# Frequently Asked Questions

FY 2019 Funding Opportunity
U.S. Administration for Community Living/ Administration on Aging
HHS-2019-ACL-AOA-FPSG-0312

## FAQs related to grant eligibility

1. **Question: Who may apply for this funding opportunity?**
   Answer: Eligible applicants are Domestic public or private nonprofit entities including: state governments, county governments, city or township governments, special district governments, Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized), Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments), nonprofits (national and local) having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS (other than institutions of higher education), public housing authorities/Indian housing authorities, public and state controlled institutions of higher education, private institutions of higher education, and independent school districts.
2. **Question: Are for-profit companies or individuals eligible to apply**?
   Answer: No.
3. **Question: Are 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 ACL Fall Prevention grantees eligible to apply?**
   Answer: Yes. Current or previous Fall Prevention grantees are eligible, but must provide a strong rationale for the need for additional funding. The justification must include significant enhancement of the integrated, sustainable evidence-based prevention program network developed with prior funding (i.e. not a continuation of current efforts, but rather an innovative approach that features new partnerships and/or programs), substantially increased geographic reach, increased engagement of special populations, etc.
4. **Question: Can we apply for both ACL's Evidence-Based Falls Prevention and Chronic Disease Self-Management Education (CDSME) Grants?**
   Answer: Yes. Applicants who meet the eligibility requirements may apply for both the Falls and CDSME funding opportunities.
5. **Question: Will prior ACL Fall Prevention grantees be given preference in this grant competition?**
   Answer: No. All applications will be scored by the review criteria listed in the funding opportunity.
6. **Question: Are you interested in expanding funding to states that have never received funding from ACL (or haven't been funded for a number of years)?**
   Answer: Preference is not given to current grantees, former grantees, or applicants who have never received funding from ACL. All applications will be reviewed and scored based on the criteria included in the funding opportunity announcement.
7. **Question: If we already have some existing capacity for one or more of the Evidence-Based Fall Prevention Programs (developed through a previous ACL grant or another funding source), does this exempt us from applying for this funding opportunity?**
   Answer: No, it does not. However, your proposal should describe your experience and existing capacity, and describe how you will be expanding your capacity and geographic service area using the grant funds.

8. **Question: Is it possible for an organization in one state to receive a Capacity-Building grant and a separate organization in the same state to receive a Sustainable Systems grant?**
Answer: Yes. The Announcement notes that it is unlikely that more than one applicant per state under each option (Capacity-Building and Sustainable Systems) will be funded. The two options are being reviewed and scored independent of one another.
9. **Question: Who has received ACL falls prevention grants in the past?**
Answer: You can see all past and currently funded grantees here: https://www.acl.gov/programs/health-wellness/falls-prevention
10. **Question: How many applicants were there for this grant competition in 2018?**
Answer: In 2018, ACL received 59 applications for the Falls Prevention competition. Of these, 10 were awarded funding.

## FAQs related to proposal formatting

11. **Question: Is there a maximum page limit for the Project Narrative?**
Answer: Twenty pages is the maximum length allowed. The Project Work Plan, Letters of Commitment, Vitae of Key Personnel, Budget Narrative/Justification, and references are not counted toward the 20 page limit as long as they are clearly labeled as Appendices.
12. **Question: Can we use a font size smaller than 11 for tables included in the narrative?**
Answer: No. The entirety of the Projective Narrative, including tables, graphics, and headings must be double-spaced, and of a standard font size of not less than 11. You can use smaller font sizes to fill in the Standard Forms and Sample Formats outside of the Project Narrative sections, such as the Project Work Plan and Budget Narrative/Justification.
13. **Question: How should we list/cite references? Are references subject to the Project Narrative criteria regarding page limit and double-spacing?**
Answer: There is not a particular citation style that you are required to use with respect to references. You may include your references as footnotes, endnotes, or a separate appendix (please be sure to clearly label). References may be single-spaced, and, if included as a separate appendix, are not subject to the 20-page limit for the Project Narrative.
14. **Question: Which elements of the application can we include as an appendix?**
Answer: The Project Work Plan, Letters of Commitment, Vitae of Key Project Personnel, Budget Narrative/Justification, Project Map, applicable references, and other supporting material (e.g. organization chart) can be uploaded as appendices.

