Administration for Children and Families

Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation

Child Care Policy Research Partnership Grants
HHS-2019-ACF-OPRE-YE-1591
Application Due Date: 06/14/2019
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Funding Opportunity Title: Child Care Policy Research Partnership Grants
Announcement Type: Initial
Funding Opportunity Number: HHS-2019-ACF-OPRE-YE-1591
Primary CFDA Number: 93.575
Due Date for Letter of Intent: 05/13/2019
Due Date for Applications: 06/14/2019

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 & Funding Page at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto.

The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) within ACF in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) invites applications for Child Care Policy Research Partnerships (CCPRP) grants to support new research and evaluation activities developed and conducted through partnerships between CCDF lead agencies in states and territories and researchers from institutions of higher education, research organizations and other eligible organizations. This announcement will fund up to ten cooperative agreements to grantees that will pursue research questions of national and state relevance and will develop research questions and research designs in partnership with local and state child care stakeholders and researchers. These projects will be expected to add to our knowledge about the efficacy of child care subsidy policies and quality improvement initiatives in promoting family economic self-sufficiency, children's healthy development and learning, and support for child care providers.

Projects are also expected to inform the field at large. As such, grantees will be expected to participate in a network of CCPRP grantees that will meet annually and communicate regularly to share lessons learned, to identify opportunities for collaborative analyses, and to develop collective expertise and resources.

CCPRP will be funded through the cooperative agreement mechanism. See Section II. Award Information for a description of the substantial involvement of the Federal Project Officer (PO) in the performance of these cooperative agreements.

I. Program Description
Statutory Authority
CCPRP are funded under the authority of section 658O(a)(5) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9858m(a)(5)).

Description
A. Background
CCDF is a federal and state partnership administered by the Office of Child Care (OCC) within ACF dedicated to supporting the employment and economic self-sufficiency of low-income working parents by providing access to affordable, high-quality child care. As a block grant, CCDF gives funding to states, territories, and tribes to provide child care subsidies through grants and contracts with providers, as well as vouchers or certificates to low-income families. CCDF improves the quality of care to promote children’s healthy development and learning by supporting child care licensing and quality improvement systems, and by supporting child care professionals to attain more training and education. CCDF funds providers in a range of settings, including family child care homes and centers that may be operated by a public, private, or non-profit entity, or a public-private partnership.

To facilitate CCDF services, OCC establishes and oversees the implementation of child care policies and provides guidance and technical assistance to states, territories, and tribal governments as they administer CCDF programs. OCC has also taken a lead role in supporting state early childhood care and education systems to help ensure that children receive quality care in order to support their healthy development and school success. OCC has created strategic partnerships with states to improve early childhood programs through a significant infusion of guidance, training, and technical assistance to promote the development of early learning guidelines, professional development plans, development and implementation of Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS), and coordination across early childhood programs. To learn more about the goals and initiatives of the CCDF and OCC, please visit the OCC website at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/.

The CCDF funding reserved for research is intended to help child care decision-makers in crafting policies and initiatives that support positive outcomes for families and children; to increase the capacity for child care research at the national, state, and local levels; and, to promote linkages among research, policy, and practice. To date, these funds have supported research efforts that have increased our knowledge about the efficacy of child care subsidy policies and programs in enhancing employment and economic self-sufficiency of low-income families, and in improving quality in child care and early education settings to support learning and development of children. Descriptions of current and past research projects funded with these research set aside funds can be found at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/topic/overview/child-care.

B. Program Goals and Requirements
Through the CCPRP grant program, ACF aims to support active collaborations between CCDF Lead Agencies and researchers to investigate questions of immediate relevance to local and national child care policies and practices. The CCDF Lead Agency and their research partners (Project Team) are expected to work collaboratively throughout all phases of the project. Project
Teams are also encouraged to work with other local and state child care stakeholders. These projects are intended to add to our knowledge about child care subsidy policies and quality improvement initiatives that are intended to support employment and self-sufficiency outcomes for parents, increase low-income families’ access to high quality child care programs, and promote positive learning and school readiness outcomes for children.

The specific goals and requirements of the CCPRP grant program are to:

1. **Develop research partnerships that support collaboration among child care researchers and CCDF Lead Agencies which build the capacity of lead agencies to conduct rigorous policy-relevant research.**

   Project Teams must include a state, territory, or tribal CCDF Lead Agency and a research partner from an institution of higher education, a research organization, or an organization with demonstrated capacity to conduct rigorous policy research. Partnerships must be formalized through memoranda of understanding, contracts, or subaward agreements during the course of the grant. For the state and territory CCDF grantees’ contact information, please visit: [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/ccdf-grantee-state-and-territory-contacts](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/ccdf-grantee-state-and-territory-contacts). For CCDF tribal grantees’ contact information, please visit: [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/ccdf-tribal-grantees-listed-in-alphabetical-order](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/ccdf-tribal-grantees-listed-in-alphabetical-order).

   All aspects of the planning and execution of the work supported by this grant program are expected to be conducted through collaborative efforts between the state, territory, or tribal CCDF Lead Agency and their research partner. Together, the partners are expected to develop the research questions, agree on the research design and its implementation, establish procedures to access and use existing data or collect new data, establish a mechanism to discuss the results as they are obtained and direct further research, consider the practice and policy implications of the results, disseminate the results to multiple audiences, and plan for future research. Ongoing collaboration between partners helps ensure that the research will be of direct use to the lead agency, as well as to the field at large.

   CCPRP grantees are also encouraged to consult with other child care policy stakeholders, especially organizations that are critical to the implementation of child care policies or initiatives central to the proposed research objectives. For example, the following entities may also be included as part of a research partnership project, in addition to the CCDF Lead Agency and research partner: (1) partnerships across state and/or local agencies; (2) departments and agencies that administer child care programs for low-income children, including public or private child care centers, Head Start, or public pre-K; (3) resource and referral organizations; (4) state agencies or organizations that oversee Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) or licensing initiatives; (5) planning councils, commissions, advisory groups, and other organizations that participate in child care planning and policy making; (6) non-academic research organizations; (7) tribal, county, or local agencies that administer child care subsidy programs; (8) family child care providers or networks of family child care homes; (9) professional organizations and associations; (10) providers of supportive services such as provider training, technical assistance, or consumer education; (11) programs and services that provide comprehensive services to young children and their families, including, but not limited to, home visiting and behavioral and mental health supports; (12) civic groups and community organizations; and (13) foundations and charitable organizations.

   Collaborative projects that would explore common questions across states are permitted and
encouraged.

