



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services

Division of State Assistance

Pre-Application Technical Assistance Recorded Call

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) – Training and Technical Assistance Program:

Regional Performance and Innovation Consortium (RPIC)

HHS-2014-ACF-OCS-ET-0823

Friday, June 13, 2014

2:15PM – 3:15PM EST

Conference Line: 1-866-763-0127; PIN: 7233795



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services

Division of State Assistance

Presenters

Josezetta Alexander

Community Services Program Specialist, Division of State Assistance
Office of Community Services

and

Jonna Holden

Grants Management Specialist, Division of State Assistance
Office of Community Services

Presentation Approved By:

Seth Hassett

Director, Division of State Assistance
Office of Community Services



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services

Division of State Assistance

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG)



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services

Division of State Assistance

CSBG Overview

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is a federal block grant program administered by the Office of Community Services (OCS). The CSBG program provides states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, U.S. Territories, and federal and state-recognized Indian tribes and tribal organizations, Community Action Agencies (CAA), migrant and seasonal farmworkers or other organizations designated by the states, funds to alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty in communities.

OCS distributes the CSBG funds to states and local communities, working through a network of over 1,100 entities designated to receive funds, known as CSBG-eligible entities and largely CAAs, for the reduction of poverty, the revitalization of low-income communities, and the empowerment of low-income families and individuals in rural and urban areas to become fully self-sufficient. Funds support a range of services and activities to assist the needs of low-income individuals, including the homeless, migrants, and the elderly.



Community Action Agencies (CAAs)

CAAs are private nonprofit and public organizations. They are governed by a uniquely structured tripartite board of directors, comprised equally of elected public officials, private sector representatives, and low-income representatives. This structure is designed to promote the participation of the entire community in assessing local needs and eliminating the causes and conditions of poverty. CAAs create, coordinate, and deliver an array of comprehensive programs and services to low-income individuals and families.



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services

Division of State Assistance

Statutory Authority

This program is authorized by Sections 674(b)(2)(A) and 678A of the CSBG Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 9903(b)(2)(A) and 9913).



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services

Division of State Assistance

Eligible Applicants

As prescribed by Section 678A(c)(2) of the CSBG Act (42 U.S.C. § 9913(c)(2)), eligible applicants are CSBG-eligible entities or statewide or local organizations or associations with demonstrated expertise in providing training on methods of effectively addressing the needs of low-income families and communities.

The applicant organization must be physically located in the ACF region they propose to serve. A single applicant organization will serve as the grantee within each region. However, eligible applicants in each region may coordinate efforts and apply as consortia. OCS will disqualify any applicants not located in the region that they propose to serve.



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services

Division of State Assistance

How Many Awards Will be Made?

OCS expects to fund 11 cooperative agreements.



How Long Will Grant Projects Last

- The projected project period is two (2) years (24-month Project Period with two 12-month Budget Periods).
- The overall program plan should be for the project period.
- Budget documents should be for annual budgets (two 12-month budget periods).