## FAQs related to Letters of Intent

15. **Question: Are potential applicants required to submit a Letter of Intent?**
Answer: Letters of Intent are not required but they are requested by December 19th to help us in planning for the independent review process.
16. **Question: Can you let us know who else from our state submits a letter of intent or application so we are better able to collaborate with other interested parties?**
Answer: Unfortunately, this type of information is considered "pre-decisional" and cannot be released publicly. However, since all applicants are asked to get a letter of support from their SUA and AAAs, you could consider reaching out to them to see if they are willing to supply this information.

## FAQs related to the administration of these grants

17. **Question: What is the difference between a grant and a "cooperative agreement"?**
    Answer: In the United States, Federal grants are financial assistance issued by the U.S. Government. A cooperative agreement is a variation of a grant, which is awarded when a grant provider anticipates having substantial involvement with the grantee during the performance of a funded project. These grants will be issued as cooperative agreements because they are significant and multifaceted endeavors in which AoA anticipates having substantial involvement with the recipients during performance of funded activities. Therefore, throughout the project period of the grant award, AoA will furnish technical assistance, oversight, and support to each grantee to help ensure program success. The cooperative agreement structure will allow AoA to provide a higher level of technical assistance, oversight and support than a grant relationship offers. For more information, see the HHS Grants Policy Statement at https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/grants/grants/policies-regulations/hhsgps107.pdf
18. **Question: What are forward-funded cooperative agreements?**
    Answer: These cooperative agreements are fully funded upfront for their three year project and budget period. Grantees will not have to compete for the second and third years of funding.
19. **Question: How are grantees able to access grant funds? Is payment based on cost reimbursement?**
    Answer: Grantees will draw down funds using the Payment Management System (PMS). Costs are not reimbursed, but rather requests are made through PMS for the release of funds.
20. **Question: Does the disclaimer noted in Section II. Award Information (Cooperative Agreement Terms) impact grantee intellectual property rights?**
    Answer: No. The disclaimer noted in Section II. Award Information of the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) does not relinquish intellectual property of the grantee. This disclaimer specifically emphasizes that the points of view or opinions of the grantee do not necessarily represent official Administration for Community Living (ACL) policy.
21. **Question: What is the make-up of the review panels that will be reviewing and scoring the incoming applications?**
    Answer: We recruit a variety of reviewers to participate in the review. We convene multiple panels comprised of individuals who may be former or current grantees (who are not applying for the current grant), representatives of various partnering agencies, academics, and other people with expertise in falls prevention and evidence-based, community programming.

## FAQs related to proposed activities under this grant

22. **Question: What evidence-based falls promotion programs can applicants propose in their applications?**
    Answer: Applicants may only propose one or more of the programs listed in Appendix A of the FOA. The interventions that are included on this list of pre-approved programs (a) have been determined to meet a specific definition of "evidence-based" as designated by the Administration for Community Living and (b) have been deemed appropriate for implementation through this funding opportunity. We included interventions that were previously reviewed by ACL staff/consultants and determined to meet the evidence-based

definition, as well as programs that more recently were reviewed and approved via an independent process facilitated by our National Falls Prevention Resource Center.

23. **Question: Who meets the definition of older adult?**
Answer: For the purpose of this FOA and consistent with the definition in the Older Americans Act (42 U.S.C. §3002(8)), we are defining an older adult as an individual who is 60 years of age or older. For tribes and tribal organizations, the age of older Indians is defined by the tribe and may vary.

24. **Question: Will the number of participants we propose need to be unique individuals or would we be able to count individuals who complete multiple programs as multiple participants?**
Answer: Grantees will be allowed to count individuals who complete more than one program as a participant in each of those programs. The count is based on participation and not unique individuals.