Subawards. Project Teams may, but are not required or encouraged to, structure and fund their partnerships through subawards. Consistent with the eligibility criteria, any eligible entity may serve as a subrecipient (i.e., a recipient of the subaward). If partnerships will be structured with a subaward, applicants must include a subaward selection process that includes a risk assessment of potential subrecipients. All subrecipients must be secured by the time of application. All subrecipients must have a DUNS number and active registration with SAM. Consistent with the expectations for Project Teams discussed throughout this funding opportunity, the applicant must clearly identify and justify the roles, responsibilities, and management plan for all subrecipients. Applicants must monitor subrecipients consistent with the requirements outlined in 45 CFR 75.351-.353. Applicants may structure their subawards to best meet the needs of their proposed projects; up to 70% of effort and funds may be transferred to the subrecipient. Applicants' and subrecipients' progress will be monitored semi-annually, and will be considered during review of applications for non-competing continuations. Subrecipients will be subject to the requirements of Section IV. 6 Funding Restrictions. Applicants may be required to report under the Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency (FFATA). More information can be found at: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/award-term-for-federal-financial-accountability-and-transparency.

2. Conduct research that addresses issues of interest to CCDF decision-makers at the local, state, and national levels.

Research and evaluation are critical to understanding child care policy issues. Projects will contribute to the broader knowledge base by conducting new research that is relevant to state and local CCDF administrators with clear links to questions of significance for national policies and initiatives and their implications for children, parents, and providers. All proposed projects are expected to build on existing literature to address gaps in current knowledge. All projects must be informed by an empirically-based conceptual framework or theory of change submitted at the time of application. Proposed projects may use qualitative or quantitative approaches, but must address applied research questions that inform and improve CCDF policies, services, and programs. The research must be of value to the CCDF Lead Agency and the social policy and early care and education fields.

Research topics and areas that are of major interest for this year’s grants include, but are not limited to:

- Effects of policy changes since the CCDBG Act of 2014 and the resulting regulations on family, provider, and child outcomes, and the child care market;
- Effects of state and territory CCDF policies (e.g., payment rates, co-payments, eligibility thresholds) on child care access, use, and quality;
- Effectiveness of efforts to support family child care providers to increase access to care that meets the needs of low-income families, including care during non-standard hours;
- Effects of consumer education efforts on parents’ choice of care, supply of care, and demand for care;
- Effects of implementation of regulations related to licensing and monitoring, training of licensors, and background checks on the supply and quality of early care and education;
- Effects of investments in quality initiatives in the context of: QRIS, professional
development of the workforce, building a supply of quality care for special populations, and supporting access to high quality care for low-income families;

- Understanding trends in variations in quality and access across geographic and regional areas, and among provider types, as well as how policy changes may be affecting these trends;
- Effects of targeted state investments in quality on identified policy challenges, including reductions in waiting lists and building capacity among family child care providers;
- Effects of initiatives to support the early care and education workforce, including staff working in center-based programs serving children birth through age 13-years, home-based providers (regulated and license-exempt), and informal home-based providers, including but not limited to initiatives related to increased wages, benefits, and other supports for the workforce that may contribute to decreases in the churn.

Proposed projects must include new data collections. New data collections may serve to complement or validate information from existing data sources.

Project Teams should develop innovative projects that draw on the resources and opportunities available to rigorously examine the proposed research questions. Rigorous research incorporates the 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 sample being studied represents one or more of the populations being served by the program.
- Consistency: When processes and methods are consistently followed and clearly described, someone else could replicate the approach, and other studies can confirm what is found.
- Neutrality: Producing results that are as objective as possible and acknowledge the bias brought to the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the results.


Past project descriptions and products can be found at: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/child-care-research-partnerships-2013-grantees

3. Produce policy-relevant findings and information throughout the duration of the grant.

Well-planned research studies sometimes take years to complete, but policymakers often need more immediate information to make evidence-based policy decisions. Project Teams must consider how their proposed topics and chosen design can produce relevant findings/information that could be shared throughout the project. In order to provide timely
information to policymakers, both locally and nationally, Project Teams must complete policy-relevant preliminary analyses in the first year. For example, Project Teams may leverage existing data sources, field a short survey, or collect new data to be analyzed and reported in the first year. Preliminary analyses are intended to inform the broader goals of the proposed research while providing important information to policymakers along the way.

4. Encourage collaborative research projects across lead agencies that explore common research questions.

Project Teams are expected to participate in a consortium of CCPRP grantees. Project Teams are expected to meet annually and communicate monthly with federal staff and other consortium members to: (a) share lessons learned; (b) identify opportunities for collaboration, including, in the case of similar research questions, implementing similar study designs and analyses, and use of common measures to collect new data; (c) identify commonalities and develop collective expertise; and (d) participate in dissemination activities and develop resources to be shared with the field at large.

After award, Project Teams will work with other consortium members to develop common research questions, define data elements and analyses, and plan for dissemination. For example, two or more Project Teams might collaborate and produce comparable data to better understand a cross-cutting theme such as access to care, continuity and stability of care, licensing, or subsidy administration. Thus, project proposals must reserve effort for collaborative activities that will contribute to the knowledge base and capacity for child care policy research more broadly and explore how similar policies and initiatives may yield different effects based on differences in policy, administrative practices, or targeted populations.

Project Teams will also be expected to work with a child care policy research partnerships support center, if one should be created by ACF through a different funding mechanism, which will support the work of the individual teams and facilitate collaborative research and dissemination efforts, answering common research questions across states.

5. Foster the exchange of current research, ideas, and information among research, policy, and practice communities.

Project Teams must attend, and should budget for, the following required meetings and conferences:

- CCPRP Consortium Kick-Off Meeting: Key project personnel (e.g., Principal Investigator(s) and CCDF Lead Agency partners) are expected to attend the two-day, in-person kick-off meeting. This meeting will be held in Washington, DC within the first 3 months of the project period. Upon award, the date of the meeting will be shared with grantees. This meeting will only occur during the first year.
- Child Care and Early Education Policy Research Consortium (CCEEPRC) Annual Meeting: It is expected that key project personnel (e.g., Principal Investigator(s) and CCDF Lead Agency partners) will attend the annual meeting in Washington, DC, for two full days. The meeting brings together grantees, contracted researchers funded by ACF, and federal and state CCDF administrators to discuss child care policy research. This meeting is an excellent opportunity for Project Teams to build relationships with key stakeholders and to discuss implications of research developments and the work of the research partnerships. Project Teams are expected to attend each year of the project.
• CCPRP Grantee Meeting: It is expected that key project personnel will attend the annual in-person grantee meeting to discuss project developments, identify research questions or issues of common interest, and identify potential collaborative products and resources. This meeting is typically held one day prior to or following the CCEPRC meeting in Washington, DC. Project Teams are expected to attend each year of the project.

