



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Child Support Enforcement

Advancing Equity in Child Support

HHS-2023-ACF-OCSE-FD-0022

Application Due Date: 06/30/2023

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Funding Opportunity Title:

Advancing Equity in Child Support

Announcement Type:

Initial

Funding Opportunity Number:

HHS-2023-ACF-OCSE-FD-0022

Primary CFDA Number:

93.564

Due Date for Applications:

06/30/2023

Executive Summary**Notice:**

- **Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the entire notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) 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/how-apply-grant>.**

The Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) invites eligible candidates to submit competitive applications to implement the Advancing Equity in Child Support demonstration. The recipient will examine child support policies and services to:

- Assess disproportional access to child support services.
- Examine child support order alignment with parents' ability to pay.
- Improve child support services to customers.
- Share promising practices and recommendations to promote equitable access to child support services.

The recipient will also gather and analyze data to identify ways to mitigate inequities within the child support program. Specifically, the recipient will lead the following five project activities:

- Literature Review and Environmental Scan
- Equity Assessment and Use of Data
- Recommendations and Model Resources
- National Technical Assistance and Dissemination
- Sustainability Planning

The recipient is expected to collaborate with individuals with lived experience in the child support program and individuals who have not accessed child support services due to concerns about being treated fairly. The recipient will also be expected to engage with community, state, tribal, territorial, and national equity experts, other state and tribal child support agencies, and related entities. These entities may include public assistance agencies, courts, reentry organizations, employment programs, domestic violence organizations, fatherhood

organizations, military and veterans' associations, and others.

The recipient must ensure the work plans and deliverables follow a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all. This includes Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

This award will have a 24-month project period with one budget period. The total budget for the 24-month project period is \$3,949,911.

I. Program Description

Statutory Authority

Title IV, part D (42 U.S.C. 651 et. seq.) and section 1115 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1315)

Description

Background

On January 20, 2021, President Biden released an [Executive Order On Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government](#) with the goal of providing equitable opportunities for all citizens, including “people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality.” He also noted that advancing equity requires a systematic approach and urged government agencies to “recognize and work to redress inequities in their policies and programs that serve as barriers to equal opportunity.” To strengthen the federal government’s ability to address the barriers that underserved communities continue to face, on February 16, 2023, President Biden signed a new Executive Order, [Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government](#). This second Executive Order reaffirms the Administration’s commitment to deliver equity and build an America in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential.

ACF's [strategic plan](#), released in January 2022, supports the President's commitment to equity. The plan highlights five strategic goals that together advance the agency’s mission to promote the economic and social well-being of children, youth, families, individuals, and communities by providing federal leadership, partnership, and resources for the compassionate and effective delivery of human services. The first goal directs ACF programs to “advance equity by reducing structural barriers including racism and other forms of discrimination that prevent economic and social well-being.” In line with the Executive Order and ACF’s strategic plan, ACF also released [ACF-IM-IOAS-22-01](#), an Information Memorandum (IM) that underscores its commitment to advancing equity for all. The IM encourages recipients to examine ways their programs and policies may create barriers for children and families of color and includes [equity definitions](#), [equity references](#), and [selected resources in support of racial equity](#). These documents may be useful references for applicants.^[1]

OCSE is committed to promoting equity in the national child support program's policies and

practices. To do so, it must identify and eliminate barriers that prevent families from receiving the child support services they need to provide for their children. Child support is an important source of income that many parents need to meet their child's basic needs.

A 2017 U.S. Census study found that fewer Black custodial parents (40.1 percent) had child support orders or agreements than non-Hispanic White custodial parents (56.5 percent). Of those with orders, 35 percent of Black custodial parents did not receive child support payments compared to 27.9 percent of non-Hispanic White custodial parents.[\[2\]](#)

OCSE has funded multiple research demonstrations (National Child Support Noncustodial Parent Employment Demonstration, Procedural Justice-Informed Alternatives to Contempt, Families Forward Demonstration, etc.) that consistently found low-income fathers of color who owe child support experience barriers to finding and maintaining employment that would allow them to make consistent child support payments.

Some state child support agencies have also found certain groups of people have disproportionately worse experiences within the child support program. For example, one state conducted an internal assessment and found Black and American Indian parents were more likely to have their driver's license suspended for nonpayment of child support than White parents (29 and 42 percent compared to 18 percent) and less likely to have it reinstated under a payment agreement. Driver's license suspension creates an additional barrier to finding employment or getting to work, which impacts the ability to pay child support.

Individual states are also making progress in assessing inequities and some have created equity analysis tools or equity action plans to examine how their own policies and practices might impact child support service delivery. OCSE's Procedural Justice-Informed Alternatives to Contempt demonstration is analyzing potential bias from child support agencies in the use of license suspension and contempt referrals among noncustodial parents. These findings will inform future research on equity in the child support program.

This NOFO builds on the research described above and represents a significant investment in researching and promoting equity in child support services and policies. The NOFO also supports OCSE's role in amplifying and disseminating model practices for promoting equity in the child support program.

Purpose and Goals

For the purposes of this award, "equity" is adapted from the definition in the President's January 2021 Executive Order as "the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality."

