domestic violence.

### **Demonstration Projects**

Activities funded under this FOA are demonstration projects. At CB, a demonstration project is one that puts into place a new, existing, or distinctive approach for delivering services to a specific population.

Demonstration projects may build stronger evidence for promising interventions or assess whether a program or service that has proven successful in one location or setting can work in a different context. These projects may also assess a model, idea, or concept that reflects a new and different way of thinking about service delivery. As appropriate to the intervention’s developmental state, demonstration projects will:

- Develop and implement an evidence-informed model or promising practice with specific components or strategies that are based on theory, research, or evaluation data; or replicate or test the transferability of successfully evaluated program models;
- Determine the effectiveness and/or outcomes, costs, and benefits of the model and its components or strategies using a rigorous evaluation approach;
- Disseminate strategically and effectively; collaborate with CB and other key partners and stakeholders to establish goals; identify and engage with target audiences; produce detailed procedures, materials and other products based on the programs evaluations; and disseminate information about project activities, products, and findings; and
- Contribute to the evidence base on strategies, practices, and programs that may be used to guide replication, program improvements, systems change, or testing in other settings.

## **PROJECT REQUIREMENTS**

### **QIC Roles and Responsibilities**

The purpose of this QIC is to build on the current knowledge base regarding how to best collaboratively serve child welfare involved children and families experiencing domestic violence - to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of these children while being

trauma-informed and programmatically responsive to the safety needs of these families throughout their engagement with child welfare. Although some strategies have been identified to engage in this collaborative work, the QIC will help to develop a stronger body of evidence for promising practices and increase our understanding of how to better develop and strengthen the necessary partnerships and infrastructure to inform child welfare practice.

Through this FOA, the QIC will assist child welfare systems to develop or enhance child welfare agency capacity in cross-systems collaboration to:

- improve the assessment of domestic violence;
- identify the needs of children of all ages who witness domestic violence;
- provide services that support relationship building between the parent and child and offer dual generational services for both the non-abusive parent and child;
- improve access to services;
- enhance information sharing and coordination of case planning; and
- meet the safety needs and improve the well-being of victims of domestic violence and their children throughout their engagement with child welfare.

The following are the objectives of the QIC:

- Collect, develop, and disseminate information that helps child welfare agencies, domestic violence programs, court professionals and early childhood programs to better serve the needs of families that are: (1) pregnant and/or have young children, (2) involved in the child welfare system, and (3) experiencing domestic violence;
- Identify evidence-based and/or evidence-informed, promising, and innovative strategies that focus on building collaborative response models, practices, and systems interventions - including the infrastructure necessary to support these services;
- Develop, support, and implement four to six projects in state, county, and/or tribal child welfare systems to pilot identified collaborative response models and/or systems interventions to better serve the needs of these families;
- Assist selected projects sites in assessing, developing, and strengthening partnerships, policies, and procedures with domestic violence programs to implement services that are responsive to victims of domestic violence and their children, including being trauma-informed and programmatically responsive to the safety needs of these families throughout their engagement with child welfare;
- Rigorously evaluate, through site-specific and, if applicable, a cross-site evaluation, the work of the four to six projects that will further build the knowledge in this field and allow for the implementation of these piloted strategies in other child welfare systems; and
- Improve the safety, permanency, and well-being for child welfare involved pregnant and parenting families experiencing domestic violence.

The QIC work will be structured in two phases: Phase I: Planning Year (Year1) and Phase II: Implementation (Years 2-5). The QIC will be awarded funds for a Phase I and, pending successful completion of that phase, a Phase II. During the Planning Year, the QIC will engage in a collaborative process to review the literature on the subject matter, complete an analysis of current initiatives and policy, develop a conceptual framework, clarify its focus,

identify best and promising practices, solicit and select project sites, and refine the implementation plan for the remainder of its knowledge-building activities. In addition, the QIC will establish an advisory committee to support the successful completion of project goals, including reviewing the implementation plan and evaluation design, providing recommendations regarding the focus of the QIC, and identifying the key strategies, best practices, and systems interventions to study. The advisory committee will include federal and non-federal subject matter experts and representatives from relevant research, practice, and policy fields. Upon CB's approval of the Phase I activities and a Phase II plan, implementation will begin.

During the Implementation Phase, the QIC will implement, support, monitor, evaluate, and provide training and technical assistance to four to six projects. The training and technical assistance will support the project site's capacity to provide trauma-informed, culturally relevant (e.g. persons from diverse, historically marginalized, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and/or Questioning communities) and developmentally appropriate services and supports for these families. These project sites will test the identified innovative practices that focus on building collaborative models, policies, procedures and systems interventions targeted toward improving the safety, permanency and well-being for child welfare involved pregnant and parenting families experiencing domestic violence. The QIC will also evaluate each of the projects to further the evidence base and disseminate knowledge in the field. The evaluations will include process, practice, cost and outcome evaluation components.

The QIC must be fully functioning as described in the applicant's timeline within 90 days following the notification of award.

### **Project Sites**

The QIC will select, using a CB-approved methodology, four to six child welfare agencies working in partnership with a domestic violence coalition/program for projects sites. These selected project sites will pilot identified strategies that build collaborative practice across service providers and improve the safety, permanency, and well-being for these young children and families. The project sites will also focus on building the necessary infrastructure to support these services, including development of collaborative policies, protocols, and procedures for addressing domestic violence across the span of families' involvement with the child welfare system. While legal services are not the focus of this FOA, they are allowable, and a potential component of the collaborative practice and/or strategy to be piloted.

Project sites will engage in rigorous evaluations in order to document effective implementation and practices, and assess cost and/or outcomes. See *Section II. Federal Award Information* for more information on ACF's Anticipated Substantial Involvement regarding the project sites.

### **Target Population**

The cooperative agreement funded through this FOA will establish a national QIC to support collaborative models, policies, procedures, and systems interventions targeted toward improving the safety, permanency, and well-being for children in families that are: (1) pregnant and/or have young children, (2) involved in the child welfare system, and (3) experiencing domestic violence.



## **Collaboration**

The QIC, in coordination with CB, will actively collaborate with key federal and non-federal partners, agencies, and organizations, including FYSB and the FVPSA program, to achieve the purposes of this FOA. These partnerships are critical to successful implementation of the proposed project. The QIC is expected to engage with those having expertise in the fields of child welfare, domestic violence, and children exposed to violence. It is also key to engage with those who have implemented evidence-based and/or evidence-informed, and promising collaborative models and systems interventions for the target population.

Project sites should demonstrate engagement in strong collaborations with community partners. In most cases, such partners should include, but are not limited to: child welfare, domestic violence prevention and service programs, court professionals, early childhood programs, shelter and housing programs, and/or homeless service providers. State, county, tribal consortium, or tribal child welfare systems selected as project sites must demonstrate a commitment to improving outcomes for families involved in child welfare experiencing domestic violence.

CB's intent is to have the QIC and the project sites mutually implement these projects. CB's intent is not to have the QIC make subawards. The QIC will be expected to enter into mutually binding work agreements with each project site. The QIC's proposed project sites and mutually binding work agreements must receive final approval from the CB Federal Project Officer (FPO).

## **Using Evidence-Based and/or Evidence-Informed Practices**

The QIC should build upon and strengthen the existing collaborative practices and encourage projects to implement strategies or systems interventions that have demonstrated evidence-based and/or evidence-informed practices, are appropriate for the population of focus and have demonstrated effectiveness in achieving the outcomes of the proposed project.