Additionally, Project Teams are encouraged, but not required to attend:

• State and Territories CCDF Administrators Meeting (STAM). STAM is hosted annually in Washington, DC, typically in August.
• National Research Conference on Early Childhood (NRCEC). NRCEC is hosted bi-annually in Washington, DC, typically in June. The next meeting will be held in summer 2020.

6. Disseminate findings to relevant stakeholders at local, state, and national levels.

Results of the studies funded through this announcement, including the implications of results for decision-makers at the local, state, and national levels, will be made widely accessible. Project Teams are expected to identify and/or develop opportunities, products, activities, or resources to communicate about the implications and innovations of the research project to both research and policy audiences at the local, state, and national levels. Project Teams must consider how to disseminate both interim and final project findings and results. Project descriptions, briefs, publications, and any other project products or resources developed with funds from this award must be archived in a digital library designated by ACF.

Project Teams must work with the Early Care and Education Data Archive (ECEDA) throughout the project period to plan for archiving the data (if appropriate). Project Teams and the data archive will jointly select the datasets that are most appropriate for archiving and decide among the options for dissemination that best address all concerns related to privacy, intellectual property rights, data ownership, and other issues. Public-use data files produced by funded projects will remain in the public domain for secondary analysis through the ECEDA.

II. Federal Award Information

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Anticipated Project Start Date:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Length of Project Periods:</td>
<td>48-month project period with four 12-month budget periods</td>
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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.

Description of ACF's Anticipated Substantial Involvement Under the Cooperative Agreement
Under the cooperative agreements, substantial involvement is anticipated by ACF throughout the duration of the funded projects. ACF will monitor the project and provide technical assistance and feedback when necessary, including joint decision-making on research design, approach, and dissemination. ACF will provide leadership to maximize cooperation and collaboration among grantees, including organizing periodic consultations and teleconferences to review research activities, to share information and to promote coordination of the project. ACF will schedule and host annual grantee meetings, set the agenda, and coordinate activities. ACF will work collaboratively with grantees to facilitate accomplishment of project goals. ACF will facilitate collaboration and coordination with other grantees, a child care policy research partnerships support center, ACF program offices (e.g., Office of Child Care) and their technical assistance providers, and other contractors.

III. Eligibility Information

III.1. Eligible Applicants

The Child Care Policy Research Partnership grant program is intended to fund collaborative research projects between a Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Lead Agency and their research partner(s) (e.g., institutions of higher education, research organizations). Therefore, eligible applicants may be either the CCDF Lead Agency or research partner organizations.

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. 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, 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. 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 ("per project period" refers only to fully funded awards), 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. 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 "ACF Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Electronic Application Submission" at www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6.

Missing the Application Deadline (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 after 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from www.Grants.gov, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. That is, applications submitted to www.Grants.gov, on or after 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

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

Each time an application is submitted via 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
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

OPRE Review Team: Child Care Policy Research Partnerships
c/o ICF
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031
Phone: (877) 350-5913
Fax: (703) 934-3740
Email: CCRP2@icfi.com

Electronic Application Submission:
The electronic application submission package is available in the FOA's listing at www.Grants.gov.

Applications in Paper Format:
For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the "Select Grant Opportunity Package" available in the FOA's Grants.gov Synopsis under the Package tab at www.Grants.gov. 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.

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

IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission

FORMATTING APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS
Each applicant applying electronically via www.Grants.gov is required to upload only two electronic files, excluding Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.
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.

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. Pages that contain blurred text, or text that is too small to read comfortably, will be removed.

English Language
Applications must be submitted in the English language and must be in the terms of United States (U.S.) dollars. If applications are submitted using another currency, ACF will convert the foreign currency to U.S. currency using the date of receipt of the application to determine the rate of exchange.

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.

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).

** Corrections/Updates to Submitted Applications**

When applicants make revisions to a previously submitted application, ACF will accept only the last on-time application for pre-review under the Application Disqualification Factors. The Application Disqualification Factors determine the application's acceptance for competitive review. See *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors* and *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options*.

**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**


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. Pages with blurred text will be removed from the application.

PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:

FORMATTING INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHILD CARE POLICY RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS GRANTS PROGRAM.

Page Limits and Numbering. Applicants must limit their entire application to 140 pages. This page limit applies to the combined length of the Project Description File and the Appendices File.

Organization of Application. Applicants are strongly advised to use headings and subheadings that correspond to the required application sections. Sections must be carefully labeled to ease reviewers' identification of information relevant to the application review criteria. Additional headers and subheaders may also be used to organize the content of each section.

Writing Style. The proposal should be consistent with the citation format and style guidelines of the current Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.

1) The required Standard Forms (SF), assurances, and certifications are submitted separately from the Project Description and Appendices files, therefore, they are not included in the 140-page limit.

2) Applicants must limit the Project Description File to 100 pages total. Applicants must number the pages of the file, beginning with the Table of Contents.

The project description should be carefully developed in accordance with ACF's research goals and agenda as described in Section I. Program Description. We suggest organizing the Project Description File according to the sections presented below. See additional instructions later in this section (under "The Project Description") for details on preparing the full project description.

   a) Table of Contents (includes a list of all pieces of the application being submitted across both files with corresponding page numbers)

   b) Project Summary/Abstract (single-spaced, one page maximum)

   c) Approach

   1. Objectives and Significance

   2. Research Design and Methodology

   3. Plan for Disseminating Research
4. Description of the Research Partnership
5. Management Plan
   5a. Project Timeline and Milestones
6. Organizational Capacity Narrative
7. Staff Roles and Qualifications
8. References
9. (optional) Subawards
e) Budget and Budget Justification

3) The Appendices File is limited to 40 pages. We suggest organizing the Appendices File according to the sections presented below:
   a) Proof of Legal Status of Applicant Entity, if applicable
   b) Supporting Documentation of Organizational Capacity or Staff Qualifications
      i) Resumes/Curriculum Vitae
   c) Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information
   d) Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds
   e) Memoranda of Understanding and/or Third Party Agreements
   f) Other Materials in Support of the Proposal

**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 “Online Answers.” 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 for use, if an applicant is unable to open the test application package.

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.

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. 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 "Select Grant Opportunity Package" at Grants.gov. Please also see https://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. For more information on the exemption, see "ACF Policy on Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission" at www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6

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).

Applicants using paper format should download the application forms package associated with the FOA’s Synopsis on www.Grants.gov under the Package tab.