This NOFO responds directly to the President's Executive Order to "...assess whether, and to

what extent, its programs and policies perpetuate systemic barriers to opportunities and benefits for people of color and other underserved groups.” OCSE will award funding to a single state or tribal child support agency that will examine child support policies and services to:

- Assess and address the disproportional access to child support services and policies.
- Examine child support order alignment with parents’ ability to pay.
- Improve child support services to customers.
- Share promising practices and recommendations to promote equitable access to child support services.

The recipient may partner with a third-party contractor(s) in support of project goals. The recipient must partner with 5 to 8 other state or tribal programs to complete equity assessments for them.

Program Design

The recipient of Advancing Equity in Child Support demonstration funds will incorporate a comprehensive, evidence-informed understanding of the role of equity in the delivery of child support policies and services. The recipient will implement the requirements described in this funding opportunity. OCSE will work with the recipient throughout the 2-year demonstration to refine the initial project plan and continuously adjust the project model to incorporate newly identified evidence and promising practices in equity assessments.

The recipient will complete the following five activities as part of this award:

- **Literature Review and Environmental Scan.** The recipient must conduct a literature review and environmental scan of the existing practices of states and tribal child support agencies that explicitly promote equity in their programs. The recipient must review and assess existing equity analysis tools and resources in use by state and tribal child support programs. Based on this review, the recipient will determine the most promising methods for assessing, addressing, and mitigating inequities in child support policies and services.
- **Equity Assessment and Use of Data.** The recipient must conduct an equity assessment of existing state and tribal child support policies and services. The equity assessment will examine the program and how it serves families (noncustodial parents, custodial parents, and children), particularly subgroups including, but not limited, to ethnic and racial minorities and other groups noted above, those experiencing domestic violence, former incarceration, etc. The recipient must:
 - Analyze barriers families experience related to child support services and current establishment, enforcement, modification, and case closure policies and processes to determine if they disproportionately affect different racial and ethnic groups and other groups noted above. The analysis must include parents currently using child support services and those eligible for but not using child support services.
 - Gather data from a sample of jurisdictions as part of the assessment.
 - Describe how they will use administrative data, external data sources, and qualitative data (including input from people with lived experience) in developing the model for the equity assessment.
 - Describe data considerations and limitations to gathering data and plans to mitigate those limitations.

- **Recommendations and Model Resources.** The recipient must provide recommendations and model resources to state and tribal child support agencies for promoting equity in current and future child support programs, policies, services, and practices. The resources must help programs identify systemic barriers to opportunities and benefits for people of color and other underserved populations. The resources will also help programs implement efforts to address such barriers. The recipient must develop resources in consultation with state and tribal child support agencies and will include recommendations for approaches to conducting equity assessments (including tools and methods) and toolkits for use by agencies. They must engage key partners, including individuals with lived experience throughout the entire development process.
- **Technical Assistance and Dissemination.** The recipient must provide technical assistance to state and tribal child support programs that request help with conducting equity assessments and addressing identified inequities. OCSE anticipates the bulk of technical assistance will occur in the last 6 to 9 months of the project and that the recipient will help at least 5 to 8 state or tribal child support programs complete equity assessments. At least one must be a tribal program. The recipient must:
 - Lead dissemination of recommended tools and resources for promoting equity.
 - Create and post resources on a website.
 - Promote website and findings virtually.
 - Submit presentation proposals to at least three national child support conferences in the final year of the award.
- **Sustainability Planning.** The recipient must create a plan for project sustainability after the period of federal funding ends. The recipient must continue to disseminate assessment findings developed during the award period.

Project Management

OCSE expects the recipient to have regular communication with OCSE to discuss program progress, challenges, and efforts to resolve those challenges as quickly and effectively as possible.

The recipient must provide at least one key, experienced, employee to serve as a Project Director to successfully manage and oversee the requirements laid out in *Section I. Program Description, Program Design*. The Project Director will work the appropriate number of hours needed for project oversight. OCSE anticipates this position will require 20 to 40 hours per week.

The Project Director will:

- Ensure required federal reports are submitted in a timely manner.
- Manage relationships and responsibilities of contracted partners.
- Monitor expenditures under the award.
- Review major deliverables in consultation with OCSE and ensure that OCSE comments are appropriately addressed.
- Submit all final deliverables listed below by the project end date:
 - Literature review
 - Brief that summarizes the process for conducting the equity assessments and findings and recommendations

- Technical assistance documents created as part of the project
- Dissemination plan that includes allocation of sufficient staff time and budget for dissemination purposes

The approach, work plan, and deliverables must follow a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all. This includes Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

OCSE expects the recipient to lead the development, implementation, and management of the equity assessment. However, OCSE also anticipates that the recipient will need to contract with third-party partners such as independent or university researchers who have experience conducting equity assessments in partnership with people with lived experience.

Partnerships

A foundational component of the Advancing Equity in Child Support demonstration is close collaboration and partnership with community, state, tribal, territorial, and national equity experts and engagement of individuals with lived experience in the child support program. The recipient will ensure diverse perspectives are considered in all activities under the award.

The recipient or their funded partners must demonstrate capacity to recruit and work with community and public agency partners (including people with lived experience) that represent multiple disciplines. The ideal recipient will have experience working with researchers, especially those who have expertise in community-engaged research, and those who work in diverse communities on issues related to inequities and disparities among historically marginalized populations.