Resources to identify well-supported evidence-based and/or evidence-informed practices can be found at the following locations:

- Comprehensive Review of Interventions for Children Exposed to Domestic Violence (<http://promising.futureswithoutviolence.org/>)
- California Evidence-based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare (<http://www.cebc4cw.org/>)
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network Empirically Supported Treatments and Promising Practices (<http://www.nctsn.org/resources/topics/treatments-that-work/promising-practices>)
- Domestic Violence Evidence Project (<http://www.dvevidenceproject.org>)
- Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness (<http://homvee.acf.hhs.gov/>)

## **Evaluation**

The QIC will undertake evaluation of activities under this FOA. Both the QIC and the project sites will have evaluation responsibilities.

The QIC will contribute to the development of a knowledge base around best practices and collaborative policy and practice models and systems interventions that are targeted toward

improving the safety, permanency, and well-being for child welfare involved pregnant and parenting families experiencing domestic violence. The QIC will design and implement site-specific evaluations for each project site. If germane to the project and approved by CB, the QIC will design and implement a cross-site evaluation. The cross-site and site specific evaluations will be guided by logic models developed by the QIC and the project sites and informed by agile methodology so that the relevance and direction of the project is evaluated throughout its developmental life cycle. Evaluations will focus on planning, implementation process, outcomes, and cost. The QIC will be responsible for providing technical assistance to project sites in collecting and reporting evaluation data.

CB encourages the QIC to use participatory and utilization-focused evaluation approaches to help guide project assessment, planning, and implementation throughout the cooperative agreement. The QIC's evaluation is expected to provide regular, timely, and useful feedback to support successful implementation and intervention fidelity, as well as to contribute to the knowledge base around best practices and effective strategies for using collaborative polices, practices, and/or procedures to better serve child welfare involved pregnant and parenting families experiencing domestic violence.

Moreover, the QIC is required to rigorously evaluate the project. Rigorous evaluation incorporates the four following criteria:

- **Credibility:** Ensuring what is intended to be evaluated is actually what is being evaluated; making sure that descriptions of the phenomena or experience being studied are accurate and recognizable to others; ensuring that the method used is the most definitive and compelling approach that is available and feasible for the question being addressed. If conclusions about program efficacy are being examined, the study design should include a comparison group (i.e., randomized control trial or quasi-experimental design);
- **Applicability:** Generalizability of findings beyond current project (i.e., when findings "fit" into contexts outside the study situation). Ensuring the population being studied represents one or more of the population being served by the program;
- **Consistency:** Consistently following and clearly describing processes and methods, so that someone else could replicate the approach and other studies can confirm what is found; and
- **Neutrality:** Producing results that are as objective as possible and acknowledge the bias brought to the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the results.

CB is particularly interested in:

- Factors and strategies associated with successful implementation;
- Organizational and systemic conditions that affect implementation;
- Implementation barriers;
- Assessments of the appropriateness of fit between the selected practices and the systems and settings into which they are introduced;
- Mechanisms that support the implementation of the project's work into service venues beyond the initial site;
- Sustainability of the new practices and services; and
- Cost of implementation and ongoing service delivery changes.

The process evaluation will support the revision and adoption of systems interventions - when necessary - to generate knowledge by the end of the project about whether the implementation activities have successfully embedded the interventions in institutional practice within and/or across targeted systems. For example, the QIC might evaluate the degree to which its collaborative models or interventions have been embedded into policies, interagency agreements, data systems, organizational structure, quality assurance protocols, and training and human resources systems. These institutional changes may be critical to the success of the proposed collaborative interventions, fidelity to the intervention models, and improved outcomes. Additionally, the QIC will actively disseminate findings throughout the project - including initial and interim findings.

At the conclusion of the project, the QIC, in collaboration with the project sites, will produce a comprehensive evaluation report detailing evaluation findings, barriers encountered, and noted success. The QIC will present these findings to CB and other stakeholders.

The QIC will have a plan for addressing protection of human subjects.

Helpful information on evaluation for program managers may be found in a document titled "Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation," which can be accessed at: [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/other\\_resrch/pm\\_guide\\_eval/index.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/other_resrch/pm_guide_eval/index.html).

### **Dissemination**

CB expects that information and knowledge generated by this project will be shared with the field and efforts will be made to integrate project knowledge into policy and practice.

Grantees are expected to disseminate strategically and incorporate dissemination activities into their work. Their dissemination activities will focus on key target audiences, understanding what these target audiences need to know and effectively getting this information to them. The QIC will disseminate project products and findings and work with the project sites to disseminate cross-project deliverables. Projects will disseminate at appropriate times on an ongoing basis throughout the project period, including dissemination of products from Phase I of the QIC. They will evaluate the extent to which their target audiences have received project knowledge and used it as intended, and assess the impact of dissemination. They will allocate sufficient staff time for dissemination.

The QIC will be expected to work throughout the course of its projects with the FPO, other CB and federal stakeholders, and relevant CB training and technical assistance providers to identify national target audiences and finalize the dissemination goals and objectives of the QIC and project sites.

### **REFERENCES**

See the Appendix for a list of references cited within this section.

## **II. Federal Award Information**

Funding Instrument Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Estimated Total Funding:	\$2,500,000
Expected Number of Awards:	1

Award Ceiling: \$2,500,000 Per Budget Period  
Award Floor: \$2,000,000 Per Budget Period  
Average Projected Award Amount: \$2,500,000 Per Budget Period  
Anticipated Project Start Date: 09/30/2016

**Length of Project Periods:**

Length of Project Period: 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. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

**Note:** For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. **A recipient's failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.** See *Section III.2.* of this announcement for information on cost-sharing or matching requirements.

The award of continuation beyond each 12-month budget period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Federal Government.

In the first budget period, the maximum federal share of each project is not to exceed \$2,500,000. In subsequent budget periods, the maximum federal share of this project is not to exceed \$3,500,000 per budget period.

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

A cooperative agreement is a specific method of awarding federal assistance in which substantial federal involvement is anticipated. A cooperative agreement clearly defines the respective responsibilities of CB and the awardee prior to the award. CB anticipates that agency involvement will produce programmatic benefits to the recipient otherwise unavailable to them for carrying out the project. The involvement and collaboration includes:

- CB review and approval of planning stages of the activities before implementation phases may begin;

- CB and recipient joint collaboration in the performance of key programmatic activities (i.e., strategic planning, implementation, information technology enhancements, training and technical assistance, publications or products, and evaluation);
- Close monitoring by CB of the requirements stated in this announcement that limit the awardee's discretion with respect to scope of services offered; and
- Close monitoring by CB during performance that may, in order to ensure compliance with the intent of this funding, exceed those federal stewardship responsibilities customary for grant activities.

At the time of project site selection, if either the child welfare agency or domestic violence coalition/program is not the lead for the project site, they must be a clearly demonstrated partner. To demonstrate this commitment, project sites will provide: letter(s) of commitment or memorandum(a) of understanding (MOU) from the relevant partners, which describe in detail the roles and responsibilities of the project partners; evidence that the relevant partners fully understand, are fully committed to the proposed project, and demonstrate a willingness to be fully engaged in the activities that are described in the application; and that the relevant partners will follow through on these commitments, regardless of changes in administration, economic status, or other foreseeable factors.

Final project site selections are due to the FPO prior to the end of Phase I: Planning Year (Year 1). The final selections will include justification of each project site selected and address anticipated logistical and administrative challenges of the selected project sites. The final site selections should be submitted to CB in a timely manner during Phase I, and it is expected that QIC will cooperate fully with securing approval from the CB FPO prior to the start of Phase II.