25. **Question: Will we be able to count the participants of programs offered by agencies that we are not directly funding?**
Answer: Yes, grantees will be allowed to count these program participants as long as the agencies are operating as part of the state/regional/tribal integrated prevention program network. At a minimum, that means that the grantee has an agreement with the agency(ies) offering the program(s) to collect the required data set from their programs and share it with the grantee.

26. **Question: Will we be able to count participants who are already participating in our existing falls prevention programs?**
Answer: Participants who attend workshops that begin before the start of the grant period can be counted as long as the workshop ends after the grant period begins.

27. **Question: Are programs for Chronic Disease Self-Management Education (CDSME) considered to be appropriate interventions under the terms of this Announcement?**
Answer: No. The intent of this Announcement is to fund evidence-based community programs that have been specifically designed to prevent falls and/or reduce falls risk. CDSME programs may be eligible for funding under HHS-2019-ACL-AOA-CSSG-0311. Applicants are encouraged to enfold these other evidence-based programs into their integrated prevention program network and to creatively leverage the existing infrastructure, cross-marketing, and funding for these programs as part of a longer term approach to building and sustaining programs.

28. **Question: Can we subcontract some or all grant activities?**
Answer: Yes. Grantees, not the Federal government, must decide whether it is in their best interest to subcontract grant activities. However, it is very important that grantees realize that the administrative responsibility and oversight of all grant activities remains with the grantee. Grantees must serve as the central, core, and active partner in the grant and not simply be a conduit for pass-through funding to sub-contractors. When subcontracting, the grantee should retain sufficient funding to adequately fulfill its administrative and oversight responsibilities. Applicants who propose to subcontract out a significant portion of their grant activities should provide a rationale in their proposal that justifies any additional overhead costs that affect the funding for programmatic activities.

29. **Question: Can an applicant propose to give fiscal or other types of incentives, such as small amounts of money or gifts, to recruit program participants?**

Answer: We do not recommend this approach, but in limited circumstances to meet programmatic goals, an applicant may propose some kinds of incentives. Monetary incentives such as cash would not be allowable. Gift cards in very small denominations ($5-$10) signed for and properly accounted for can be an option. However, if an applicant proposes to do so, it must present a compelling reason and evidence as to why it is necessary to do so and describe how this practice can be maintained after the grant period. An applicant needs to weigh its programmatic resources and fiscal costs against its ability to meet its targeted number of program completers. From a fiduciary perspective, every cost in the grant must meet the Federal Cost Principles, which include being reasonable, allowable and allocable. Additionally, from a programmatic perspective, grant expenditures should be developed within the context of sustainability.

30. **Question: Can an applicant use these funds to pay for transportation costs associated with getting participants to and from the proposed program(s)?**
Answer: We do not recommend this approach, but in limited circumstances to meet programmatic goals, an applicant may propose to do so. A better approach would be for the applicant to describe how it is going to leverage existing transportation resources from various public and private sources to provide for any needed transportation.

31. **Question: Can grant funds be used to pay for the direct provision of the proposed program(s), e.g., to pay the salaries of the workshop leaders or to provide a small stipend to leaders or master trainers?**
Answer: It is allowable to pay direct service costs including salary and expenses as part of start-up costs. However, the intent of this announcement is to embed the program into the ongoing operations of delivery system partners. Part of the sustainability planning efforts should be to develop strategies that will cover personnel costs. We do not encourage the use of stipends as that has a different meaning for certain grant programs and are usually reserved for payments to students as part of an internship, etc.

32. **Question: Can sites offering the programs charge participants a fee for participation?**
Answer: Yes, charging participants a reasonable fee is an acceptable part of a sustainability plan to offset costs. We consider any fees received to be program income and grantees would have to use those funds as they are earned to cover or further grant related activities. Grantees are expected to expend program income funds before drawing down additional Federal dollars. Any program income remaining after the grant expires will require the grantee to contact the Federal agency for disposition instructions, which is generally to return the remaining balance.

33. **Question: Can my proposal address populations in more than one state - for example if we're proposing a program for a minority population with large groups in different states. Could we just have one sustainability partner?**
Answer: We don't have specific guidance in the announcement about projects in multiple states. Please carefully read the expectations about an integrated system and the review criteria. We're trying to build up systems that will help support these programs over time. Any proposal that covers multiple states must address the expectations in the Announcement. If you have a sustainability partner that can work across states then you would only need one partner, or you could have a different partner in each state.