Partner programs are not expected to run a demonstration or institute any new procedures or programs to participate. They will share data and procedures and allow observations. In return, they will receive an equity assessment/analysis from the grant recipient.

Anticipated 24-Month Timeline

Months 1-3: project planning and start-up (hire staff, establish contracts, etc.)

Months 4-15: literature review and environmental scan; equity assessment and use of data; recommendations and model resources

Months 16-24: technical assistance and dissemination

This is a suggested timeline. OCSE expects there will be overlap in project activities.

[1] For more information on ACF's position on equity, see <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/equity>.

[2] Grall, Timothy, "Custodial Mothers and Fathers and Their Child Support: 2017," *Current Population Reports*, P60-269, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2020.

Subawards

Recipients under this grant program may opt to transfer a portion of substantive programmatic

work to other organizations through subaward(s). The prime recipient must maintain a substantive role in the project. ACF defines a substantive role as conducting activities and/or providing services funded under the award that are necessary and integral to the completion of the project. Subrecipient monitoring activities alone, as specified in 45 CFR § 75.352, do not constitute a substantive role. Furthermore, ACF does not fund awards where the role of the applicant is primarily to serve as a conduit for passing funds to other organizations unless that arrangement is authorized by statute.

Subrecipient(s) must meet the eligibility requirements identified in the NOFO, *Section III.1. Eligible Applicants*. Additionally, all subrecipient(s) must obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number assigned by the System for Award Management (SAM), if they do not already have one. Prime recipients are required to check SAM to verify that the subrecipient(s) is/are not debarred, suspended, or ineligible.

Please reference the [Award Term and Condition on Subawards](#) on the [ACF Administrative and National Policy Requirements](#) website for further requirements involving subawards.

II. Federal Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:

CA (Cooperative Agreement)

Estimated Total Funding:

\$3,949,911

Expected Number of Awards:

1

Award Ceiling:

\$3,949,911

Per Project Period

Award Floor:

\$3,949,911

Per Project Period

Average Projected Award Amount:

\$3,949,911

Per Project Period

Anticipated Project Start Date:

09/30/2023

Length of Project Periods:

Other

Additional Information on Project Periods and Explanation of 'Other'

24-month budget and project period.

Additional Information on Awards:

Awards made under this funding opportunity 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 funding under this funding opportunity. 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.** For more information on these requirements, see *Section III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching*.

The total amount available for award represents both section 1115 funds and corresponding child support federal financial participation funding (FFP). OCSE now awards these together, and applicants should request a budget representing both. Guidance on this can be found in [IM-20-06](#). For this funding announcement, the maximum project budget is \$3,949,911. Applicants do not need to break out the section 1115 and FFP funding request. Instead, they should request a total award budget. The SF-424A and budget documents submitted with the application should be for the 24-month budget and project period. Round all budget figures to the nearest dollar amount. Submit budget requests, including object class categories in whole numbers.

Notice About Fully Funded Project Period: This award has a fully funded, 24-month project period. This means that the recipient will receive the full award amount in a Payment Management System (PMS) account and will have 2 years to spend those funds. Recipients will not need to apply for non-competing continuation or carryover funding.

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

This award will be a cooperative agreement. A cooperative agreement is an award instrument used when substantial involvement is anticipated between the awarding office and the recipient during performance of the project. OCSE will collaborate substantially with the recipient throughout the project period in the following activities:

- Providing consultation to the recipient about the development and implementation of program design, approaches to address problems that arise, and identification of areas needing technical assistance
- Providing timely review, comments, and decisions on inquiries and documents submitted by recipients
- Holding teleconferences and/or webinars regularly with the recipient to promote coordination; information sharing; and access to resources, training, and learning opportunities
- Working together to address issues or problems identified by the recipient, ACF, or others about the program's ability to carry out the full range of activities included in the approved application in the most efficient and effective manner

OCSE will provide consultation and will review and approve the work plan for the project. As OCSE determines appropriate, it will request changes to the project plan in consultation with the recipient. OCSE will also approve any revisions to the work plan or structure of the project during the budget/project period. Additionally, OCSE will propose and approve changes to project scope and activities. OCSE will approve final drafts of documents, articles, publications, and research reports developed or distributed under this cooperative agreement. OCSE will be involved in the development of long-term strategies for implementing the project and will participate in major project activities, such as conferences, topical meetings, or major project meetings.

OCSE will organize periodic consultations, meetings, briefings, teleconferences, webinars, and other forums to review current and planned activities, share information, and promote technical assistance and national dissemination. The recipient must plan travel expenses for at least one representative from its organization to participate in at least one OCSE-organized meeting or national conference.

The recipient will provide a detailed project implementation plan, work plan, trainings/events schedule, evaluation schedule, and plan for reporting outcomes. OCSE will keep the recipient informed about performance expectations and OCSE's policies, priorities, and vision for assessing inequities in child support policies, practices, and services. The respective responsibilities of OCSE and the recipient will be identified and incorporated into the terms and conditions of the award and the cooperative agreement during pre-award negotiations. OCSE anticipates the cooperative agreement will not change the project requirements for the recipient under this opportunity.