### III. Eligibility Information

#### III.1. Eligible Applicants

In accordance with section 105(a)(6), ACF “may award grants to public or private agencies and organizations.” 42 U.S.C. § 5106(a)(6).

Collaborative and interdisciplinary efforts are strongly encouraged, but applicants must identify a primary applicant responsible for administering the grant.

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Faith-based and community organizations that meet the eligibility requirements are eligible to receive awards under this funding opportunity announcement. Faith-based organizations are encouraged to review the ACF Policy on Grants to Faith-Based Organizations at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/acf-policy-on-grants-to-faith-based-organizations>.

See *Section IV.2. Legal Status of Applicant Entity* for documentation required to support eligibility.

#### III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: No

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

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

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

### III.3. Other

#### **Application Disqualification Factors**

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

#### **Award Ceiling Disqualification**

Applications that request an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period as stated in *Section II. Federal 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.

#### **Required Electronic Application Submission**

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). **Paper applications received from applicants that have not been approved for an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding**

**under this announcement.**

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 the applicant to submit applications in paper format. Information and the requirements for requesting an exemption from required electronic application submission are found in "Request an Exemption from Electronic Application Submission" in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*.

**Missing the Application Deadlines (Late Applications)**

**The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*.** Electronic applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://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](http://www.Grants.gov), will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. That is, applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://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](http://www.Grants.gov) at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) validation check, will not be received at, or acknowledged by, ACF.

Each time an application is submitted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), the submission will generate a new date and time-stamp email notification. 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.4. 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.**

**Notification of Application Disqualification**

Applications that are disqualified under these criteria are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

**IV. Application and Submission Information**

**IV.1. Address to Request Application Package**

CB Operations Center,  
c/o LCG, Inc.  
1400 Key Boulevard

Suite 900  
Arlington, VA 22209  
Phone: (888) 203-6161  
Email: [CB@grantreview.org](mailto:CB@grantreview.org)

**Electronic Application Submission:**

The electronic application submission package is available in the FOA's listing at [www.Grants.gov](http://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 in the Application Package available in the FOA's Grants.gov synopsis at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). They are also available at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>. 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](http://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 website at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>.

**Federal Relay Service:**

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) for assistance at [www.gsa.gov/fedrelay](http://www.gsa.gov/fedrelay).

## IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission

### FORMATTING APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS

**In FY 2013 ACF implemented a new application upload requirement. Each applicant applying electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://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.**

***FOR ALL APPLICATIONS:***

**Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)**

AOR is the designated representative of the applicant/recipient organization with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the award and administration of grants. In signing a grant application, this individual agrees that the organization will assume the obligations imposed by applicable Federal statutes and regulations and other terms and conditions of the award, including any assurances, if a grant is awarded.



AOR authorization is part of the registration process at [www.Grants.gov](http://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 Awards 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.

### **Accepted Font Style**

Applications must be in Times New Roman (TNR), 12-point font, except for footnotes, which may be TNR 10-point font.

### **Page Limitations**

**Applicants must observe the page limitation(s) listed under "PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:". Page limitation(s) do not include SFs and OMB-approved forms.**

**All applications must be double-spaced.** An application that exceeds the cited page limitation for double-spaced pages in the Project Description file or the Appendices file will have the last extra pages removed and the removed pages will not be reviewed.

### **Application Elements Exempted from Double-Spacing Requirements**

The following elements of the application submission are exempt from the double-spacing requirements and may be single-spaced: the table of contents, the one-page Project Summary/Abstract, required Assurances and Certifications, required SFs, required OMB-approved forms, resumes, logic models, proof of legal status/non-profit status, third-party agreements, letters of support, footnotes, tables, the line-item budget and/or the budget justification.

### **Adherence to FOA Formatting, Font, and Page Limitation Requirements**

Applications that fail to adhere to ACF's FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will be adjusted by the removal of page(s) from the application. Pages will be removed before the objective review. The removed page(s) will not be made available to reviewers.

In instances where formatting and font requirements are not adhered to, ACF uses a formula to determine the actual number of pages to be removed. The formula counts the number of characters an applicant uses when following the instructions and using 12-point TNR and 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. Applications that have more than one scanned page of a document on a single page will have the page(s) removed from the review.

For applicants that submit paper applications, double-sided pages will be counted as two pages. When the maximum allowed number of pages is reached, excess pages will be removed and will not be made available to reviewers.

**NOTE:** Applicants failing to adhere to ACF's FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will receive a letter from ACF notifying them that their application was amended. The letter will be sent after awards have been issued and will specify the reason(s) for removal of page(s).

### **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 registration and application submission instructions provided at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

The original of a paper format application must include original signatures of the authorized representatives.

### **Accepted Application Format**

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

If possible, applicants are encouraged to include page numbers for each page within the application.

ACF generally does not encourage submission of scanned documents as they tend to have reduced clarity and readability. If documents must be scanned, the font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable. Documents must be scanned page-for-page, meaning that applicants may not scan more than one page of a document onto a single page.

### **PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:**

With the exception of Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, the application submission is **limited to 125 pages** in its entirety. The two files applicants must submit are the Project Description and Appendix.

The Project Description file must include these items:

1. Table of Contents
2. Abstract
3. Objectives and Need for Assistance
4. Approach
5. Evaluation
6. Logic Model
7. Organizational Capacity
8. Line Item Budget and Budget Justification

The Appendices file must include these items:

1. Certifications and Assurances
2. Proof of Legal Status (if applicable)
3. Third-party agreements
4. Staff and Position Data (e.g., resumes, job descriptions, organizational charts)
5. Indirect Cost Rate Letter (if applicable)

## **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](http://www.Grants.gov). **ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile.**

**Each applicant is required to upload ONLY two electronic files, excluding SFs and OMB-approved forms.**

**File One:** Must contain the entire Project Description, and the Budget and Budget Justification (including a line-item budget and a budget narrative).

**File Two:** Must contain all documents required in the Appendices.

### **Adherence to the Two-File Requirement**

No more than two files will be accepted for the review. Applications with additional files will be amended and files will be removed from the review. SFs and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

### **Application Upload Requirements**

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, are listed earlier 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.

Applicants must ensure that the version of Adobe Professional they are using is compatible with Grants.gov. To verify Adobe software compatibility please go to Grants.gov and click on “Support” at the top bar menu and select “Adobe Software Compatibility”, which is listed under the topic “Find Answers Online.” The Adobe verification process allows applicants to test their version of the software by opening a test application package. Grants.gov also includes guidance on how to download a supported version of Adobe, as well as troubleshooting instructions if an applicant is unable to open the test application package. There is also a help page for configuring Firefox and Chrome to open PDFs using Adobe software.

The Adobe Software Compatibility page located on Grants.gov also provides guidance for applicants that have received error messages while attempting to save an application package. It also addresses local network and/or computer security settings and the impact this has on use of Adobe software.

For any systems issues experienced with Grants.gov or with SAM.gov, please refer to ACF’s “Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues” document for complete guidance at [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems\\_issue\\_policy\\_final.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf) under "How to Apply for a Grant/Submit an Application."

### **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.

### **Naming Application Submission Files**

**Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Limit file names to 50 characters (characters and spaces).** Special characters that are allowed under Grants.gov’s naming conventions, and are accommodated by ACF’s

systems, are listed in the instructions available in the Download Application Package at Grants.gov. Please also see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/submitting-utf-8-special-characters.html>.