34. **Question: In addition to the aging services network, can we collaborate with organizations such as YMCAs, health care organizations, faith-based organizations, etc.?**

Answer: Yes. You are free to develop/propose formal or informal partnerships with a variety of organizations (i.e., senior centers, local fitness centers, etc.). Applicants are required to establish formal partnerships and obtain letters of support from some partners (see page 5 of the funding opportunity), but can partner with other organizations in their communities.

35. **Question: With respect to a network hub, can we focus on particular regions of the state that are known to have a high level of need, even if the areas are not contiguous?**
    Answer: A contiguous regional/statewide network hub is not required, though it is important to include data-driven rationale within your application to demonstrate why you've selected certain areas of focus within your state.
36. **Question: Is there a minimum number of participants and workshops that must be offered each year?**
    Answer: There are no minimum targets regarding the number of participants and workshops, but you should include the number of participants you intend to reach, as well as a rationale for how you determined your targets. Targets should be realistic and achievable. In developing your participant/completer targets, please reference Appendix D of the FOA.
37. **Question: Should applicants submit one comprehensive work plan that includes goals for all three years or should proposals include a separate work plan for each of the three years?**
    Answer: Applicants must provide a separate work plan for each year (year one, year two, and year three). The work plans for each year should match the separate budget plans for each year. The overall proposal should describe the goals or accomplishments that are expected over the three year period.
38. **Question: Do we need to create partner-specific work plans for our major contributing partners?**
    Answer: You do not need to provide any additional work plans for your partners. However, in the work plan, you should indicate any lead persons at the partnering agencies that are responsible for tasks included in the work plan. Applications are reviewed to determine the extent to which the application narrative, work plan, and support letters reflect an adequate commitment from partners and description of their activities and areas of responsibility.
39. **Question: Are Medicare Advantage beneficiaries or patients who are part of an Accountable Care Organization appropriate participant targets under this announcement?**
    Answer: Yes. Both are appropriate participant populations.
40. **Question: In previous fall prevention grants, there's been a 50 hour requirement for some of the Tai Chi programs. Is there a minimum hours of participation required for the Tai Chi programs?**
    Answer: There is no broad 50 hour requirement for the ACL-approved Tai Chi programs. Appendix A includes the list of pre-approved Tai Chi programs, as well as links to descriptions of the requirements of the programs. Applicants should be structuring classes to give participants the opportunity to complete the minimum number of hours (included in the program descriptions) that are required for the specific Tai Chi program that they are proposing.
41. **Question: Are we required to have an external evaluator for this grant?**
    Answer: No, you are not required to engage an external evaluator.
42. **Question: Where can I find a list of organizations that are offering the interventions listed in Appendix A?**

Answer: The appendices include the website for each intervention, many of which list licensed organizations. There is also a program locator tool hosted by the Evidence-Based Leadership Council, though this tool is not inclusive of all of the interventions listed in Appendix A.

## FAQs related to required Letters of Commitment/Support

43. **Question: To whom should letters of support/commitment be addressed?**
Answer: Letters of support should be addressed to the applicant.
44. **Question: If I am unable to get a letter of support from one of the required entities will my application still be reviewed?**
Answer: The application responsiveness criteria (which administratively determine whether an application can be reviewed at all) indicates that applications must include letters of support. This section does not, however, innumerate which specific letters the applicant should include. Instead, the review criteria (which application reviewers use to add/subtract points to each application) do innumerate which letters should be included (State Unit on Aging, etc.)
In other words, as long as your application does include some letters of support from key partners and collaborators named in the proposal, it can still be reviewed. Reviewers will deduct points if you're missing any of the three specific types letters indicated in the review criteria.
45. **Question: If proposing a statewide intervention, do we need to provide a letter of commitment from all Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) within our state?**
Answer: Yes, you should include letters of commitment from all applicable AAAs that cover your proposed project area.
46. **Question: Our organization is part of an Accountable Care Organization (ACO). With respect to the required letter of support from at least one sustainability partner, can the ACO function as our sustainability partner?**
Answer: Yes, the ACO that your organization is part of can serve as the sustainability partner, but you should justify the need for grant resources with respect to enhancing the delivery and sustainability of your proposed intervention(s) within the ACO.
47. **Question: Can a state unit on aging provide multiple letters of support if there is more than one applicant from the same state?**
Answer: Yes. State agencies can make their own decisions regarding which/how many organizations they provide a letter of support for.
48. **Question: If our state unit on aging (SUA) director provides a letter noting that we are going to be partnering with particular area agencies on aging (AAAs), do we still need letters of commitment from the AAAs?**
Answer: Yes, you must still get letters of commitment from the AAAs that are within your services area. The SUA cannot provide a letter of commitment on behalf of the participating AAAs.