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).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms / Assurances / Certifications</th>
<th>Submission Requirement</th>
<th>Notes / Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.</td>
<td>Required of all applicants. To obtain a DUNS number, go to <a href="http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform">http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform</a>. Active registration at the Systems Award Management (SAM) website must be maintained throughout the application and project award period. SAM registration is available at <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http://www.sam.gov</a>.</td>
<td>See Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM) for more information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance</td>
<td>Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.</td>
<td>Required for all applications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SF-424 Key Contact Form</td>
<td>Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.</td>
<td>Required for all applications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification / IRB Certification / Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)</td>
<td>Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the Overview and Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times. If the information is not available at the time of application, it must be Form is available at <a href="http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html">http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html</a>. General information about the HHS Protection of Human Subjects regulations can be obtained at <a href="http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/">http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/</a>. Applicants may also contact OHRP by email (<a href="mailto:ohrp@csophs.dhhs.gov">ohrp@csophs.dhhs.gov</a>) or by phone (240-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form/Program</td>
<td>Submission Requirement</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs</td>
<td>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. By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.</td>
<td>Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)</td>
<td>Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.</td>
<td>Required for all applications. In the SF-P/PSL, applicants must cite their primary location and up to 29 additional performance sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>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, &quot;Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying,&quot; in accordance with its instructions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Submission of the certification is required for all applicants.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Mandatory Grant Disclosure**
All applicants and recipients are required to submit, 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. (Mandatory Disclosures, 45 CFR 75.113)

Disclosures must be sent in writing to:


**And to:**

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

**Fax:** (202) 205-0604 (Include “Mandatory Grant Disclosures” in subject line) or **Email:** MandatoryGranteeDisclosures@oig.hhs.gov

**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.1. 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.

Letter of Intent
Applicants are strongly encouraged to notify ACF of their intention to submit an application under this announcement. Please submit the letter of intent by the deadline date listed in Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.

The letter of intent should include the following information: number and title of this announcement; the name and address of the applicant organization; and/or Fiscal Agent (if known); and the name, phone number, fax number and email address of a contact person.

Letter of intent information will be used to determine the number of expert reviewers needed to evaluate applications. **The letter of intent is optional.** Failure to submit a letter of intent will not impact eligibility to submit an application and will not disqualify an application from competitive review.

The letter of intent should be submitted via email to CCRP2@icfi.com or to the following physical address. Submission by email is preferred.

OPRE Review Team: Child Care Policy Research Partnerships

c/o ICF

9300 Lee Highway

Fairfax, VA 22031-6050

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.

**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.

**1. Objectives and Significance**

Applicants must clearly outline and justify the objectives of the proposed research project and summarize how the expected outcomes will inform CCDF policy. Applicants must demonstrate the significance of their proposal in the context of the existing knowledge base and current research and policy fields.

Applicants must:

- Describe the key research questions and initial hypotheses. The hypotheses must be justified given current theory and the extant empirical evidence, citing relevant literature.
- Explain how the proposed project will: improve current knowledge of an important issue or problem in child care policy and/or practice; tackle issues that are significant to the partnership’s CCDF Lead Agency; and/or address issues relevant to CCDF policy and OCC more broadly.
- Describe how the project will inform specific programmatic and/or policy decisions of the CCDF Lead Agency and contribute to future policy, practice, and research more broadly, suggesting practical applications as well as longer-term benefits that might be
derived from the project’s activities or findings.

2. Research Design and Methodology

Applicants must fully describe the technical approach for addressing the key issues and achieving the project objectives and research questions laid out in the Objectives and Significance section. Applicants must clearly articulate the link between the research questions, design, methods, analyses, and expected outcomes. It may be helpful to include diagrams or tables that portray the interrelationships among the proposed research issues, questions, variables, and data elements.

Applicants must describe, in detail, the research design and methods that will be used to address the proposed research questions, and explain how the methods are appropriate and sufficient to address the objectives and research questions. Projects can use quantitative and/or qualitative methods. Research designs must be rigorous as defined by the ACF Evaluation Policy described in Section I. Program Description. Applicants must discuss the strengths and limitations of each aspect of the design including any technical or logistical challenges that may arise, and propose solutions for them. Research designs must demonstrate consideration of the cultural and ethical issues that may arise.

The methodological discussion must include technical details of the proposed research design, including a clear description of the following elements, at a minimum:

**Conceptual Framework or Theory of Change**

- Describe the conceptual framework or theory of change that details the relations between the variables of interest and expected outcomes. Include theoretical justifications and empirical evidence.
- Describe the component or components of the child care subsidy policy that are hypothesized to lead to anticipated changes. A more complete conceptual framework or theory of change could include further details such as the sample representing the target population, key moderators, and the specific measures used for the outcomes.

**Data Sources, Sample, and Methods**

*For new data collection:*

- Describe how the sample will be chosen and recruited. Describe the strengths and limitations of the proposed sample.
- Describe all of the activities and procedures for the proposed research.
- Identify and define the key constructs. Describe how the constructs will be measured, including psychometric properties of instruments, as applicable.
- Describe the data that will be collected and the methods that will be used to collect the data.
- If the proposed research will link the data collected to administrative data, describe how they will be linked to address the research questions.

*For existing data:*

If the project involves the use of administrative data:
If the project involves the secondary analysis of existing data sets:

- Describe the objectives of the original research and its appropriateness and limitations for this study.
- Describe how the data would be accessed.
- Describe the characteristics of the data (including data quality) and variables or data elements to be used and how these fit within the research plan.
- If applicable, include information on measures that were used including psychometric properties.
- Applicants who propose to analyze nationally or regionally representative data sets, such as the National Survey of Early Care and Education, Child Care Policies Database, licensing data, workforce registry data or data from the Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, or National Center for Education Statistics, should discuss how their analyses could address national, regional, or state-level child care market or policy parameters and/or trends.

Linking to ongoing research projects:

The CCDF Lead Agency may be conducting other studies that relate to the topic selected for the research proposal, and the project under the CCPRP grant may expand, complement, or build on the project. If the applicant intends to link to other research projects, please include the following information:

- Explain how linking the studies would meet the goals of this grant program.
- Describe how the proposed research would make a distinct contribution while building on the ongoing research.
- Describe the design and timeline of the ongoing research study.
- Describe how the project team will get access to the data.
- Describe how the technical aspects of linking data from both/all projects would be structured and carried out. In addition, include a timeline for linking the projects.
- Describe the status of the ongoing study, including the status of the data collection and other phases of the study, and the implications for the proposed project (e.g., if proposed project would rely on analyses of data from an ongoing study, what the status/timeline is for data cleaning and how any delays would affect the proposed project).
- If applicable, the application should include a letter of agreement or support as evidence of cooperation from individual(s)/organization(s) conducting the other
research project.