### **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.

### **Format Requirements for Paper Applications**

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. All pages in the application submission must be sequentially numbered.**

**Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications**

See *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper format application submissions.

**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 in the Application Package posted for this FOA at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

Other versions of required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at Grants.gov <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>.

Forms / Assurances / Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes / Description
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	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-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications. In the SF-P/PSL, applicants may cite their primary location and up to 29 additional performance sites.

<p>Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)</p>	<p>Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>	<p>Submission of the certification is required for all applicants.</p>
<p>Mandatory Grant Disclosure</p>	<p>Submission is required for all applicants and recipients, in writing, to the awarding agency and to the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) all information related to violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award.</p> <p>Disclosures must be sent in writing to:</p> <p>The Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Grants Management, ATTN: Grants Management Specialist, 330 C Street, SW., Switzer Building, Corridor 3200,</p>	<p>Mandatory Disclosures, 45 CFR 75.113</p>

	<p>Washington, DC 20201</p> <p><b><u>And</u></b></p> <p>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, ATTN: Mandatory Grant Disclosures, Intake Coordinator, 330 Independence Avenue, SW., Cohen Building, Room 5527, Washington, DC 20201</p>	
<p>SF-424 Key Contact Form</p>	<p>Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.</p>	<p>Required for all applications.</p>
<p>SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities</p>	<p>If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application. If it is not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>	<p>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.</p>



<p>DUNS Number (Unique Entity Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.</p>	<p>A DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier) is required of all applicants.</p> <p>To obtain a DUNS number, go to <a href="http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform">http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform</a>.</p> <p>Active registration at the Systems Award Management (SAM) website must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.</p> <p>SAM registration is available at <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http://www.sam.gov</a>.</p>	<p>A DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier) and SAM registration are eligibility requirements for all applicants.</p> <p>See <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> for more information.</p>
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**Non-Federal Reviewers**

Since ACF will be using non-federal reviewers in the review process, applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget as well as Social Security Numbers, if otherwise required for individuals. The copies may include summary salary information. If applicants are submitting their application electronically, ACF will omit the same specific salary rate information from copies made for use during the review and selection process.

**The Project Description**

**The Project Description Overview**

**Purpose**

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. It should address the activity for which federal funds are being requested, and should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the program as described in *Section I. Program Description*. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. When appropriate, applicants should cite the evaluation criteria that are relevant to specific components of their project description. 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 must prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria in *Section V.I. Criteria*. The text options give a broad overview of what the project description should include while the evaluation criteria identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

### **Table of Contents**

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers. The table of contents must be single spaced and will be counted against the total page limitations.

### **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, in Times New Roman 12-point font, and limited to one page in length. Additional pages will be removed and will not be reviewed.

### **Objectives And Need For Assistance**

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance including the nature and scope of the problem must be demonstrated, and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly and concisely stated; supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information,

as well as data describing the needs of the target population and the proposed service area as needed. When appropriate, a literature review should be used to support the objectives and needs described in this section.

### **Expected Outcomes**

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

### **Approach**

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed project will be accomplished. Applicants must account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Describe any design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and/or community involvement in the project. Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals that will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

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

Applicants must describe their understanding of the need for this QIC, as it relates to:

- relevant legislation;
- high rates of co-occurrence of child maltreatment and domestic violence in the child welfare population;
- impacts of children's exposure to violence and the needs of these children;
- known risk and protective factors; and
- existing challenges and barriers to collaborative efforts.

It is expected that applicants will also describe their understanding of the evidence-based and/or evidence-informed and promising collaborative models and systems interventions targeted toward improving the safety, permanency, and well-being for child welfare involved pregnant and parenting families experiencing domestic violence and ensuring they receive services that are high quality, trauma-informed, culturally relevant, and programmatically responsive to their needs throughout their engagement with child welfare.

The applicant must develop and propose a design that clearly and concisely describes a strategy for a 12-month planning phase (Phase I: Planning Year) for the development of the QIC, and a preliminary plan and strategy for the implementation phase (Phase II: Implementation (Years 2-5)).

#### *Phase I: Planning Year (Year 1)*

Applicants must describe how they will perform, at a minimum, the following functions during the first year of the project:

- Develop the proposed multidisciplinary membership and composition of the advisory committee. CB anticipates that the advisory committee will consist of representatives

from the relevant research, practice, and policy communities. At a minimum, they should include representatives from child welfare agencies, domestic violence service programs, courts, housing and homeless service providers, early childhood, culturally specific community based organizations, and federal agencies working on related issues. The advisory committee will help inform the work of the QIC, specifically as it relates to selecting the focus of the QIC, defining key research, practice and policy issues, and questions pertaining to the topic, and development of the cross-site evaluation and conceptual framework;

- Conduct a comprehensive review and analysis of the current state of research on the co-occurrence of child maltreatment and domestic violence, the collaborative models and systems interventions targeted toward child welfare involved pregnant and parenting families experiencing domestic violence, and instruments used or that could be used in a child welfare setting to assess or screen for domestic violence;
- Identify and conduct an environmental scan and review of the collaborative models and systems intervention initiatives currently in use by states, counties, and/or tribes; including gaining understanding of current barriers to implementation of collaborative work across agencies and programs;
- Conduct analysis of and identify gaps within child welfare agency policies and protocols for domestic violence assessment, data collection, safety planning and intervention, guidance on training, and practice standards;
- Develop and implement a systemic approach to focusing the research topics and refining the Phase II: Implementation Plan;
- Develop a tool(s) to assist project sites in assessing partnerships and identifying barriers to working across systems to meet the needs of child welfare involved families experiencing domestic violence, including, but not limited to: differences in values and perceptions of the primary client; timing differences in service systems; knowledge gaps; and lack of effective communication;
- Identify linkages with appropriate organizations and resources at the QIC level and in the project sites;
- Develop, in consultation with CB and the advisory committee, and implement a plan to select projects sites, including the development of selection criteria;
- Select four to six state, county, or tribal child welfare system project sites, considering representation of various systems, structures, target population, and geographical spread in site selection (all sites must receive final approval from CB);
- Submit final site selections to the FPO prior to the end of Phase I: Planning Year (Year 1). The final selections must include justification of each project site selected and should address anticipated logistical and administrative challenges of the selected project sites. The final site selections should be submitted to CB in a timely manner during Phase I and it is expected that QIC will cooperate fully with securing CB approval prior to the start of Phase II;
- Collaborate with CB regarding the selected sites during the planning and implementation phases;
- Develop and establish an administrative and management structure for ensuring that projects are implemented within 90 days of the selection by the QIC;
- Monitor sites and ensure project accountability;
- Revise and update the preliminary methodology for conducting a site-specific and, if

applicable, a cross-site evaluation (Revised Preliminary Evaluation Plan), as proposed in the original proposal; and

- Revise the preliminary design for Phase II: Implementation submitted in the QIC's original proposal and submit to CB a final design for Phase II: Implementation Plan (including a plan addressing the Evaluation Responsibilities and Activities described here and below) that presents a clear and comprehensive vision of how the QIC would operate Phase II, subject to CB approval.

The Phase II Implementation Plan is due to the FPO for review and approval, 10 months after the award of the cooperative agreement. The Phase II Implementation Plan should be submitted to CB in a timely manner during Phase I and it is expected that QIC will cooperate fully with securing CB approval of Implementation Plan prior to the start of Phase II.