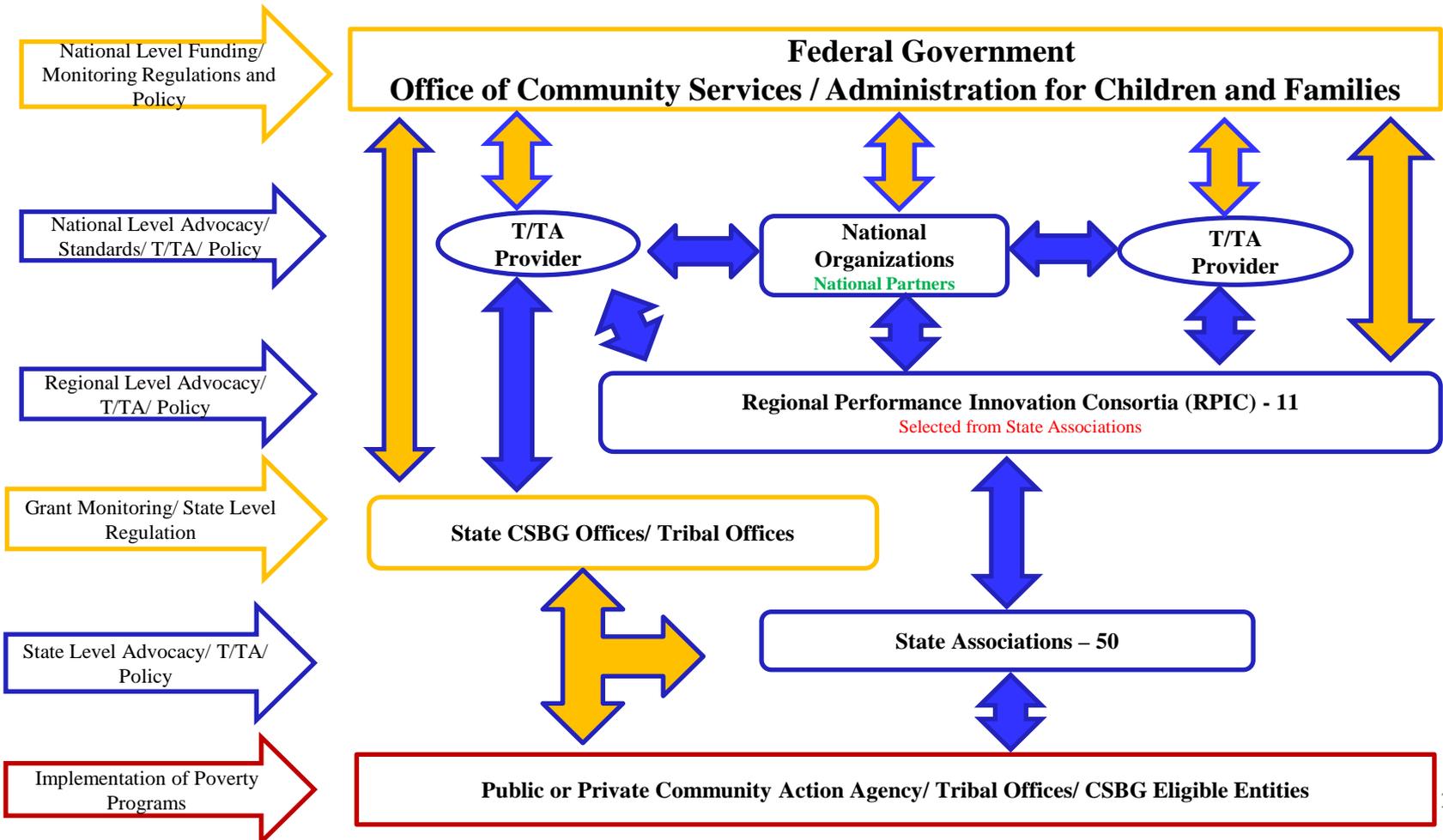


Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services

Division of State Assistance

CSBG Network Flow Chart





The Community Action Network – A Précis of the Players

Agencies (Eligible Entities)

Over 1,000 agencies provide anti-poverty services and advocacy in 99% of American counties. Approximately 80% of these agencies are 501(c)3 non-profits, and 20% are public entities, part of a city or county government. These organizations are strongly community-based, with local board control, addressing poverty in a place-based system. Agencies typically run multiple programs in their mission to address the causes and the effects of poverty.

Regional Performance and Innovation Consortium (RPIC) and State Associations

A key part of the Training and Technical Assistance network, State Associations provide member services, coordination, training and often host conferences. One Association in each region is designated as the lead agency (the RPIC) to coordinate communication and training in their ACF region, including sub-granting funds to the other State Associations.

State CSBG Lead Offices

Housed within state governments, these are the offices with the responsibility to fund, support and monitor local agencies, passing 90% of the CSBG dollars directly to local entities. State Offices typically work closely with both the local agencies and the State Association, and are responsible for the State CSBG Plan, incorporating the agency plans for activities in their communities, as well as the annual reporting of outcomes.



The Community Action Network – A Précis of the Players (Continued)

National T/TA Partners

There are currently four national associations, three of whom provide training and technical assistance (T/TA) to the CSBG Network under OCS cooperative agreements.