**Analytic Plan**

- Describe the analytical approach, statistical techniques, and methods of inference that will be used to analyze the data.
- Describe the results of power analyses that demonstrate that the sample size will be sufficient to detect effects using the proposed analytic techniques (if necessary).

**Preliminary Results during the First Year**

- Develop and describe a plan to analyze and report data within the first budget period. This may include analysis of newly collected data or analysis of existing data, such as administrative data.
- Discuss how these early findings will inform and contribute to subsequent stages of the proposed research project.

**Security**

- Describe the procedures that will be used to ensure data quality and security.
- Describe how the proposed project will provide for adequate protection of human subjects. This includes the plan to protect confidentiality of all the data used and/or collected and the consent procedures.

3. **Plan for Disseminating Research**

Applicants must provide a comprehensive communication or dissemination plan that outlines how the project team will communicate about the project with researchers, policymakers, CCDF Lead Agencies, and other early care and education stakeholders. The dissemination plan must identify target audiences and appropriate dissemination products and/or activities for each. In developing a dissemination plan, applicants are encouraged to consult OPRE resources addressing dissemination of human services research, and particularly the report titled The Value-Added Research Dissemination Framework. The Framework is available on ACF’s website at [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/opre-research-dissemination-project-2010-2012](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/opre-research-dissemination-project-2010-2012).

The proposed dissemination plan must include the following:

- Plans to consult and/or collaborate with partner agencies to review and interpret the project's findings and its implications for CCDF and/or early care and education policies and agencies. Plans should describe potential contributions from partner agencies and other relevant stakeholders in developing products and/or disseminating findings.
- Plans for communicating findings from the proposed research to relevant target audiences, including (but not limited to):
  - Research community; policymakers, technical assistance providers, and practitioners in the fields of child care and early childhood care and education (as appropriate); and
• State, territory, or tribal CCDF Lead Agencies or local government agencies or nongovernmental agencies that administer CCDF programs on behalf of CCDF Lead Agencies and other project partners, if applicable.

• Describe specific products and/or activities that are intended for specific, key target audiences. Applicants must identify both research- and policy-oriented products to communicate project developments and findings. In addition to traditional written research products and dissemination channels (e.g., conference presentations, technical papers or reports, peer-reviewed scholarly publications), plans should identify activities to communicate and/or facilitate use of the sponsored research by policymakers, CCDF administrators and agencies, and/or other stakeholders. As examples, products may include presentations or research briefs tailored for state policymakers, software, or web-based tools, if applicable. Dissemination plans and products may differ substantially depending on the target audiences.

4. Description of the Research Partnership

Applicants must discuss the composition, stage, and goals of their research partnership. Specifically, applicants must:

• Describe all organizations that will form the Project Team, and provide evidence that each partner is willing to participate in the partnership (e.g., formal letters of specific commitment or support from each partner).

• Describe the stage of the partnership (i.e., a new partnership or a mature one), and explain how the partnership’s stage will affect the type of work proposed under the grant, the roles of the partners, and the expectations for the results of the project including both the research produced and the future of the partnership. Partnerships at any stage are acceptable, but it is important to show that the partnership is prepared to carry out the proposed evaluation.

• Describe how the partnering organizations decided to propose a project and how they collaboratively identified the research questions and designed the project.

• Include a description of past or current partnerships among Project Team members, if applicable, that demonstrate the ability to carry out collaborative research.

• Discuss the partnership’s decision-making process, e.g., how it will determine research direction, release of research results, and future research plans.

• Discuss how the proposed project will improve the CCDF Lead Agency’s capacity to participate in and use research.

5. Management Plan

Applicants must provide a management plan that describes a sound and feasible plan of action for how the proposed project will be carried out. This section must describe, in detail, how the project will be structured and managed, how the timeliness of activities will be ensured, how quality control will be maintained, and how costs will be controlled. Applicants should discuss their management of the project as a whole, and the management and coordinating roles of any partners.

The plan must include, as appropriate:
• Describe how the project will be managed by the grantee/lead organization to ensure that members of the partnership operate as a cohesive team and that the goals of the project are carried out efficiently and cost-effectively.
• Identify the management structure and procedures that will be used to keep the project on track and ensure the quality of its work. This is especially important for projects involving multiple institutions carrying out different tasks that must be coordinated and/or integrated.
• Describe all subcontracts, subawards, and other formal relationships within the partnership. Partners who will provide access to data or records must provide a letter stipulating the terms of their agreement with the project team.
• Discuss the partnership’s agreement and strategy for sharing and housing data. This should include the main sources of data that will be shared, where the data will be housed, how the data will be managed, who will develop the documentation necessary for their use, and the availability of the data to partners and other interested parties.
• Discuss plans for communicating and consulting among team members and key stakeholders to, at a minimum, interpret research findings and results. Applicants may also consider including planned discussions and milestones to refine the research plan, monitor progress, troubleshoot difficulties encountered, develop products, and communicate project results.
• Discuss potential problems or challenges to accomplishing the project’s objectives, including factors that may affect the quality of the research or its outcomes, may undermine the ability of partners to collaborate effectively, and may hinder the sharing, review, and dissemination of information. This should include a description of how problems and challenges will be discussed and handled by participating partnership organizations.

6. Organizational Capacity

The applicant must demonstrate that the proposed grantee organization and partners have the organizational capacity and resources to successfully carry-out the project on time, within budget, and to a high standard of quality, including the capacity to resolve a wide variety of technical and management problems that may occur. Applicants should include organizational plans for the project, including a description of the organizational structure and linkages among project partners, and the respective roles and resources contributed by each partner organization. Applicants must demonstrate each organization's ability to efficiently carry out its assigned roles and functions for a project with the proposed project's size, complexity, and scope, including evidence of successful management of federal funds. See Organizational Capacity below for additional information on documentation that may be used to demonstrate Organizational Capacity.

7. Staff Roles and Qualifications

Applicants must demonstrate that the project team has the experience and expertise to carry out the proposed project on time, within budget, and with a high degree of quality.

More specifically, applicants must:

• Identify staff responsible for managing all key project activities, including management
of the budget, and describe their roles and responsibilities, their professional and/or technical qualifications to execute proposed activities, the proportion of time they will be committed to the project in relation to their other duties, the period of time they will be employed, and whether their continued employment will be dependent solely on the funds to be awarded under this announcement.