*Phase II: Implementation Phase (Years 2-5)*

Applicants must describe how they will, at a minimum, implement the following components during Years 2-5 of the cooperative agreement:

- Develop an implementation plan for each project site, to be approved by CB. The plans will be submitted to CB at the beginning of Phase II;
- Conduct an assessment of project site child welfare agency policies and protocols for domestic violence assessment;
- Develop and implement, in conjunction with CB and sites, a technical assistance plan for each project site for ongoing technical assistance, guidance, and support by the QIC, to include programmatic and evaluation elements of the projects;
- Work intensively with each project site to identify barriers and make recommendations for needed changes in system policies, protocols, procedures, and practices;
- Develop a plan for forming and maintaining a method of information sharing and collaboration between project sites;
- Develop and implement a methodology for creating a synthesis report on the activities of the projects;
- Finalize, in conjunction with the selected sites and CB and other key federal partners, the design for site specific evaluations, and if applicable the cross-site evaluation, based upon the Revised Preliminary Evaluation Plan;
- Work closely with project sites to develop a strategy for integration and sustainability of effective and/or evidence-informed practice models within the project site system, including the policies and procedures necessary to support the needed infrastructure; and
- Develop and implement a strategy for information dissemination, including fostering and strengthening communication and coordination activities with CB's Capacity Building Centers, the Child Welfare Information Gateway, FVPSA-funded technical assistance centers, and other relevant entities funded by CB and other key federal partners.

Applicants must describe how the following will be incorporated in their proposed projects throughout Phase I and Phase II:

- Feasible methods of enhancing child welfare capacity to serve the target population and

- improve processes, practice, and functional outcomes for the target population; and
- Plan for establishing and building upon collaborative partnerships needed to guide and support successful implementation, including the meaningful involvement of consumers in the project sites.

Applicants also must describe how they will address the following:

- Serving the target population as described in *Section I, Project Requirements, Target Population*;
- Meeting the collaboration requirements as described in *Section I, Project Requirements, Collaboration*; and
- Meeting the following dissemination requirements as reflected in the development of a dissemination plan:
  - Disseminate reports, products, and/or grant project outputs so that project information is provided to key target audiences;
  - Work with project sites to develop and disseminate cross-project deliverables;
  - Disseminate throughout Phase 1 and Phase 2;
  - Evaluate the extent to which target audiences have received project information and have used it as intended;
  - Develop and disseminate a body of knowledge regarding the appropriate elements to consider and address when building and implementing models of effective engagement, services, and systems interventions for child welfare involved pregnant and parenting families experiencing domestic violence;
  - Develop and disseminate strategies and practices to lay the groundwork for further development of evidence-based and/or evidence-informed models of systems intervention for the target population, with supporting protocols, tools, and products that child welfare systems seeking to implement such models can look to for guidance, insight, and replication; and
  - Collaborate with the FPO and other federal stakeholders training and technical assistance providers in order to finalize dissemination goals and objectives.

Applicants must describe how successful implementation of their proposed project would result in improved well-being, placement stability, and permanency outcomes for the target population.

### **Project Timeline and Milestones**

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

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

### **Funded Activities Evaluation Plan**

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

The applicant must either: demonstrate the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, comprehensive, and rigorous cross-site evaluation, and provide technical assistance to the project sites; or present a sound method for contracting with an institution of higher education or a third-party evaluator specializing in social science research to conduct the evaluation. The proposed evaluator must have adequate experience with research and/or evaluation, clearly understand the population of interest, and have experience in obtaining and analyzing child welfare data. A skilled evaluator can help develop a logic model(s) and assist in designing an evaluation strategy(ies) that is rigorous and appropriate given the goals and objectives of the proposed project. Evidence of the evaluators qualifications to undertake the proposed work should be provided. The applicant must provide a convincing rationale that justifies the portion of their budget set aside for evaluation.

Applicants must work collaboratively with project sites to develop a rigorous project evaluation plan that will:

- Contribute to developing the knowledge base on best practices and collaborative policy and practice models and systems interventions that are targeted toward improving the safety, permanency, and well-being for child welfare involved pregnant and parenting families experiencing domestic violence. This should include successful strategies for supporting these families experiencing domestic violence, and ensuring they receive services that are high-quality, trauma-informed, and programmatically responsive to their needs, including their safety needs throughout their engagement with child welfare; and
- Produce a catalogue of systems level strategies and practices to lay the groundwork for further development of evidence-based and/or evidence-informed collaborative policy and practice models and systems interventions for these families with supporting protocols, tools, and products that child welfare systems - seeking to implement improved services to address this co-occurrence - can look to for guidance, insight, and replication.

The applicant's evaluation plan should include qualitative and quantitative aspects, process,

practice, cost, and outcome evaluation components. The evaluation must:

- Discuss how the evaluation will be conducted for both the proposed QIC and each of the project sites;
- Articulate the proposed rigorous evaluation methods, measurement (use of valid and reliable instruments), data collection, data management system, sample and sampling (if appropriate), timeline for activities, plan for securing Internal Review Board (IRB) review if applicable, and ongoing analysis for the QIC and each of the project sites;
- Describe how the evaluation plan would likely yield useful findings about effective strategies and/or outcomes and contribute to and promote evidence-based and/or evidence-informed practices that could be used to guide replication in other settings;
- Include evaluation of the effectiveness and/or outcomes of collaborations between child welfare agencies, domestic violence services, and other key community partners, including, but not limited to social network analysis;
- Include an evaluation of the comprehensiveness and effectiveness and/or outcomes of agency policies and protocols for domestic violence assessment, data collection, and safety planning;
- Articulate the factors and strategies associated with implementation barriers and successful implementation, cost, maintenance, and sustainability, including contributing organizational and system conditions;
- Discuss the factors related to the appropriateness of fit between the selected practices and the systems and settings into which they are introduced;
- Use an appropriate comparison condition if the research is measuring the impact of the service system changes on participant outcomes or to compare various implementation strategies and their potential connection with implementation outcomes (e.g., applicants may choose to test different implementation approaches with the same service system changes, with different providers, or in different service areas);
- Plan for using evaluation findings to produce ongoing documentation of project activities and results that can be used to modify the work, as necessary, and serve as a basis for project adjustments;
- Propose a plan to conduct a cost evaluation. Factors that may be considered in this cost evaluation may include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Service delivery hours;
  - Rates of reimbursement;
  - Staff and/or clinical caseloads;
  - Supervisor to worker and/or clinician ratios;
  - Cost per child, family, or unit of service;
  - Training and consultation costs;
  - Installation and maintenance costs;
  - Quality assurance costs; and
  - Value of the benefits derived compared with the alternative treatment costs avoided.
- Include a preliminary logic model for the cross-site evaluation, key research questions, methods to study key components (i.e., evaluation design), and instrumentation.

During Phase II, evaluators should plan to continue to work collaboratively with and provide



technical assistance to project sites to ensure that each site is implementing the evaluation plan with fidelity. The applicant should describe how they will:

- Ensure the integrity of data collection processes;
- Review, analyze, and interpret data using agile methodology to refine project services, products, and evaluation activities;
- Document planning and implementation processes;
- Document what is being done by those practicing (piloting or adapting) the new systems interventions; and
- Use the process evaluation to support project quality assurance activities and to assess whether the systems interventions are being practiced with fidelity.

The applicant must affirm its willingness to participate in all aspects of any federally sponsored evaluation or technical assistance contract as a condition of acceptance of funding.

### **Legal Status of Applicant Entity**

Applicants must provide the following documentation:

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

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

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

### **Logic Model**

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

for measuring the extent to which proposed processes and outcomes actually occur.