OCSE does not anticipate being substantially involved in the recipient's creation of data collection activities such as those related to needs assessments, evaluations, and requests for feedback. The recipient is not expected to submit such data collection instruments for OCSE approval. OCSE will not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information covered by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA), unless it displays a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. In cases where OCSE is directly involved in creating data collection activities under this NOFO, data collection will be conducted consistent with the PRA of 1995, (44 U.S.C. 3501-3521) and display a valid OMB control number.

III. Eligibility Information

III.1. Eligible Applicants

State Title IV-D agencies, or the umbrella agency, and tribal Title IV-D agencies operating comprehensive programs.

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

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 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 a recipient or subrecipient and are accepted by ACF. Non-federal cost sharing will be included in the approved project budget so that the recipient 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 funding under this funding opportunity.

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 funding under this funding opportunity. 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.

Required Electronic Application Submission

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at 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 funding under this funding opportunity.

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](#)."

Missing the Application Deadline (Late Applications)

The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 pm ET on the due date listed in the Overview and in Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times. Electronic applications submitted to Grants.gov after 11:59 pm ET on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from Grants.gov, will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity. That is, applications submitted to Grants.gov, on or after 12:00 am ET on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity.

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

Each time an application is submitted via 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 pm ET on the due date listed in the Overview and in Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times. Paper applications received after 4:30 pm ET on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not received approval of an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity.**

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 NOFO.

IV. Application and Submission Information

IV.1. Address to Request Application Package

Melody
Morales

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement
330 C Street SW.
Washington
DC
20201
202-401-4557
melody.morales@acf.hhs.gov

Application Packages

Electronic Application Submission:

The electronic application submission package is available in the NOFO's listing at Grants.gov.

Applications in Paper Format:

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications are available in the "Select Grant Opportunity Package" available in the NOFO's Grants.gov Synopsis under the Package tab at 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 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 Grants.gov is required to upload only two electronic files, excluding SFs and Office of Management and Budget (OMB)-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed. SFs and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

FOR ALL APPLICATIONS:

Authorized Organization 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 extra pages removed, and those 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, 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 NOFO Formatting, Font, and Page Limitation Requirements

Applications that fail to adhere to ACF's NOFO 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 and 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 NOFO 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. Other, 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 SFs and OMB-approved forms. The original copy must have original signatures.

Signatures

Applicants submitting electronic applications must follow the registration and application submission instructions provided at [Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov).

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

Accepted Application Format

With the exception of the required 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:

With the exception of SFs and OMB-approved forms, the application submission is limited to 35 pages. The application must be uploaded in the following two files:

File One (Project Description).

- Project Summary/Abstract

- Table of Contents
- Project Narrative (Approach, Expected Outcomes, Timeline and Milestones)
- Budget and Budget Justification

File Two (Appendices)

- Resumes and Curricula Vitae
- Third-Party Agreements and/or Other Supporting Material
- Optional Governing Body Documentation (if necessary)

Do not submit required SFs and OMB-approved forms in these files.

Optional Governing Body Documentation

In some states and tribes, the umbrella state or tribal authority overseeing the child support program must give approval to the applicant organization to receive an award from ACF/OCSE. If a child support program applicant is from an umbrella state or tribal organization where there is an approval requirement to receive an award, then the applicant must submit documentation to ACF/OCSE that such approval has been granted. **ACF/OCSE only requires a copy of such approval if the umbrella state or tribal authority requires such approval for the applicant to receive the funds.**

Documentation of this approval is not required to be submitted at the time of the application. If the applicant cannot obtain the approval or documentation in time to submit the application, then the application may be submitted and reviewed by ACF/OCSE. There is no penalty in the application review process for applicants unable to receive or submit documentation of approval with the application. **However, if the application is selected for funding, then documentation of approval will be required for ACF to issue the award.** Documents not submitted by the time of the award may result in notice of award restriction remarks, restricting funds from drawdown and availability of funds in the PMS.

All documentation submitted, whether with the application or as a post-application submission, must be signed and dated by an official of the governing body. In signing the application, the governing body agrees that the applicant organization will assume the obligation imposed by applicable federal statutes, regulations, and other terms and conditions of the award, including any assurances, if awarded. Written board resolutions, meeting minutes from the governing body, and/or letters from the authorizing official reflecting approval are acceptable documentation, depending on what is appropriate for the applicant's governance structure.

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically unless they have 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 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 Acrobat Reader software 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 Acrobat Reader they are using is compatible with Grants.gov. To verify Adobe software compatibility please go to Grants.gov and click on "Applicants" at the top bar menu and select "Adobe Software Compatibility", which is listed under "Applicant Resources." The Adobe verification process allows applicants to test their version of the software by opening a test Workspace PDF form. 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 form.

The Adobe Software Compatibility page located on Grants.gov also provides guidance for applicants on filling out a Workspace PDF form. In addition, it addresses local network and/or computer security settings and the impact this has on use of Adobe software.

Required SFs and OMB-approved Forms

SFs and OMB-approved forms 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 SFs, OMB-approved forms, and required assurances and certifications.