- If staff positions for key project activities are currently vacant, include a position description outlining the qualifications necessary to carry out the duties and responsibilities of each position. If applicable, include letters of commitment from any individuals who have been selected but not yet hired. If a data collection team must be assembled, describe the expected composition of the team, what expertise will be represented, and how individuals will be selected.
- Provide evidence that the proposed staff have adequate knowledge of CCDF policies, early care and education and school-age care, and/or other areas of expertise relevant to the focal topic selected to be addressed by the project, as well as related initiatives, to successfully carry out their assigned roles.
- Identify all proposed consultants or advisors, document their expertise, and describe their roles and responsibilities or how their services will be utilized. Include letters of commitment or intent, if possible.
- Identify the authors of the proposal and describe their continuing role in the project if funded.

8. References
Applicants must include a list of references for any resources that are cited within the application.

9. Subawards (optional)
If applicable, applicants must state their intention to subaward and describe how they plan to meet the requirements and expectations outlined in Section I. Program Description, Subawards. Applicants must describe their plan to monitor all subrecipients in accordance with 45 CFR 75.352.

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.
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.

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);
- 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;
- Child care licenses and other documentation of professional accreditation;

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 Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act, 2019 and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2019, (Division B, Title II, Sec. 202), limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this announcement may not be used to pay the salary of an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II
salary of the "Rates of Pay for the Executive Schedule" is $189,600. This amount reflects an individual's base salary exclusive of fringe benefits and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties of the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards and subcontracts under an ACF grant or cooperative agreement.

Provide a budget 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.

The application’s budget and budget justification (i.e., narrative) should reflect the full project period, with each budget period presented separately. For a 48-month project, include a detailed budget table and narrative budget justification clearly describing estimated costs for completion of the project, consistent with the budget categories and amounts reported in Standard Form 424-A. This section should be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate how the budget supports the level of effort and resources to manage and execute the proposed research and dissemination activities. The discussion should include the appropriateness of the level and distribution of funds to the successful completion of ACF’s goals for the grant program and all project requirements, including costs related to travel for mandatory meetings and consortium activities (as described in Section I. Program Description) over the course of the project period. Indirect costs are counted towards the award ceiling.

**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/subcontractor, 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.

**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 rate. 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, 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. 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**

This section provides the application submission and receipt instructions for ACF program applications. Please read the following instructions carefully and completely.

**Electronic Delivery**

ACF is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. ACF applicants are required to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

**How to Register and Apply through Grants.gov**

Read the following instructions about registering to apply for ACF funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Organization applicants can find complete instructions here: [https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html](https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html)
**Obtain a DUNS Number:** All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Applicants must enter the DUNS number in the data entry field labeled "Organizations DUNS" on the SF-424 form.

For more detailed instructions for obtaining a DUNS number, refer to:

**Register with SAM:** In addition to having a DUNS number, organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). All organizations must register with SAM in order to apply online. Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov.

For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to:

**Create a Grants.gov Account:** The next step in the registration process is to create an account with Grants.gov. Applicants must know their organization's DUNS number to complete this process. Completing this process automatically triggers an email request for applicant roles to the organization's E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) for review. The EBiz POC is a representative from your organization who is the contact listed for SAM. To apply for grants on behalf of your organization, you will need the AOR role.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:
https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html

**Authorize Grants.gov Roles:** After creating an account on Grants.gov, the EBiz POC receives an email notifying them of your registration and request for roles. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of your organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been approved as an AOR.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:
https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html

**Track Role Status:** To track your role request, refer to:
https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html

When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization's AOR that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC must authorize individuals who are able to make legally binding commitment on behalf of the organization as an AOR; this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.
How to Submit an Application to ACF via Grants.gov

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each FOA, you can create individual instances of a workspace.

The following is an overview of applying via Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html

Create a Workspace: Creating a workspace allows you to complete an application online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

Complete a Workspace: Add participants to the workspace, complete all the required forms, and check for errors before submission.

Adobe Reader: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace so that they will appear similar to other Standard or ACF forms. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drive(s), then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html

Mandatory Fields in Forms: In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.

Complete SF-424 Fields First: The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and DUNS number. To trigger this feature, an applicant must complete the SF-424 information first. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

Submit a Workspace: An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

Track a Workspace: After successfully submitting a workspace package, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the package. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html
Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist ACF with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

**Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission**

All applications must be received by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date established for each program. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant AOR will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When ACF successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submission, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by ACF.

Applicants with slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

**Issues with Federal Systems**


**Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission**

To request an exemption from required electronic submission please refer to ACF’s “Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission” document for complete guidance at: [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/acf_policy_for_requesting_an_exemption_from_required_electronic.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/acf_policy_for_requesting_an_exemption_from_required_electronic.pdf).

**Paper Format Application Submission**

An exemption is required for the submission of paper applications. See the preceding
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 their 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 Date for Letter of Intent**

Due Date for Letter of Intent: **05/13/2019**

Due Date for Applications: **06/14/2019**

**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.


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 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).

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


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

**Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper format application:**
ACF will not provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

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

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. Also see ACF Policy on Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission at www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6.

Submission By Mail
OPRE Review Team: Child Care Policy Research Partnerships
c/o ICF
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031-6050

Hand Delivery
OPRE Review Team: Child Care Policy Research Partnerships
c/o ICF
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031-6050

Electronic Submission
See Section IV.2. for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via www.Grants.gov.
For all submissions, see Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.

V. Application Review Information

V.1. Criteria

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maximum Points: 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The applicant’s research questions and hypotheses demonstrate a solid understanding of the relevant research literature, the critical issues and research goals of the CCDF program, and the goals of the partnering CCDF Lead Agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The primary research questions are adequately justified and relevant to CCDF policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The applicant sufficiently demonstrates:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) how the project will inform future specific programmatic and/or policy decisions of the CCDF Lead Agency;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) how the project will inform the CCDF program and/or Office of Child Care policies and initiatives, and specifically, how the research would benefit various policy and/or program audiences, such as informing policymakers on issues of current relevance in early care and education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Approach, Research Design and Methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maximum Points: 40</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The applicant includes a theoretically justified conceptual framework or theory of change that is appropriate for the proposed research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The applicant adequately links the research questions, research design, key constructs, methods, analyses, and expected outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The applicant demonstrates that an appropriate sample will be chosen and recruited, and is sufficient to detect effects using the proposed analytic techniques, and that the methods to recruit and retain the target sample(s) is reasonable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The applicant’s proposed approach employs technically sound, rigorous, and appropriate design, methods, and procedures to meet the project’s research objectives, and if applicable:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) reflects a sensitivity to relevant cultural and ethical issues;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) demonstrates sufficient psychometric properties for the proposed instruments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The applicant’s proposed analytic plan and statistical techniques are rigorous and appropriate for the research questions under consideration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The applicant describes appropriate and realistic strategies to resolve potential difficulties or challenges that may arise during the course of the research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The applicant includes appropriate informed consent procedures and sufficiently protects human subjects as well as the confidentiality and security of all the data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The applicant includes a plan to produce policy relevant findings and information throughout the grant, and particularly in the first budget period that:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) is practical, feasible, and appropriate to be completed within the first budget period;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) clearly informs and/or complements the broader research objectives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. The applicant demonstrates a willingness to collaborate with the consortium of CCPRP grantees to identify and coordinate common measures and analyses as well as develop research products and resources for the field at large.