### **Organizational Capacity**

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

- Organizational charts;
- Resumes (no more than two single-spaced pages in length);
- Curricula Vitae (CV);
- Biographical Sketches (short narrative description);
- Copy or description of the applicant organization's fiscal control and accountability procedures;
- Evidence that the applicant organization, and any partnering organizations, have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of programs similar to that offered under this announcement;
- Evidence that each participating organization, including partners and/or subcontractors, possess the organizational capability to fulfill their role(s) and function(s) effectively;
- Job descriptions for each vacant key position.

### **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.

### **Third-Party Agreements**

Third-party agreements include Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Letters of Commitment. General letters of support are **not** considered to be third-party agreements. Third-party agreements must clearly describe the project activities and support to which the third party is committing. Third-party agreements must be signed by the person in the third-party organization with the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their organization.

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

### **Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds**

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

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

### **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 entered on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C, according to the directions provided with the SFs. The budget justification consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. Applicants must indicate the method they are selecting for their indirect cost rate. See Indirect Charges for further information.

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

***Special Note:** The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, (Division E, Title VII, General Provisions – Government-Wide), 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 "Rates of Pay for the Executive Schedule" is \$185,100. This amount reflects an individual's base salary exclusive of fringe benefits and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties of the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards and subcontracts under an ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

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

Applicants must provide a detailed budget and a narrative budget justification for the first year of the project (not to exceed \$2.5 million) and a detailed budget and a narrative budget justification for each project year thereafter (not to exceed \$3.5 million).

Applicants must allocate at least 20 percent of their project budget for evaluation and demonstrate that there are sufficient funds in their project budgets each year to support

evaluation, data collection, dissemination activities, and related staff time. The applicant's overall line-item budget and budget justification must include detailed allocations for the range of required evaluation activities, including the following:

- Collection of evaluation data, including costs of staff training and time to collect data;
- Storage of data, including costs for staff to conduct regular activity such as data entry, quality checks, reliability training for coding, etc.; and
- Monitoring and reporting data, including costs for staff to analyze data, create and review reports, and plan and monitor adjustments.

The application's budget must include funds for all required items for the project, including funding to support project sites and anticipated activities of project partners, as applicable. The application's budget must include funds to support the following required travel:

- Within 3 months after the award, the project director, evaluator, and one to three other key staff must attend a 2-day kick-off meeting in Washington, DC;
- In the project site-selection process, the project director, evaluator, and one to three other key staff must attend a 2-day meeting in Washington, DC, to review and discuss the site selection process and project sites; and
- The project director, evaluator, and one to three other key staff must attend an annual meeting with their FPO, in Washington, DC, to review and discuss progress toward project goals, including project site and evaluation implementation.

## **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. Contractors and consultants should not be placed under this category.

## **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, and taxes.

### **Travel**

**Description:** Costs of out-of-state or overnight project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. Do not include in-state travel or 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 project staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops/conferences/grantee orientations should be detailed in the budget.

### **Equipment**

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

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

### **Supplies**

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

**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 (with budget detail), including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. This area is not for individual consultants.

**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 are required to use 45 CFR 75.328 procedures and must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold fixed by 41 U.S.C. § 134, as amended by 2 CFR Part 200.88, and currently set at \$150,000. 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 contractor/sub-contractor, by agency title, along with the same supporting information referred to in these instructions. If the applicant plans to select the contractors/sub-contractors post-award and a detailed budget is not available at the time of application, the applicant must provide information on the nature of the work to be delegated, the estimated costs, and the process for selecting the delegate agency.

### **Other**

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

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

### **Indirect Charges**

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

- 1) The applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant federal agency.

Note: An applicant must enclose a copy of the current approved rate agreement. If the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

- 2) Per 45 CFR § 75.414(f) Indirect (F&A) costs, “any non-Federal entity [i.e., applicant] that has never received a negotiated indirect costs rate, ... may elect to charge

a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. As described in § 75.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time.”

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

### **Commitment of Non-Federal Resources**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Paperwork Reduction Disclaimer**

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the Project Description and Budget/Budget Justification is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection information. The Project Description and Budget/Budget Justification information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, expiration date is 01/31/2019. 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](http://www.Grants.gov)**

Additional guidance on the submission of electronic applications can be found at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

After a grant application package is submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), a confirmation screen will appear on the applicant's computer screen. This screen confirms that an application has been submitted an application to Grants.gov. This page also contains a tracking number to identify the status of the application submission in the Track My Application feature.

When the application has completed the Grants.gov submission process, Grants.gov will send email messages to advise the applicant of the progress of the application through its system. **Over the next two business days, an applicant should receive two emails from Grants.gov:**

- **Submission Receipt Email:** Confirms successful receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system and indicates the application's status as "Received."
- **Submission Validation –OR– Rejection with Errors Email:** Indicates that the application was either successfully validated or rejected by Grants.gov. Either the application has been successfully validated by the system prior to transmission to



the grantor agency or the application has been rejected due to errors.

### **Application Validation at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)**

After an application has been successfully submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://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](http://www.Grants.gov) for more information.

Each time an application is re-submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), the applicant will receive a new **Submission Receipt Email**. Only applications with on-time date and time stamps in Submission Receipt Email, and that pass validation, will be transmitted to ACF. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check are not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

**NOTE:** The Grants.gov 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.

Similarly, if an applicant resubmits their application to Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, and the resubmitted application does not pass the validation check, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review.

### **Grants.gov Support Center**

- If applicants encounter any technical difficulties in using [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), contact the Grants.gov Support Center at: 1-800-518-4726, or by email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov), to report the problem and obtain assistance. Hours of Operation: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Grants.gov Support Center is closed on federal holidays.
- Applicants should always retain Grants.gov Support Center service ticket number(s) as they may be needed for future reference.
- **Contact with the Grants.gov Support 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. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)* will determine whether the submission issues**

are due to Grants.gov system errors or user error.

### Issues with Federal Systems

For any systems issues experienced with Grants.gov or SAM.gov, please refer to ACF's "Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues" document for complete guidance

at [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems\\_issue\\_policy\\_final.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf).

### 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](http://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](http://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](mailto:electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov), or
- Sending a written request to the Office of Grants Management Contact listed in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)* 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](mailto: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.4. 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.4. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

### **Paper Format Application Submission**

**An exemption is 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.7.* of this announcement for address information for paper format application submissions. Applications submitted in paper format must be received by 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date.

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.4. Submission Dates and Times* in this announcement.

### IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

All applicants must have a DUNS Number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) and an active registration with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov/SAM, <https://www.sam.gov>).

Obtaining a DUNS Number may take 1 to 2 days.

All applicants are required to maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If a grant is awarded, registration at SAM must be active throughout the life of the award.

**Plan ahead. Allow at least 10 business days after you submit your registration for it to become active in SAM and at least an additional 24 hours before that registration information is available in other government systems, i.e. Grants.gov.**

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 through Grants.gov or prevent the award of a grant. Applicants should maintain documentation (with dates) of your efforts to register for, or renew a registration, at SAM. User Guides are available under the “Help” tab at <https://www.sam.gov>.

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.

### IV.4. Submission Dates and Times

#### Due Dates for Applications

Due Date for Applications: **07/22/2016**

## **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. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

### **Electronic Applications**

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via [www.Grants.gov](http://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](http://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](http://www.Grants.gov) are available at: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

Applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://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 receipt of 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.7. 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](http://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.