Naming Application Submission Files

Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by Grants.gov. Limit file names to 50 characters (characters and spaces). Please also see

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/submitting-utf-8-special-characters.html>.

Use only file formats supported by ACF

Applicants must 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 PDFs 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)
- 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 for 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 NOFO, or multiple applications under separate NOFOs, each application submission must be packaged separately. The package(s) must be clearly labeled with the NOFO title and Funding Opportunity Number.

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

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 an award under this funding opportunity must submit the listed SFs, assurances, and certifications with the application. All required SFs, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package posted for this NOFO at Grants.gov.

| Forms/Assurances/Certifications | Submission Requirement | Notes/Description |
|--|---|---|
| SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance | Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date. | Required for all applications. |
| Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM) registration. | Required of all applicants. Applicants must have a UEI and maintain an active SAM registration throughout the application and project award period. Obtain a UEI and SAM registration at: http://www.sam.gov . | See <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> for more information. |
| SF-424 Key Contact Form | Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date. | Required for all applications. |
| Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form) | Submission required of all applicants | Submission of the certification is required for all applicants. |

| Forms/Assurances/Certifications | Submission Requirement | Notes/Description |
|---|--|--|
| | with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant. | |
| SF-424A - Budget Information - Non- Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non- Construction Programs | <p>Submission is required for all applicants when applying for a non-construction project. SFs must be used. Forms must be submitted by the application due date.</p> <p>By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.</p> | Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project. |
| SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL) | Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date. | Required for all applications. In the SF-P/PSL, applicants must cite their primary location and up to 29 additional performance sites. |
| SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities | 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 | 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 |

| Forms/Assurances/Certifications | Submission Requirement | Notes/Description |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| | submitted prior to the award of a grant. | member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. |

Additional Required Assurances and Certifications

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:

The Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Grants Management, ATTN: Grants Management Specialist, 330 C Street, SW., Switzer Building, Corridor 3200, Washington, DC 20201

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: grantdisclosures@oig.hhs.gov

The Project Description

The Project Description Overview

General Expectations and Instructions

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

The Project Description must be clear, concise, and complete. ACF is particularly interested in Project Descriptions that convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project Descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length.

Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting documents designated as required must be included in the Appendix of the application.

Table of Contents

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

Project Summary

Provide a summary of the application project description. It must be clear, accurate, concise, and without cross-references to other parts of the application. The summary must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the Project Summary:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax, Cell)
- Email Address
- Website Address, if applicable

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

Need for Assistance

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance, including the nature and scope of the problem, must be demonstrated. Supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned parties, may be included in the Appendix. Any relevant data based on planning studies or needs assessments should be included or referred to in the endnotes or footnotes.

Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as available.

Objectives

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

Expected Outcomes

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

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.

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

The application must include the following:

- A detailed description of the proposed project, including specific goals, objectives, how the recipient will complete all five required activities, and timelines. Applicants must discuss in detail how they will approach each of the required project activities outlined in *Section I. Program Description* and present any limitations they foresee.
- Evidence demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of child support business processes and services and an understanding of why equity matters in child support.
- A detailed plan for collecting administrative, qualitative, and external data as part of establishing baseline information, as well as a plan for mitigating limitations to gathering such data.
- A detailed plan for meaningful, respectful engagement and integration of a diverse group of individuals with lived experience in child support. This experience should be relevant for guiding activities to effectively improve service delivery.
- A detailed project management plan that adequately reflects the complex nature of the project requirements, demonstrates an effective communication plan with key partners, and provides evidence that the approach is feasible to implement in the required timelines.
- A detailed description of the most effective and feasible approach to project sustainability and alternative supports needed to maintain the program after the grant ends.

Project Timeline and Milestones

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections (for the entire project period) of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function or activity, in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

Organizational Capacity

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

- Resumes.
- Curricula Vitae (CV).
- 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 funding opportunity.
- Evidence that each participating organization, including partners, contractors and/or subrecipients, possess the organizational capability to fulfill their role(s) and function(s) effectively.
- Job descriptions for each vacant key position.

The application must include the following:

- A brief description of the applicant's current equity assessment efforts (if any) to date.
- Evidence that the applicant and/or proposed partners has/have experience and capacity assessing inequities in child support services and policies or a related/relevant field.
- An explanation and evidence of the applicant's experience coordinating and working with representatives from other state, tribal, or federal agencies (e.g., ACF, OCSE, or child support agencies).
- Evidence the applicant has experience and capacity to coordinate, collaborate, support, and manage the engagement of multiple partners, including state and tribal child support agencies, public agencies, university or other research/evaluation providers, community-based organizations, and individuals with lived experience.

Partnerships and Collaboration

The application must include the following:

- A plan for communicating and working collaboratively with OCSE as described in *Section II. Federal Award Information, Description of ACF's Anticipated Substantial Involvement Under the Cooperative Agreement*.
- A list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project, and a description of the nature of their contribution.
- Evidence that the applicant has identified and initiated partnership development with key partners required to implement the scope of work described in this section of the funding opportunity.

If known when submitting the application, the applicant must disclose their intent to enter into subaward arrangements. For each proposed subaward, the applicant must include a description of the work the subrecipient(s) will perform.