*Proposed projects may include plans to analyze existing data from a variety of sources. If applicable, please use the evaluation criteria below to evaluate the research design and methodology for the relevant components of the proposed research plan.*

If the project proposes to use administrative or other existing data sets:

(a) The applicant thoroughly describes how the data will be accessed, processed, and managed. This includes providing evidence of relevant agreements, licenses, or memoranda of understanding.

(b) The applicant thoroughly describes the data and demonstrates it is of sufficient quality to address the research questions. This includes the characteristics of the sample and how it will be constructed, the variables or data elements that will be used, and how these variables map onto the research questions.

If the project proposes to conduct secondary data analysis:

(a) The applicant thoroughly describes the secondary data, including information on the original sample, measures, and psychometric properties.

(b) The applicant demonstrates that the secondary data source is appropriate for addressing the proposed research questions and identifies any limitations of the data.

If the project proposes to link the data collected for this grant with other research projects:

(a) The applicant fully demonstrates how the proposed research would make a distinct contribution while building on ongoing research and meet the goals of this grant program.

(b) The applicant includes a thorough discussion of the design and status of the ongoing research study, including the status of data collection and other phases of the ongoing study and the implications for the proposed project.

(c) The applicant clearly discusses the technical aspects of how data collected under this award will be linked to the data from ongoing research.

(d) The timeline to complete the ongoing research and to link the research studies is feasible.

(e) The applicant demonstrates that they will have access to the data and includes evidence of cooperation from individual(s) and organization(s) conducting the other research project (i.e., application includes a letter of agreement or support, if appropriate).

**Approach, Dissemination Plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maximum Points:5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The applicant outlines a reasonable, appropriate, and comprehensive plan to communicate about the project with researchers, policymakers, CCDF Lead Agencies, technical assistance providers, and other early care and education stakeholders. This</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
includes plans to consult and/or collaborate with partner agencies to review and interpret the project’s findings and its implications for CCDF and/or early care and education policies and agencies.

2. The applicant identifies target audiences and describes appropriate dissemination products and/or activities for each audience.

3. The applicant describes a reasonable plan for working with partner agencies and other relevant stakeholders to review and interpret the project’s findings, determine the implications for CCDF and/or early care and education policies and agencies, and develop plans and products for dissemination.

4. The applicant proposes products and activities to maximize the relevance and utilization of the sponsored research for policy audiences, demonstrating consideration of appropriate distribution channels to reach intended audiences at various levels of policy development, decision-making, and administration.

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### Approach, Research Partnerships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maximum Points: 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> The Project Team includes members from a state, territory, or tribal CCDF Lead Agency, and members of an entity with demonstrated research capacity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> The applicant clearly identifies the participating Project Team members and provides adequate evidence of all proposed partners’ willingness to participate in the project. This should include a description of all subcontracts or other formal relationships, formal letters of intent, and data sharing agreements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> The applicant describes the stage of the partnership and explains how the partnership’s stage affects the type of work proposed, each partners’ role, and the future of the partnership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong> The applicant demonstrates that all partners worked together to develop the application and the proposed research project. Specifically, the application includes adequate detail about each partner’s contribution to the development of the partnership and the application materials, including the proposed research questions and methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.</strong> The applicant provides evidence that all partners have the ability to collaborate effectively to complete the proposed activities. This includes adequate information on the partnership’s plans for future decision-making throughout the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.</strong> The applicant demonstrates how the proposed project will improve the CCDF Lead Agency’s capacity to participate in and use research.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Approach, Management Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maximum Points: 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> The applicant presents a sound and reasonable management plan that will ensure all members of the project will operate as a cohesive team to efficiently complete the proposed work within budget and with a high degree of quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> The applicant includes a detailed and reasonable project timeline with feasible target completion dates for milestones, major activities, and products. The timeline demonstrates that the proposed project will be completed on time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> The applicant outlines a detailed and feasible management structure and procedures that</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
will be used to keep the project on track. This includes clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and functional relationships among all members of the project team and any consultants, advisors, steering or management committees, technical workgroups, and/or coordinating bodies.

4. The applicant describes clear and practical plans for communicating and consulting among team members, consultants, advisors, and key stakeholders.

5. The applicant describes an appropriate strategy to share and house the data among the members of the partnership.

6. The applicant includes adequate discussion of potential problems or challenges to accomplishing the project’s objectives, including factors that may affect the quality of the research or its outcomes, may undermine the ability of partners to collaborate effectively, and may hinder the sharing, review, and dissemination of information. The applicant describes a reasonable plan for how partners will make decisions to address problems and challenges.

Approach, Organizational Capacity

1. The applicant clearly demonstrates that each partner has the capacity and resources to successfully carry out the project on time, within budget, and to a high standard of quality, including compliance with the terms and conditions of a federal grant and oversight of federal funds.

2. The applicant demonstrates that partners have the combined facilities and organizational experience to successfully carry out all functions, roles, and tasks of the proposed project.

3. The applicant demonstrates that partners can effectively and efficiently administer a project of the proposed size, complexity, and scope.

Approach, Staff Roles and Qualifications

1. The applicant clearly demonstrates that the project team has the experience and expertise to carry out the proposed project activities, including (but not limited to): the management of federal funds as well as the research design, sampling, field work, data processing, statistical analysis, collaboration with partners and with other grantees in the consortium, and reporting and dissemination.

2. The applicant demonstrates that the composition of staff, their level of commitment, and the period of time they will be employed are sufficient to complete all components of the proposed project on time, within budget, and with a high degree of quality.

3. If key positions are currently vacant, the applicant includes a detailed description of the position, necessary qualifications, and plan for how individuals will be selected. The applicant includes letters of intent from any individuals that have been selected to fill positions, but have not yet been hired.

4. The proposed project team has extensive knowledge of relevant CCDF policies.

5. The applicant identifies any proposed consultants or advisors and sufficiently documents their expertise and proposed roles and responsibilities on the project.

6. The authors of the proposal are identified and will have key roles in managing and/or
executing the proposed activities.

