

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

Strengthening Communities Fund Nonprofit Capacity Building Program

Guidance for Potential Applicants

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Funding Opportunity Number: HHS-2009-ACF-OCS-SI-0091

CFDA Number: 93.711



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children & Families

Call Outline



- Purpose of SCF
- Program Overview
- Eligibility
- Key Program Components
- Funding Restrictions
- Evaluation Criteria
- Administrative/Submission Info

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009



“This is an opportunity not only to deal with the immediate crisis, but also to lay the foundations for long-term growth and prosperity in this country.”

**- President Barack Obama,
at the signing ceremony for the
American Recovery and
Reinvestment Act of 2009,
February 17, 2009**

SCF Purpose:



To build the capacity of nonprofit organizations to address the broad economic recovery issues present in their communities, including helping low-income individuals secure and retain employment, earn higher wages, obtain better-quality jobs, and gain greater access to state and Federal benefits and tax credits, including ARRA benefits.

SCF Overview



There are two separate programs that make up the Strengthening Communities Fund:

- The SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building Program
- The SCF State, Local, and Tribal Government Capacity Building Program

www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/scf/

What is Capacity Building



SCF funds must be used for capacity building. They may not be used for direct services.

- Capacity building is the process of implementing activities critical to the long-term viability of organizations to increase the effectiveness of programmatic activities and organizational operations.
- Capacity building activities are designed to increase an organization's sustainability and effectiveness, enhance its ability to provide social services, and create collaborations to better serve those most in need.

Program Overview



PA Pages 15-16

Nonprofit Capacity Building Program

Est.Total Program Funding:	\$34,000,000
Individual Award Ceiling:	\$1,000,000
Expected # of Awards:	34
Project/Budget Period:	24 months
Funding Instrument Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Non-Federal Match:	Yes

Program Overview



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Required Non-Federal Match

Grantees must provide at least 20% of the total approved cost of the project.

- Can be met by cash or in-kind contributions
- The match is **not** 20 percent of the request. It is 20 percent of the **Total Project Cost**.

Program Overview



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Required Non-Federal Match

Federal Request	20 Percent Cost Share	Total Approved Project Cost
\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$1,250,000
\$500,000	\$125,000	\$625,000
\$200,000	\$50,000	\$250,000

Nonprofit Capacity Building Program

- Governments
- Institutions of higher education
- Nonprofits with or without 501(c)(3) IRS status
- Small businesses and other for-profit organizations

Key Program Components



PA Page 5-7, 9-15

Nonprofit Capacity Building Program

- 1) Training
- 2) Technical Assistance
- 3) Competitive Financial Assistance

Key Program Components



PA Pages 6-7, 9-12

Training refers to group-based adult education and skill building activities (e.g., workshops) provided to nonprofit organizations.

Technical assistance refers to consultation that is specifically customized or tailored to the needs of the authorized entity and particular nonprofit organization.

- 50% of T & TA must be in the form of direct and individualized technical assistance.
- T & TA must be offered at **no cost** to interested faith-based and community organizations.

Key Program Components



PA Pages 12-15

Financial Assistance to Project Partners

- Must be competitive
- At least 55% of Federal amount requested
(Bonus Points to applicants providing 60% or more in competitive financial assistance)
- Applicants for assistance must be nonprofits
- Applicant orgs will be working to address economic recovery issues
- Financial assistance must be for capacity-building activities

Key Program Components



PA Pages 10-11

Critical Areas of Capacity

- 1) Organizational Development
- 2) Program Development
- 3) Collaboration & Community Engagement
- 4) Leadership Development
- 5) Evaluation of Effectiveness

Key Program Components



PA Page 10

Use of Funds – Organizational Development

- Strengthening Board Governance
- Developing Systems: Management, Human Resources, Financial, Information Technology
- Training Job/Benefits Counselors for ARRA Benefits and Other Federal Assistance
- Developing Comprehensive Communications Strategy

Key Program Components



PA Page 11

Use of Funds – Program Development

- Developing Information (e.g., ARRA Benefits, Tax Credits, Social Service Benefits)
- Translating Program Information into Spanish or Other Languages
- Developing Curriculum (e.g., job retraining, new job skills)
- Making Program Improvements

Key Program Components



Allowable

Capacity Building

- Researching and developing new job training programs
- Purchasing program-related equipment and supplies
- Implementing systems for client record keeping or referral sources
- Developing a guide or clearinghouse for benefits and/or tax credits
- Training staff to run a job bank

Unallowable

Direct Services

- Paying staff to train or provide services to clients
- Purchasing and serving food to those in need
- Conducting client assessments or providing referrals to clients
- Counseling individuals about benefits or tax credits
- Paying for training stipends for clients or program participants
- Paying management costs for existing programs

Funding Restrictions



PA Pages 41-42

Not Allowable

- Fundraising
- Reimbursement of pre-award costs
- Construction
- Purchase of real property
- Direct social service provision including provision of medical care
- Inherently religious activity
- Discrimination against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion or religious belief
- The provision of contracts to organizations that provide the grantee with a cost share match

Evaluation Criteria



PA Pages 43-44

Project Summary/Abstract – 3 points

Objectives & Need for Assistance – 10 points

- (a) service area (2 points)
- (b) needs of service area (4 points)
- (c) needs of nonprofits in service area (2 points)
- (d) project objectives (2 points)

Evaluation Criteria



PA Pages 44-47

Approach – 35 points

- (a) training & tech assistance strategy (15 points)
- (b) financial assistance strategy (20 points)

Organizational Profiles – 27 points

- (a) past experience (15 points)
- (b) organizational capability (5 points)
- (c) project management structure and staffing (7 points)

Evaluation Criteria



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Evaluation – 15 points

- (a) evaluation design (5 points)
- (b) pre-assessment strategy (5 points)
- (c) post-assessment strategy (5 points)

Budget & Budget Justification – 10 points

- (a) project budget (8 points)
- (b) last 2 fiscal years' operating budgets (2 points)

Evaluation Criteria



PA Pages 4-5, 27-28, 49-50

BONUS POINTS – 5 points

AmeriCorps*VISTA Bonus Points
(2 points)

Additional Financial Assistance Beyond the
55 Percent Requirement (3 points)

Applicants demonstrating 60 percent or more in financial assistance to project partners will be awarded bonus points.

Important Tips to Avoiding Common Mistakes



- ✓ Read the entire (and correct) program announcement.
 - *Be mindful of cross-references.*
- ✓ Double-check eligibility requirements.
- ✓ Follow the format guidelines (e.g., 25 pages, etc.).
- ✓ Use application checklist to make sure all relevant attachments are included.
- ✓ Set up Grants.gov account in advance.
- ✓ Please try not to send in multiple versions of your application. If you must, ***please make it clear which version you want us to review!!***
- ✓ Do not ask for more than \$1,000,000.
- ✓ Submit your application with enough time to get it to the destination before the deadline.

Administrative/Submission Information



The deadline for submission is:

July 7, 2009

No later than 4:30 p.m. (Eastern Time)

Applications ***received*** after this date and time will be classified as late and will not be considered for funding.

Administrative/Submission Information



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There are 2 ways to submit your application:

1. By mailing paper copies (1 original and 2 copies) to the address in the program announcement or
2. By submitting an electronic version through Grants.gov.

PLEASE NOTE – This registration process for Grants.gov can take up to 5 days. Do not wait until the last minute.



Administrative/Submission Information



1) www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/scf/

Click on Nonprofit Capacity Building Program

2) Contact SCF

Phone: 800-281-9519

Email: ocs@lcn.net