The Office of Community Services (ACF/HHS/OCS)

The federal Office of Community Services (OCS) partners with states, communities and agencies to eliminate causes of poverty, increase self-sufficiency of individuals and families and revitalize communities. In addition to the Community Services Block Grant Program, other OCS programs include the Social Services Block Grant Program, the Community Economic Development Program, the Job Opportunities for Low-Income Individuals Program, the Rural Community Development Program, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, and the Assets for Independence Program.



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services

Division of State Assistance

Regional Performance and Innovation Consortium (RPIC)

Funding Announcement Overview



Purpose of the Regional Performance and Innovation Consortium (RPIC)

This funding opportunity announcement (FOA) is intended to fund 11 RPIC to continue serving as geographic focal points and lead the development of a comprehensive and integrated system of training and technical assistance (T/TA) activities among State Associations with the central mission of ensuring that all CSBG-eligible entities are able to meet organizational standards and utilize evidence-based and evidence-informed service approaches to address the identified needs of low-income people in communities.

The purpose of the RPIC will be to continue to institute a regional approach for T/TA coordination and information dissemination, foster efforts that promote the primary mission of the RPIC and work in partnership with OCS and national CSBG T/TA providers focused on organizational standards, learning communities, risk mitigation, performance management efforts, quality improvement, and legal compliance.



Four Focus Goals of the Regional Performance and Innovation Consortium (RPIC)

- **Participating in Implementing and Meeting Organizational Standards** for organizational operations.
- **Participating in a Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) Next Generation Effort** that includes attention to the complete ROMA cycle of performance management.
- **Disseminating Information** in a timely manner to all CSBG-eligible entities.
- **Coordinating T/TA Efforts** with State CSBG Lead Agencies and national technical assistance grantees.



Core Functions of the Regional Performance and Innovation Consortium (RPIC)

- Continuing regionally-based coordination of economies of scale of State Association technical assistance efforts.
- Continuing to ensure, through training, that all CSBG-eligible entities are able to implement and meet organizational standards.
- Continuing to coordinate and support State CSBG Lead Agencies and their State Associations T/TA activities.
- Continuing to support local implementation of State ROMA Next Generation performance management efforts.
- Continuing to ensure that T/TA efforts are coordinated in an efficient and responsive manner utilizing federal T/TA resources, state T/TA support, and resources from local CSBG-eligible entities.
- Continuing to participate in national work groups and learning communities supported by OCS.



Allocation of Funds for the RPIC

Each RPIC must meet the following requirements regarding allocation of funds:

Minimum Distribution to State Associations - The lead grantee for the RPIC will collaborate with State Associations to support technical assistance focused on standards. The lead grantee for the RPIC consortia will be required to provide at least 40 percent of the federal grant funds awarded through this cooperative agreement, through contracts, to other State Associations in the grantee's defined geographic region. Participating State Associations will be required to provide a letter of support from the State CSBG Lead Agency and demonstrate membership, or letters of support, from the majority of CSBG-eligible entities in the state.

Minimum Allocation for Organizational Standards and Performance Management Efforts - Each RPIC will be required to demonstrate that at least 25 percent of the federal grant funds awarded under this cooperative agreement, among the consortia of State Associations, will support the regional input and implementation of organizational standards and ongoing participation in CSBG performance management initiatives.

The two allocation requirements described above are not mutually exclusive. This means that a contract to a State Association can count toward the Minimum Distribution Requirement for State Associations, as well as the Minimum Allocation for Performance Management Efforts. However, the grant budget and program plan must clearly indicate that the minimum requirements will be met in both categories.



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services

Division of State Assistance

Coordination with OCS and National Technical Assistance Grantees

Each RPIC will participate in a CSBG Network-wide approach in partnership with OCS and the established national CSBG T/TA providers.

Each RPIC will collaborate with these national CSBG T/TA providers to disseminate training materials developed under this announcement.