## FAQs related to the proposal budget

49. **Question: Should the budget include funds for traveling to meetings?**
Answer: Yes. Applicants should plan and budget to send two representatives, once a year (including any potential no-cost extension period), to a falls prevention-relevant professional development conference identified by AoA as an appropriate grantee activity. This meeting will

take place in the Washington, DC area. Further meeting details will be communicated upon grant award.

50. **Question: Is there a match requirement?**
Answer: No, there is no match requirement. Applicants that do provide match will not be viewed differently or given more points during the independent review process. We encourage applicants to not provide match because if they choose to do so, then the match amount will become a part of their award notice and the awardee will be held to that match.

51. **Question: Does the budget range for each funding option include indirect costs? What indirect rate can we use?**
Answer: Any indirect costs charged by the applicant would be included in the amount of the federal award. The total budget ranges ($50,000-$150,000 and $400,000-$600,000) include indirect costs.
Indirect costs must be supported by an approved indirect cost rate agreement, which also defines the direct charges against which the rate applies. Indirect charges may only be requested if: (1) the applicant has a current indirect cost rate agreement approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) or another Federal agency; or (2) the applicant is a state or local government agency. State governments should enter the amount of indirect costs determined in accordance with DHHS requirements. If indirect costs are to be included in the application, a copy of the approved indirect cost agreement must be included with the application. Further, if any sub-contractors or sub-grantees are requesting indirect costs, a copy of the latest approved indirect cost agreements must also be included with the application, or reference to an approved cost allocation plan.
You should consult your organization's financial representative to see if you should be charging indirect costs and if so, what the approved rate is. In the event you are looking to make an initial request, please contact the Project Officer and Grants Management Specialist associated with this funding opportunity announcement.

52. **Question: Is there a cap on the indirect costs that will be permitted? Would an indirect cost rate of 45% be permitted?**
Answer: There is no set limit on the indirect costs. Indirect costs can only be charged if the organization has an approved allocation plan or an approved federal indirect cost agreement. Applicants should check with their fiscal staff for the amount that can be charged on the grant as it is different for each organization. Also see the HHS Grants Policy Statement at https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/grants/grants/policies-regulations/hhsgps107.pdf

53. **Question: Regarding the budget template, can you clarify the difference between non- Federal cash versus non-Federal in kind?**
Answer: These are both forms of match, and match is not required for this program. Non-Federal cash is any cash from you or your partners; it does not include funds from the Federal government. In kind includes any third party non-cash items that are program-related such as meeting room space that can be used as match for this program (please note, there is no match requirement in this funding opportunity). Applicants who voluntarily decide to add a match to their application will be held to that match and the match dollar amounts will be in their Notice of Award.

54. **Question: Do funds need to be evenly allocated across the three year project period (e.g. if requesting $600,000, budgeting $200,000 per year over the course of three years)?**

Answer: No. Funds do not need to be evenly allocated across the project period. Please be sure that your budget is aligned with your work plan with respect to project activities, outcomes, and outputs.

55. **Question: Can an organization use this funding for the salaries of new staff roles that support the proposed Falls Prevention Initiative?**

Answer: Yes, staff time is an allowable use of these grant funds