Program Performance Evaluation Plan

Applicants must describe a plan for the program performance evaluation that will contribute to continuous quality improvement. The program performance evaluation must monitor ongoing activities and the progress towards the goals and objectives of the project. Include descriptions of the inputs (e.g., organizational profile, collaborative partners, key staff, budget, and other resources), key activities, and expected outcomes of the funded activities. The plan must explain how the inputs, activities, and outcomes will be measured; how the resulting information will be used to inform improvement of funded activities; and any processes that support the overall data quality of the performance outcomes.

Applicants must describe the organizational systems and processes that will effectively track performance outcomes, including a description of how the organization will collect and manage data (e.g., assign skilled staff, data management software, data integrity, etc.) in a way that allows for accurate and timely reporting of performance outcomes. Applicants must describe any potential obstacles for implementing the program performance evaluation and how those obstacles will be addressed. Applicants must include a timeline for how information from the quality improvement evaluation will be reviewed and applied to the ongoing project.

Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information

Provide a description of how protected personally identifiable information and other

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

Third-Party Agreements

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

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

Letters of Support

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

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

Project budget calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If cost sharing or matching 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 Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2022 and Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, (Division H, Title II, Sec. 202), limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this funding opportunity may not be used to pay the salary of an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. For the Executive Level II salary, please see "Executive & Senior Level Employee Pay Tables" under <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/>. The salary limitation reflects an individual's base salary exclusive of fringe benefits, indirect costs 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 SF-424A and/or the SF-424C, as applicable, for the entire project period that is being fully funded (the budget period and the project period are the same).

Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for the full project period. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

For applicants proposing to use subaward(s), if the total amount budgeted for subawards exceeds 50 percent of total direct costs for the budget period, the applicant must provide a justification for subawarding the portion of the project and must explain how the prime recipient plans to maintain a substantive role in the project. Applicants must explain why the participation of the subrecipient is necessary, and why the applicant cannot achieve the objectives without the subrecipient(s)' participation.

The recipient must plan travel expenses for at least one representative from its organization to participate in at least one OCSE-organized meeting or national conference.

General

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

Personnel

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

Justification: For each position, provide: the name of the individual (if known), their title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application.

Fringe Benefits

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees in addition to regular salaries and wages. For more information on

Fringe Benefits please refer to 45 CFR § 75.431. Do not include the fringe benefits of consultants, contractors, and subrecipients.

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

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act taxes, retirement, taxes, etc.

Travel

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

Justification: For each trip show: the total number of travelers; 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/recipient orientations should be detailed in the budget justification.

Equipment

Description: "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation, shall be included in, or excluded from, acquisition cost in accordance with the organization's regular written accounting practices.) See 45 CFR §75.439 for more information.

Justification: For each type of equipment requested provide: a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use on the project; as well as use and/or disposition of the equipment after the project ends.

Supplies

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

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

Contractual

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

Justification: Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. Applicants must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold stated in 48 CFR § 2.101(b). Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc., available to ACF.

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

Other

Description: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include, but are not limited to: consultant costs, local travel, insurance, food (when allowable), medical and dental costs (non-personnel), professional service costs (including audit charges), space and equipment rentals, printing and publications, computer use, training costs (such as tuition and stipends), staff development costs, and administrative costs. Please note costs must be allowable per 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart E.

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

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 HHS or another cognizant federal agency.

Justification: An applicant must enclose a copy of the current approved rate agreement. If the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed. Choosing to charge a lower rate will not be considered during the objective review or award selection process.

2. Per 45 CFR § 75.414(f) Indirect (F&A) costs, "any non-Federal entity [i.e., applicant] that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, ... may elect to charge a *de minimis* rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. As described in Section 75.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as the 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. This line should be used to indicate required and/or voluntary committed cost sharing or matching, if applicable.

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

For awards that require matching or cost sharing by statute, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources (at or above the statutory requirement) in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching or cost sharing amount (and any voluntary committed amount in excess) may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute, recipients are not expected to provide cost sharing or matching. However, recipients are allowed to voluntarily propose a commitment of non-federal resources. If an applicant decides to voluntarily contribute non-federal resources towards project costs and the costs are accepted by ACF, the non-federal resources will be included in the approved project budget. The applicant will be held accountable

for all proposed non-federal resources as shown in the Notice of Award (NoA). **A recipient's failure to meet the voluntary amount of non-federal resources that was accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that was identified in the approved budget in the NoA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

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

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

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

Paperwork Reduction Act Disclaimer

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the Project Description is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. The Project Description information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, which expires 03/31/2025. 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 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 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.

Organizations must have an active System for Award (SAM) registration which provides a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), and Grants.gov account to apply for grants.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but SAM registration may take several weeks. Therefore, an organization's registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the entities ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Organization applicants can find complete instructions

here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

Register with SAM: All organizations (entities) applying online through Grants.gov must register with SAM. Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. For detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer

to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

Create a Grants.gov Account: The next step in the registration process is to create an account with Grants.gov. Follow the on-screen instructions provided on the registration page.

Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account: A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant). If you work for or consult with multiple organizations, you can have a profile for each organization under one Grants.gov account. In such cases, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all your grant profiles. To add an organizational profile to your Grants.gov account, enter the UEI for the organization in the UEI field. For detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html>

EBiz POC Authorized Profile Roles: After you register with Grants.gov and create an Organization Applicant Profile, the applicant's request for Grants.gov roles and access is sent to the EBiz POC. The EBiz POC is then expected to 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 the organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been assigned the AOR role. For 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 commitments on behalf of the organization as a user with the AOR role; this step is often missed and 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 NOFO, you can create individual instances of a workspace.

For an overview of applying on Grants.gov using Workspaces, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.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 to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.

Adobe Reader: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. 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: These forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and SAM UEI. 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 application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted workspace.

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 funding 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 and understanding background information on the issue.

Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

All applications must be received by 11:59 pm 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 acknowledgment 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 connections should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Therefore, applicants should allow enough time to prepare and submit the application before the package closing date.

Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received submission message in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role.

Issues with Federal Systems

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

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.

Paper Format Application Submission

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

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements* of this funding opportunity for address information for paper format application submissions. Applications submitted in paper format must be received by 4:30 pm 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 funding opportunity.

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

All applicants must have a UEI and an active registration with SAM (<https://www.sam.gov>) prior to applying to a funding opportunity.

All applicants are required to maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If a grant is awarded, the SAM registration must be active throughout the life of the award. Your SAM registration must be renewed every 365 days to keep it active.

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 request a UEI, register for, or renew a registration, at SAM.

Please see the “Help” tab at <https://sam.gov/content/help> for more information and assistance with this process.

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal grant funds from any HHS Agency to:

- Be registered in 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;
- Provide its UEI in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV; and
- Ensure any proposed subrecipient(s) have obtained and provided to the recipient their UEI(s) prior to making any subawards (**Note:** Subrecipients are not required to complete full SAM registration.).

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 Applications

06/30/2023

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 Grants.gov is 11:59 pm ET on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 am ET on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity.

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

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

Instructions for electronic submission via Grants.gov are available at:
www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html.

Applications submitted to 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 pm 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 funding under this funding opportunity.

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

Hand-delivered applications 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 am ET and 4:30 pm 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 funding under this funding opportunity.

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

Emergency Extensions

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

Acknowledgement of Received Application

Acknowledgement from Grants.gov

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to 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 the application's submission. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation check.

Applicants will also receive an email acknowledging that the received application is in the **Grants.gov validation process**, after which a third email is sent with the information that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, the series of checks and validations.

Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged by ACF.

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 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 covered under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health

and Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Executive Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

Applicants should go to the following URL for the official list of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in E.O. 12372 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf>.

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

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

SPOC comments may be submitted directly to ACF at: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, 330 C St. SW, 3rd Floor, Washington, DC 20201.

Entities that meet the eligibility requirements of this funding opportunity are still eligible to apply for a grant even if a State, Territory or Commonwealth, etc., does not have a SPOC or has chosen not to participate in the process. Applicants from non-participating jurisdictions need take no action with regard to E.O. 12372. Applications from Federally-recognized Indian Tribal governments are not subject to E.O. 12372.

IV.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)

Pre-award costs are not allowable.

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

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

IV.7. Other Submission Requirements

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

Submission by Mail

Melody
Morales
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement
330 C Street SW.
Washington
DC
20201

Hand Delivery

Same as Above

Electronic Submission

See *Section IV.2.* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via 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 notice of funding opportunity and relevant statutes and regulations, reviewers must 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 must 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 must evaluate and score an application based on the documents that are presented in the application and must 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. The Project Description* of this funding opportunity.

Program Approach**Maximum Points: 40**

To what degree does the applicant demonstrate the following:

- A detailed description of the proposed project, including project specific goals, objectives, timelines, and how they will accomplish the following five required activities described in *Section I. Program Description, Program Design*:

- Literature Review and Environmental Scan
 - Equity Assessment and Use of Data
 - Recommendations and Model Resources
 - National Technical Assistance and Dissemination
 - Sustainability Planning
- Evidence of having conducted work that addresses issues related to equity and inequities in child support services and policies (or at least evidence demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of child support business processes and services and an understanding of why equity matters in child support).
 - A detailed plan for collecting administrative, qualitative, and external data as part of establishing information and a plan for mitigating limitations to data collection.
 - A detailed plan for meaningful, respectful engagement and integration of a diverse group of individuals with lived experience in child support. This feedback should be relevant for guiding activities to effectively improve service delivery.
 - A detailed project management plan that adequately reflects the complex nature of the project requirements, demonstrates an effective communication plan with key partners, and provides evidence that the approach is feasible to implement in the required timelines.
 - A comprehensive description of the most effective and feasible approach to project sustainability and alternative supports needed to maintain the program after the grant ends.

Organizational Capacity

Maximum Points: 25

To what degree does the applicant demonstrate the following:

- Qualified personnel with relevant experience and resources adequate to plan, manage, and complete the project, including experience examining disproportionate impacts of policies and processes on different racial and ethnic groups.
- Personnel qualified to monitor performance, including reviewing major deliverables.
- Organizational structure and program plan(s) that ensure active engagement and collaboration with OCSE, partners, and subrecipients to reach project goals.
- Awareness and identification of potential challenges to coordinating project activities and realistic strategies for overcoming such challenges.
- Ability to ensure required data collection and submission is appropriately staffed and managed with access to necessary technology.
- Capacity and detailed plan to engage and incorporate the perspectives of people with lived experience.