Federal Involvement Under Cooperative Agreement Mechanism

In order to ensure that OCS meets its compliance and T/TA responsibilities for CSBG and continues its partnership with the CSBG Network, grants awarded under this Funding Opportunity Announcement will be funded in the form of Cooperative Agreements. Federal involvement may include the following:

- Identifying State CSBG Lead Agencies, State CAA Associations, and RPIC grantees that require T/TA assistance with ROMA Next Generation efforts and implementing and meeting organizational standards.
- Convening in-person planning and coordination meetings involving national CSBG T/TA providers to share information about proposed T/TA projects, identify areas for potential coordination of efforts, and identify priority areas for T/TA projects.



Federal Involvement Under Cooperative Agreement Mechanism (Continued)

- Participating, as the assigned OCS Program Specialist, in monthly scheduled conference calls to review project timelines, assess progress related to activities of the RPIC, and provide updates on current and planned CSBG activities.
- Participating in webinars with national CSBG T/TA providers and facilitate the exchange of information that helps to identify common quality improvement issues.
- Communicating with the RPIC via Dear Colleague Letters, Information Memorandums, email, conference calls, in-person meetings, conferences, and/or webinars to ensure that information on current and planned CSBG activities are disseminated in a timely fashion.



Project Description

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. It should address the activity for which federal funds are being requested, and should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the program as described in *Section I. Program Description* of the FOA. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. When appropriate, applicants should cite the evaluation criteria that are relevant to specific components of their project description. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services

Division of State Assistance

Outcomes Expected

- Identify the outcomes to be derived from the project. Outcomes should relate to the overall goals of the project.
- Describe in detail the expected achievements for the RPIC.
- Describe likely outcomes for CSBG-eligible entities and State CSBG Lead Agencies that receive proposed T/TA activities.
- Describe likely benefits for the CSBG Network due to the proposed T/TA activities.
- Describe the likely outcomes due to the proposed activities indicated in the four major focus goals.



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services

Division of State Assistance

Approach

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



Program Performance Evaluation Plan

The evaluation plan must:

- Provide a narrative addressing how the conduct of the project and its results will be evaluated.
- Discuss the extent to which the T/TA provided is evidence-based and/or evidence informed.
- Discuss the criteria to be used to evaluate results, and explain the methodology that will be used to determine if the needs identified and discussed are being met and if the project results and benefits are being achieved.



Program Performance Evaluation Plan (Continued)

The evaluation plan must:

- Describe how the proposed plan for performance evaluation will help continue to ensure that immediate T/TA needs are addressed, as well as the ways in which the proposed plan will help OCS address long-term T/TA needs related to quality improvement support in the CSBG Network. The applicant must describe how the proposed plan will evaluate and measure program effectiveness.
- Describe plans for evaluating outcomes from training events.
- Describe plans for evaluating the impact of technical assistance activities on the management, strategic planning, performance assessment, and service delivery practices of organizations that receive technical assistance.



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services

Division of State Assistance

CSBG Regional Performance and Innovation Consortium (RPIC)

Criteria Sections	Points
Objectives	10
Implementation Plan	40
Outcomes Expected	20
Organizational Capacity	15
Budget and Budget Justification	15



Criteria Section 1: Objectives: (10 points)

In this section, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

- The applicant clearly identifies the significant features and components of the RPIC, clearly states the goals (i.e., products of an effective project) and subordinate objectives (i.e., measurable steps for reaching these goals) of the project, and provides the rationale for the project goals. The applicant clearly describes how the goals and objectives of proposed project activities will address the needs of the RPIC. (0 - 10 points).



Criteria Section 2: Implementation Plan : (40 points)

In reviewing this section, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

- (1) The applicant presents a well-conceived overall approach to the project describing how the project will continue to operate in an effective way to achieve the purpose and goals stated in the FOA. (0 - 15 points).
- The project description clearly identifies the region to be served.
 - The project description is clear and complete and includes a timeline with specific and measurable goals and objectives. The project narrative of the application presents a clear statement of work to be undertaken and objectives for the period of the proposed work.
 - The approach presents a description to continue to support local implementation of organizational standards and State ROMA Next Generation performance management efforts within the designated region.
 - The approach includes a strategy for continuing to coordinate training on State ROMA Next Generation performance management efforts and the implementation and meeting of organizational standards.