Budget and Budget Justification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maximum Points: 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The applicant includes a detailed budget with the itemized expenses for the project and a detailed narrative budget justification that clearly explains all of the calculations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The proposed project costs and the requested period of support are fully justified and reasonable to complete the proposed research objectives including, but not limited to, research activities, staff time, management, coordination, and dissemination activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The applicant has budgeted funds to collaborate with the consortium of CCPRP grantees to identify and coordinate common measures and develop research products and resources for the field at large.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The budget and budget justification includes sufficient annual support for key project personnel to travel to and participate in CCEPPRC and the annual grantee meetings in Washington, DC for each year of the grant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 (http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform) and an active registration at SAM (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.

Applications may be funded in whole or in part depending on: (1) the combination of projects that best meet the needs of ACF and the CCDF program such as prioritizing applications that complement or fill gaps in ACF's current research portfolio; (2) the federal funds available; and (3) the geographic diversity of grantees.

Recipients of an award under this FOA will be legally accountable to ACF for performance of the project or program. Recipients will be held solely responsible in the event of non-compliance by a subrecipient. Applicants proposing to use subrecipients to complete the proposed project will be reviewed by ACF for any management or financial problems. ACF may elect to not allow a recipient to subaward if it displays an inability to properly monitor and management subrecipients.

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

As required by 2 CFR Part 200, 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), [www.fapiis.gov/](http://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 in the objective review process, but not selected for award, may receive funding if additional funds become available or may compete for funding during the next review cycle (if one occurs in the next fiscal year). Applications designated as “approved but unfunded” typically cannot be kept in an active status for more than 12 months. 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.

Grantees may translate the Federal award and other documents into another language. In the event of inconsistency between any terms and conditions of the Federal award and any translation into another language, the English language meaning will control. Where a significant portion of the grantee’s employees who are working on the Federal award are not fluent in English, the grantee must provide the Federal award in English and in the language(s) with which employees are more familiar.

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

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to 45 CFR Part 75 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for HHS Awards. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is available at [www.ecfr.gov](http://www.ecfr.gov). Unless otherwise noted in this section, administrative and national policy requirements that are applicable to discretionary grants are available at: [www.acf.hhs.gov/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements).

**HHS Grants Policy Statement**

The HHS Grants Policy Statement (HHS GPS) is the Department of Health and Human Services' single policy guide for discretionary grants and cooperative agreements. ACF grant awards are subject to the requirements of the HHS GPS, which covers basic grants processes, standard terms and conditions, and points of contact, as well as important agency-specific requirements. The general terms and conditions in the HHS GPS will apply as indicated unless
there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary that are specified in the Notice of Award (NOA). The HHS GPS is available at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-1.

An application funded with the release of federal funds through a grant award does not constitute, or imply, compliance with federal regulations. Funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with all applicable federal regulations.

**VI.3. Reporting**

Performance Progress  Semi-Annually
Reports:

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 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:
Financial Reports:  Semi-Annually

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

**Program Office Contact**
Meryl Barofsky
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation
Division of Child and Family Development
330 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20416
Phone: (887) 350-5913
Fax: (703) 934-3740
Email: CCRP2@icfi.com

**Office of Grants Management Contact**
Timothy Chappelle
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Grants Management
ICF International
Federal Relay Service:
Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) at www.gsa.gov/fedrelay.

VIII. Other Information

Reference Websites

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

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) www.acf.hhs.gov/

ACF Funding Opportunities Forecast www.grants.gov/

ACF Funding Opportunity Announcements ami.grantsolutions.gov/

ACF "How To Apply For A Grant" https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto.


The Office of Child Care www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/

Application Checklist

Applicants may use this checklist as a guide when preparing an application package.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to Submit</th>
<th>Where Found</th>
<th>When to Submit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SF-424 - Application</td>
<td>Referenced in Section IV.2.Required Forms,</td>
<td>Submission is due by the application due date found in the Overview and in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Assistance</td>
<td><strong>Assurances, and Certifications.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This form is available in the FOA's forms package at <a href="http://www.Grants.gov">www.Grants.gov</a> in the Mandatory section.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mandatory Grant Disclosure</th>
<th>Requirement, submission instructions, and mailing addresses are found in the &quot;Mandatory Grant Disclosure&quot; in <strong>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances and Certifications.</strong></th>
<th>If applicable, concurrent submission to the Administration for Children and Families and to the Office of the Inspector General is required.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If applicable, concurrent submission to the Administration for Children and Families and to the Office of the Inspector General is required.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration. | Referenced in **Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)** in the announcement. To obtain a DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier), go to [http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform](http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform). To register at SAM, go to [http://www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov). | A DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier) and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants. Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period. |

| SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs | Referenced in **Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.** These forms are available in the FOA's forms package at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) in the Mandatory section. They are required for applications that include only non-construction activities. | Submission is due by the application due date found in the Overview and in **Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.** |

| SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL) | Referenced in **Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.** This form is available in the FOA's forms package at | Submission is due by the application due date found in the Overview and in **Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.** |
| **Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)** | Referenced in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.*  
This form is available in the FOA's forms package at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). | Submission is due with the application package or prior to the award of a grant. |
| SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities | "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.*  
This form is available in the FOA's forms package at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). | If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application.  
If it not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant. |
| **Letter of Intent** | Referenced in *Section IV.2. Project Description.* | Submission is due by the Letter of Intent due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4.* |
| **Table of Contents** | Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Description.* | Submit with the application by the due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.* |
| **Project Summary/Abstract** | Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Description.*  
The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page. | Submission is due by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.* |
| **The Project Description** | Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Description.* | Submission is due by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.* |
| **The Project Budget and Budget Justification** | Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification.* | Submission is required in addition to submission of SF-424A and / or SF-424C.  
Submission is required with the |
| Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification / IRB Certification / Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule) | Referenced in *Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications*. See [http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html](http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html) for additional information. This form is available in the FOA's forms package at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) | Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the *Overview* and *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. If the information is not available at the time of application, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant. |
| SF-424 Key Contact Form | Referenced in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications*. This form is available in the FOA's forms package at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) | Submission is due with the application by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. |
| Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (IDR) | Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification*. The IDR must be submitted with the application package. | If the IDR is available by the application due date, it must be submitted with the application package. If it is not available by the application due date, listed in the *Overview* and *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*, it may be submitted prior to the award of a grant. |
| Proof of Non-Profit Status | Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Description, Legal Status of Applicant Entity*. Proof of non-profit status should be submitted with the application package by the application due date and time listed in the *Overview* and *Section IV.4.* of the FOA. If it is not available at the time of application submission, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant. |