**Emergency Extensions**

ACF may extend an application due date when circumstances make it impossible for an applicant to submit their applications on time. Only events such as documented natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or a verifiable widespread disruption of electrical service, or mail service, will be considered. The determination to extend or waive the due date, and/or receipt time, requirements in an emergency situation rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)*.

**Acknowledgement from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)**

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to [www.Grants.gov](http://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 also receive an email acknowledging that the received application is in the **Grants.gov validation process**, after which a third email is sent with the information that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, the 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 by ACF.

See "What to Expect After Submitting" at [www.Grants.gov](http://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](http://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.5. Intergovernmental Review**

This program is not subject to Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," or 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." No action is required of applicants under this announcement with regard to E.O. 12372.

#### **IV.6. Funding Restrictions**

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions are unallowable. Fund raising costs for the purposes of meeting the Federal program objectives are allowable with prior written approval from the Federal awarding agency. (45 CFR §75.442)

Proposal costs are the costs of preparing bids, proposals, or applications on potential Federal and non-Federal awards or projects, including the development of data necessary to support the non-Federal entity's bids or proposals. Proposal costs of the current accounting period of both successful and unsuccessful bids and proposals normally should be treated as indirect (F&A) costs and allocated currently to all activities of the non-Federal entity. No proposal costs of past accounting periods will be allocable to the current period. (45 CFR §75.460)

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.

As required under section 105(c) of CAPTA (42 U.S.C. § 5106(c)), funding for evaluations shall be provided as a stated percentage of a demonstration grant. CB is requiring that at least 20 percent per year of the total budget must be used to support the evaluation and evaluation activities conducted under the grant.

#### **IV.7. Other Submission Requirements**

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

##### **Submission By Mail**

CB Operations Center

c/o LCG, Inc.

1400 Key Blvd

Suite 900  
Arlington, VA 22209

### **Hand Delivery**

CB Operations Center  
c/o LCG, Inc.  
1400 Key Blvd  
Suite 900  
Arlington, VA 22209

### **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.4. Submission 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.

#### **Objectives and Need for Assistance**

**Maximum Points:20**

In reviewing the objectives and need for assistance, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The applicant demonstrates a clear linkage between project activities and the authorizing legislation, the CAPTA.
2. The applicant demonstrates a thorough understanding of the need to increase knowledge regarding collaborative response models, policies, procedures, and systems interventions toward improving the safety, permanency, and well-being for children in families that are: (1) pregnant and/or have young children, (2) involved in the child welfare system, and (3) experiencing domestic violence.
3. The applicant demonstrates an understanding of the co-occurrence of child maltreatment and domestic violence, the needs of children and families experiencing this co-occurrence, and an understanding of the challenges and barriers to developing collaborative partnerships and practices to support the target population specified in this FOA.
4. The application includes a clear statement of the goals (i.e., the intended end products of an effective project) and objectives (i.e., measurable steps for reaching



these goals) of the proposed project. The applicant presents a clear vision for developing and implementing the proposed project to contribute to achieving these goals and objectives and clearly addresses each of the items in *Section IV.2 The Project Description, Approach*.

5. The applicant clearly demonstrates how the proposed QIC and project sites, if successfully implemented, would build the knowledge base of successful collaborative response models, policies, procedures, and systems interventions toward improving the safety, permanency, and well-being for child welfare involved pregnant and parenting families experiencing domestic violence.
6. The applicant clearly demonstrates that the proposed project will contribute to achieving the purposes of the FOA.

## Approach

Maximum Points:35

In reviewing the approach, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The applicant provides a reasonable and achievable timeline for implementing the proposed project, including major milestones and target dates.
2. The applicant describes the factors that could speed or hinder project implementation and explains how these factors would be managed.
3. A well-defined logic model or conceptual framework guides the proposed project. The logic model demonstrates strong links between proposed inputs and activities and intended short- and long-term outcomes.
4. The proposed approach clearly addresses each of the items listed in *Section IV.2 The Project Description, Approach* of this FOA, including a detailed description of activities the project proposes to undertake during Phase 1 (Planning Phase) and Phase II (Implementation Phase).
5. The applicant provides a plan for conducting the comprehensive literature review, analysis of current initiatives, and analysis of existing policies that address the co-occurrence of child maltreatment and domestic violence that is: (a) appropriate and feasible; (b) likely to result in the development of a comprehensive description and assessment of collaborative practices models and strategies for working with the target population of this FOA; and (c) likely to identify knowledge gaps and barriers.
6. The applicant describes a clear and reasonable strategy for refining the focus for the QIC during the planning year.
7. The applicant describes a strong plan for selecting and guiding the implementation of projects at four to six sites.
8. The application proposes an advisory committee that includes representatives from the relevant research, practice, and policy communities, including, but not limited to: child welfare, domestic violence prevention and service programs, courts, housing, early childhood, culturally specific community based organizations, and federal agencies working on related topics.
9. The design of the proposed QIC clearly reflects current knowledge from the research literature on the co-occurrence of child maltreatment and domestic violence and collaborative practice models and strategies to best serve child welfare involved families experiencing domestic violence and builds on current theory,

research, evaluation data, and best practices.

10. The applicant proposes a feasible method of enhancing child welfare agency capacity in assessing, developing, and strengthening partnerships, policies, and procedures with domestic violence programs to implement services that are programmatically responsive and meet the safety needs of victims of domestic violence and their children throughout their engagement with child welfare.
11. The proposed project would develop products and provide information on strategies used and the outcomes achieved that would support evidence-based and/or evidence-informed improvements of practices in the field and implementation at additional child welfare agencies. The schedule for developing these products is appropriate in scope and budget.
12. The intended audience (e.g., practitioners, front-line staff, caseworkers, researchers, policymakers) for product dissemination is appropriate to the goals of the proposed project. The project's products would be useful to the identified audiences; the plan for disseminating information is appropriate; and the mechanisms and forums that would be used to convey the information and support replication by other interested agencies are appropriate.

#### Evaluation

Maximum Points:20

1. The applicant proposes a clear and convincing plan for evaluating the project and satisfies the requirements for the evaluation published in this FOA, as described in the applicant's preliminary evaluation design.
2. The methods of the proposed cross-site evaluation are feasible, comprehensive, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and context of the project.
3. The evaluation plan is strongly guided by the project's logic model.
4. The applicant provides an appropriate and realistic plan for using evaluation findings to produce ongoing documentation of project activities and results that can be used to modify the work, as necessary, and serve as a basis for project adjustments.
5. The applicant proposes a feasible plan to produce findings and results about effective and/or evidence-informed collaborative practice strategies that may be implemented in other settings.
6. The proposed evaluation plan would be likely to yield useful findings or results about successful collaborative response models, policies, procedures, and systems interventions toward improving the safety, permanency, and well-being for child welfare involved pregnant and parenting families experiencing domestic violence.
7. The applicant proposes a sound plan for collecting high-quality data with reliable and valid instruments that measure proposed outcomes of the program as identified in the project logic model.
8. There is an appropriate plan for working with the designated evaluator for securing informed consent and implementing an IRB review, if applicable.
9. The applicant either demonstrates the in-house capacity to conduct an objective and rigorous evaluation of the project or presents a sound plan for contracting with a third-party evaluator.
10. The applicant demonstrates that the in-house or contracted evaluator has sufficient

experience with research and/or evaluation, has had experience conducting evaluations with child welfare populations, has experience and expertise in obtaining and analyzing child welfare and domestic violence data, and does not have a conflict of interest in conducting this evaluation.