Criteria Section 2: Implementation Plan: (40 points) (Continued)

(2) The applicant provides a clear and detailed plan for continuing to collaborate and communicate with the State CSBG Lead Agency, State Associations, national CSBG T/TA providers, and OCS staff to discuss the status of implementing and meeting organizational standards and State ROMA Next Generation performance management efforts. (0 - 10 points).

(3) The applicant provides a plan for continuing to assist State Associations and CSBG-eligible entities within the designated region in analyzing community needs assessment data, setting challenging service delivery goals, identifying evidence informed service plans, and documenting outcomes based on the ROMA cycle of performance management. (0 - 10 points).

(4) The applicant provides an approach for continuing to participate in national work groups and learning communities supported by OCS. (0 - 5 points).



Criteria Section 3: Outcomes Expected: (20 points)

In reviewing the outcomes expected, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

- (1) The applicant presents a well-defined logic model that guides the proposed project. The logic model demonstrates strong links between proposed inputs and activities and intended short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. The logic model addresses the purpose and goals stated in the FOA. (0 - 10 points).

- (2) The applicant describes how the project will ensure long-term program and management improvements for the RPIC and CSBG-eligible entities in the interest of enhancing CSBG services and activities throughout the CSBG Network. (0 - 10 points).



Criteria Section 4: Organizational Capacity: (15 points)

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

- (1) The applicant provides strong evidence of sufficient experience and expertise in the program areas of this FOA; in collaboration with partner organizations; in culturally competent service delivery; and in administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of similar projects. (0 - 5 points).
- The applicant provides evidence of expertise in the area of technical assistance related to the purpose and goals stated in the FOA.



Criteria Section 4: Organizational Capacity: (15 points) (Continued)

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

(2) The applicant describes, for example in a resume, the level of knowledge, skills, and abilities of the proposed project director and primary staff members, and documents how their specific qualifications and level of expertise will support the successful implementation of the proposed project activities. (0 - 5 points).

(3) The applicant clearly documents the roles, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors, and/or partners. These are well defined and appropriate to the successful implementation of the proposed project. (0 - 5 points).



Criteria Section 6: Budget and Budget Justification: (15 points)

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

- The applicant includes a budget that details the itemized expenses for the project. The narrative budget justification clearly states how each itemized expense will be utilized. (0 - 10 points).
- The budget must also reflect the minimum distribution to State Associations (40%) and minimum allocation for organizational standards and performance management efforts (25%).
- The costs of the project are reasonable, allocable, program-related and are commensurate with the types and range of activities and services to be conducted as well as the expected goals and objectives. (0 - 5 points).



Two-File Requirement

- **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.



Project Description

The **combined** page number limitation for the Project Description *and* the Appendices must not exceed 150 pages.

The Project Description must include the following items in this order. All items must be labeled, numbered, and organized clearly in the Table of Contents:

- Table of Contents
- Project Summary/Abstract
- Objectives and Need for Assistance
- Outcomes Expected
- Approach
- Organizational Capacity
- Dissemination Plan
- Project Timeline and Milestones
- Program Performance Evaluation Plan
- Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds
- Project Budget and Budget Justification



Project Description

The **combined** page number limitation for the Project Description *and* the Appendices must not exceed 150 pages.

The Appendices must include the following in this order. Please include a Table of Contents for all items provided in the appendices. All items must be labeled, numbered, and organized clearly in the Table of Contents:

- Table of Contents
- Proof of Legal Status of Entity/Proof of Non-Profit Status
- Logic Model
- Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information
- Third-party Agreements
- Letters of Support
- Resumes
- Other Supporting Documentation



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services

Division of State Assistance

Submission

- Applications are due **Tuesday, July 15, 2014**
- Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit in advance of the deadline.
- Electronic submission is required through <http://www.Grants.gov>
- Electronic applications received after 11:59 p.m. Eastern time will be disqualified.



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services
Division of State Assistance

For Questions or Comments

Contact us at

OCSgrants@acf.hhs.gov

or

(855) 792-6551