Partnerships and Collaboration

Maximum Points: 25

To what degree does the applicant demonstrate the following:

- Information about collaboration partners and/or subrecipient(s) including detailed descriptions of roles and responsibilities, experience, and expertise to achieve program objectives and outcomes.

- A clear and reasonable plan to ensure ongoing engagement, coordination, and communication with partners, including individuals with lived experience, with capacity to support program implementation, technical assistance, and dissemination.
- Detailed descriptions of roles and responsibilities for all partners and subrecipients likely to contribute to achieving the program’s objectives and outcomes.
- MOU or Letter of Commitment clearly outlining roles, responsibilities, and commitment for all partners and subrecipients named in the application.
- A clear and adequate plan for monitoring partners and subrecipients that will enable the applicant to track program implementation and progress, identify and address issues and challenges in real-time, and ensure coordination of efforts across partners and subrecipients.

Budget

Maximum Points: 10

To what degree does the applicant demonstrate the following:

- Sound budget justification consisting of a budget narrative and line-item budget detail for each cost category identified on the Budget Information SF-424A, which is consistent with the proposed program objectives.
- Clear rationale, detailed descriptions, and justifications for partner and/or subrecipient costs.
- Realistic plan to monitor and adjust budget expenditures based on input from OCSE and other key partners.
- Adequate funding set aside for at least one representative to attend OCSE-sponsored recipient meetings and further learning opportunities linked to program activities.
- Detailed plan for compensating individuals with lived experience.

V.2. Review and Selection Process

No grant award will be made under this funding opportunity on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant that does not have a UEI and an active SAM registration. See *Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) 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 NOFO.

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 funding

opportunity. 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. If identified in *Section I. Program Description*, 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. In addition, ACF reserves the right to evaluate applications in the larger context of the overall portfolio by considering geographic distribution of federal funds (e.g., ensuring coverage of states, counties, or service areas) in its pre-award decisions.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. In addition, ACF may elect to not allow a prime recipient to subaward if there is any indication that they are unable to properly monitor and manage subrecipients.

Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested.

Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants

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/, before making any award in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold 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 [45 CFR § 75.205\(a\)\(2\) Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants](#).

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 in the current Fiscal Year. 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 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 email or by GrantSolutions, 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.

Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.6. Funding Restrictions*, if applicable. Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk.

Recipients 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 recipient's employees who are working on the Federal award are not fluent in English, the recipient 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 funding opportunity are subject to 45 CFR Part 75 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for HHS Awards currently in effect or implemented during the period of award, other Department regulations and policies in effect at the time of award, and applicable statutory provisions. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is available at 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.

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.

Please review all HHS regulatory provisions for Termination at 2 CFR § 200.340.

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 NoA. The

HHS GPS is available at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/discretionary-post-award-requirements#book_content_0.

VI.3. Reporting

Performance Progress Reports:

Semi-Annually

Reporting Requirements

Recipients under this funding opportunity 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 funding opportunity are as follows:

Financial Reports:

Semi-Annually

VII. HHS Award Agency Contact(s)

Program Office Contact

Melody

Morales

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Administration for Children and Families

Office of Child Support Enforcement

330 C Street SW.

Washington

DC

20201

202-401-4557

melody.morales@acf.hhs.gov

Office of Grants Management Contact

Jill

Saletta

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Administration for Children and Families

Office of Grants Management

330 C Street SW.

Washington

DC

20201

202-401-9357

jill.saletta@acf.hhs.gov

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 Forecasts and NOFOs www.grants.gov/.

ACF "How To Apply For A Grant" <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/how-apply-grant>.

ACF Property Guidance <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/real-property-and-tangible-personal-property>

Grants.gov Accessibility Information [www.grants.gov/ web/grants/accessibility-compliance.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/accessibility-compliance.html).

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

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

Application Checklist

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

| What to Submit | Where Found | When to Submit |
|---|--|--|
| SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at www.Grants.gov in the Mandatory section. | Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> . |
| Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM) registration. | Referenced in <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> in the funding opportunity. To obtain a UEI and SAM registration, go to http://www.sam.gov . | A UEI and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants. Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period. |

| What to Submit | Where Found | When to Submit |
|---|--|---|
| SF-424 Key Contact Form | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i> This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at www.Grants.gov . | Submission is due with the application by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i> |
| Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form) | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i> This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at www.Grants.gov . | Submission is due with the application package or prior to the award of a grant. |
| SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i> These forms are available in the NOFO's forms package at 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 <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i> |
| SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL) | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i> This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at www.Grants.gov . | Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i> |
| SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities | "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i> This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at www.Grants.gov . | If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application. If not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant. |

| What to Submit | Where Found | When to Submit |
|---|---|--|
| The Project Budget and Budget Justification | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification.</i> | <p>Submission is required in addition to submission of SF-424A and / or SF-424C.</p> <p>Submission is required with the application package by the due date in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p> |
| The Project Description | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description.</i> | Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i> |