#### Organizational Capacity

Maximum Points:20

In reviewing the organizational capacity, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The applicant's organization and any partnering organizations collectively have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of similar projects of size and scope. Each participating organization (including their partners and/or subcontractors) possesses the organizational capability to effectively fulfill its assigned roles and functions effectively.
2. The applicant's organization and any partnering organizations collectively have relevant experience and expertise in child maltreatment, child welfare, child protective services, co-occurrence of child maltreatment and domestic violence, and the needs of children and families experiencing domestic violence.
3. The proposed project director and key project staff demonstrate sufficient relevant knowledge, experience, and capabilities (e.g., as presented in their resume) to effectively institute and manage a project of this size, scope, and complexity. The role, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors and/or partners, is clearly defined (e.g., in the job description) and appropriate to the successful implementation of the proposed project.
4. The applicant clearly demonstrates that the applicant's organization and any partnering organizations has the experience and will have the capacity to work in partnership with state, county, and/or tribal child welfare systems and domestic violence programs in the development of the project sites and in the provision of technical assistance to the sites, including the provision of programmatic guidance and policy analysis.
5. The proposed project includes a sound management plan for ensuring that staff and partnering organizations are achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality.
6. The applicant clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of the applicant and any partnering organizations in the implementation of the QIC. The application includes Letter(s) of commitment or MOU from the relevant partners, which describe, in detail, the identified roles and responsibilities of the project partners; evidence that the relevant partners fully understand, are fully committed to the proposed project, and demonstrate a willingness to be fully engaged in the activities that are described in the application.
7. The plan clearly describes the effective management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors, and consultants (if applicable).

In reviewing the budget and budget justification, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. There is a detailed narrative budget justification for each year of the project. The costs of the proposed project are reasonable, in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits.
2. The applicant allocates at least 20 percent of the project budget per year for the required evaluation and provides justification for the amount allocated.
3. The applicant allocates sufficient funds to support all required items for the project, including funding to support project sites and the anticipated activities of proposed project partners, as applicable.
4. The budget includes the costs associated with travel to the required meetings in Washington, DC, as outlined in the FOA.
5. There is evidence that the applicant's fiscal controls and accounting procedures would ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement, and accurate accounting of funds received under this funding opportunity announcement.

## 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](http://www.dbn.com)) and an active registration at SAM ([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)). See *Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)*.

### Initial ACF Screening

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets any of the disqualification factors described in *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Disqualified applications are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

### Objective Review and Results

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using only 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. Scores and rankings are only one element used in the award 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.

### **Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants**

As required by 2 CFR 200 of the Uniform Guidance, effective January 1, 2016, ACF is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), <https://www.fapiis.gov/>, before making any award in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000) over the period of performance. An applicant may review and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency has previously entered into FAPIIS. ACF will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR § 200.205 Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants [http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=se2.1.200\\_1205&rgn=div8](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=se2.1.200_1205&rgn=div8).

Please refer to *Section IV.2.* of this announcement for information on non-federal reviewers in the review process.

### **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 determined as approved but unfunded, notice will be given of the determination by email.

## **V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates**

Announcement of awards and the disposition of applications will be provided to applicants at a later date. ACF staff cannot respond to requests for information regarding funding decisions prior to the official applicant notification.

## **VI. Federal Award Administration Information**

### **VI.1. Federal 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, email, or by GrantSolutions.gov or the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES), whichever is relevant. 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.6. Funding Restrictions*.

## **VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Unless otherwise noted in this section, administrative and national policy requirements that are applicable to discretionary grants are available at:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements>.

## **VI.3. Reporting**

Recipients under this FOA will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. Information on reporting requirements is available on the ACF website at

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-2>.

For planning purposes, the frequency of required reporting for awards made under this announcement are as follows:

Performance Progress Reports:	Semi-Annually
Financial Reports:	Semi-Annually

## **VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)**

### **Program Office Contact**

Jean Blankenship

Administration for Children and Families

Administration on Children, Youth and Families

Children's Bureau

CB Operations Center, c/o LCG, Inc.  
1400 Key Boulevard, Suite 900  
Arlington, VA 22209  
Phone: (888) 203-6161  
Email: [CB@grantreview.org](mailto:CB@grantreview.org)

**Office of Grants Management Contact**

Bridget Shea Westfall  
Administration for Children and Families  
Office of Administration  
Office of Grants Management  
CB Operations Center, c/o LCG, Inc.  
1400 Key Blvd, Suite 900  
Arlington, VA 22209  
Phone: (888) 203-6161  
Email: [CB@grantreview.org](mailto:CB@grantreview.org)

**Federal Relay Service:**

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) at [www.gsa.gov/fedrelay](http://www.gsa.gov/fedrelay).

**VIII. Other Information**

**Reference Websites**

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

HHS Grants Forecast <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/hhsgrantsforecast/index.cfm>.

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

ACF Grants Homepage <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants>.

ACF Funding Opportunities <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/foa/>.

ACF "How to Apply for a Grant" <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/how-to-apply-for-grants>.

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

For submission of a paper format application, all required Standard Forms (SF), assurances, and certifications are available on the ACF Grants-Forms page through

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>.

Standard grant forms are available at the [Grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html) Forms Repository webpage at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>.

For information regarding accessibility issues, visit the Grants.gov Accessibility Compliance Page at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/accessibility-compliance.html>

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

The *Federal Register* <https://www.federalregister.gov/>.

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

### Application Checklist

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
Third-Party Agreements (also, MOUs and Consortia Agreements)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Project Description</i> .	If available, submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4</i> . If not available at the time of application submission, due by the time of award.
Mandatory Grant Disclosure	Requirement, submission instructions, and mailing addresses are found in the "Mandatory Grant Disclosure" entry in the table in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances and Certifications</i> .	Concurrent submission to the Administration for Children and Families and to the Office of the Inspector General is required.



<p>SF-424 Key Contact Form</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>For electronic application submission, this form is available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Optional."</p> <p>The form is also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>	<p>Submission is due with the application by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>
<p>SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p> <p>These forms are <b>required</b> for applications under this FOA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects that include only non-construction</li> </ul>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>

	activities must submit the SF-424A and SF-424B, along with the SF-424 and SF-P/PSL.	
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>
Proof of Non-Profit Status	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description, Legal Status of Applicant Entity.</i>	<p>Proof of non-profit status should be submitted with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i> If it is not available at the time of application submission, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>

<p>SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities</p>	<p>"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>For electronic application submission, this form is available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Optional."</p> <p>The form is available in the electronic application kit at Grants.gov</p> <p>and at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application.</p> <p>If it not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>
<p>SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates</i></p>

	<p>FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a></p> <p>by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>	<p><i>Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>
Commitment of Non-Federal Resources	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification.</i></p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>
Logic Model	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description.</i></p>	<p>Submission is due with the application package by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>
Project Summary/Abstract	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description.</i> The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>
Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p>	<p>Submission is due with the application package or prior to the award of a grant.</p>

	<p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov page under the "Application Package" tab in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>	
The Project Description	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.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Table of Contents	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submit with the application by the due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. 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 is required in addition to submission of SF-424A or SF-424C. It must be submitted with the application package by the due date in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

<p>DUNS Number (Unique Entity Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> in the announcement.</p> <p>To obtain a DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier), go to <a href="http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform">http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform</a>.</p> <p>To register at SAM, go to <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http://www.sam.gov</a>.</p>	<p>A DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier) and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants.</p> <p>Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.</p>
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## Appendix

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