NWX-HHS-AOA-1

Moderator: Donna Bethge

December 1, 2021

12:00 pm CT

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. For the duration of today's conference, all parties will be in listen-only mode until the question-and-answer session of the conference. At that time you may press *1 on your phone to ask a question. I would now like to hand the conference over to Ms. Donna Bethge. I do apologize. I do need to let you know that this conference is being recorded and if you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time. Donna Bethge, you may begin.

Donna Bethge: Thank you, Tara. Hi, everyone. My name is of Donna Bethge and on behalf of the Administration on Aging, the Administration for Community Living, I'd like to thank you for joining us today.

I'm also joined by my colleague from ACL's Office of Grants Management, Sean Lewis, who will be available for the question and answer part of today's call.

Today we'll be discussing the Notice of Funding Opportunity titled, 2022 Empowering Communities to Deliver and Sustain Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Programs. This is HHS-2022-ACL-AOA-FPSG-0031.

For fiscal year 2022 we anticipate that this will be the only Notice of Funding Opportunity for ACL's Falls Prevention Program. I am the primary contact person and you can find my contact information on Page 12 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

During this call, we'll be reviewing four key things: 1) is the administration for the Community Living's vision related to this grant opportunity. 2) is some key award information, including who is eligible to apply. 3) is items of note in the funding opportunity. 4) we'll wrap up with questions and answers.

So throughout the review of the funding opportunity, I'll be referencing the PDF with the instructions for applying, which is posted on grants.gov.

To find this PDF, you can do the following: Go to grants.gov, locate this Notice of Funding Opportunity, go to the package tab and then click on the preview link and click on download instructions. It would be really helpful to download this document so you can follow along during this presentation.

Let's start with the ACL overall vision. The Empowering Communities to Deliver and Sustain Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Programs' funding opportunity reflects the ACL vision to help communities develop and expand capacity, implement and sustain evidence-based falls prevention programs as strategies to reduce falls and falls risk among older adults and adults with disabilities, particularly those in underserved geographic areas and populations as defined by the Executive Order on advancing racial equity and support for underserved communities through the federal government.

The goal is to increase the number of individuals who participate in these evidence-based falls prevention programs while pursuing the sustainability of these programs beyond the end of the grant period.

Over the past 18 months, we have witnessed how older adults have been impacted by COVID-19. Studies show that many older adults are less active and in worse physical condition now than before the pandemic, leading to a higher risk of falls. Now, more than ever, there is a need to make these falls prevention programs widely available and sustainable for the future.

So, here is some key award information. As I mentioned earlier, we anticipate that this will be the only ACL falls prevention funding opportunity for fiscal year 2022. It will be highly competitive.

Approximately $3.8 million is available for an estimated six to eight cooperative agreements. To give you an idea of how competitive our falls prevention grant opportunities were in the 2021 ACL Falls Prevention Grant Program competition, we received 39 applications and awarded 11 grants. That's about 28% of our applicants that were funded.

Grants will be awarded a total amount ranging from $500,000 to $600,000 for the three year fully-funded grant period, subject to the availability of funds. Your request should not exceed the three year ceiling at $600,000. Fully funded means that these grants receive all of their grant funds upfront for their three year project and budget period.

The National Falls Prevention Resource Center is housed at the National Council on Aging, otherwise known as NCOA. NCOA will provide technical assistance, educational opportunities and manage the National Falls Prevention database.

Eligible applicants for this funding opportunity are listed on Page 8. They are domestic, public or private nonprofit entities, including state governments, county governments city or township governments, special district governments, Native American governments, public and state controlled institutions of higher education, private institutions of higher education, public housing authorities, Indian housing authorities, Native American Tribal organizations, nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status, independent school districts, faith-based organizations and community organizations. Individuals and for-profit companies are not eligible to apply.

Current or previous ACL falls prevention grantees are not excluded from this funding opportunity but must provide a strong rationale for the need for additional funding. This must include an explanation of how this proposal significantly differs from previous projects.

This may not be a continuation of current efforts or activities supported by previously awarded ACL falls prevention grants, particularly because sustainability, without additional federal funding, has been a goal of all previous ACL falls prevention funding opportunities.

Applicants must propose an innovative approach that addresses the goals of this funding opportunity that features new partnerships and/or programs. Repeat awardees will be expected to meet the participant and sustainability goals that they included in each of their awards.

Applicants must specify a project director in their application. The project director, also sometimes referred to as the principal investigator, is the primary point of contact on matters involving the application. This should be the individual that would actually oversee the work of the proposed project and does not have to be a senior leader or executive at the organization.

The project director should be actively involved in the writing of the proposal and be able to answer any ACL questions about the application.

Please ensure that you list the name and contact information for the project director on Page 1 of the SF-424 that you submit with your application.

Here are some key dates. The letter of intent is due on December 17, 2021. This is highly recommended for ACL internal planning purposes. The letter does not need to be formal. An email indicating the notice of funding opportunity title and number and your intention to apply is sufficient.

The deadline for submission of applications is 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on January 25, 2022. However we strongly encourage you to submit your application to grants.gov seven days prior to the application closing date, in case there are any technical issues that arise.

The anticipated Notice of Grant Awards and the project period start date is May 1, 2022.

For application screening, in order for an application to be reviewed, it must meet all five of the following screening criteria. These are listed on Page 9 of the funding opportunity. First, applications must be submitted electronically in grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, January 25, 2022. This information is listed in Section 4.3 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity under submission date and time.

Second, the project narrative section of the application must be double spaced on 8-1/2 x 11 inch plain white paper with one inch margins on both sides and a standard font size of no less than 11 points, either Times New Roman or

Arial. If you single space something in the narrative, even text on charts or tables, your application may be screened out.

Third, the project narrative must not exceed 20 pages. Note that the project work plan, letters of commitment, project map, organizational chart, the budget narrative justification and the vitae of key project personnel are not counted as part of the project narrative for purposes of the 20 page limit.

Fourth, applications must include a proposed budget narrative and justification for years one, two and three along with a combined budget narrative justification for the proposed 36 month budget period. The proposed combined budget narrative justification must not exceed the total award ceiling of $600,000.

And fifth, applications must include a project work plan for years one, two and three. Project work plans must be consistent with the proposed project narrative and the budget narrative justification.

Here are a few items to note in the Notice of Funding Opportunity. This falls prevention funding opportunity has two goals which are listed on Page 4.

Goal number one is to develop or expand capacity to significantly increase the number of older adults and adults with disabilities, particularly those in underserved areas and populations who participate in evidence-based falls prevention programs, to empower them to reduce their risk of falls.

Goal number two is to enhance the sustainability of evidence-based falls prevention programs through the implementation of robust sustainability strategies.

So let's talk about goal number one: increasing the number of older adults who participate in falls prevention programs. All applicants must propose to offer two or more programs on the pre-approved list of programs in Appendix A of the funding opportunity.

At least one program proposed must be available for and delivered in a remote format, for example, by video conference. The National Falls Prevention Resource Center, NCOA, maintains a website that tracks remote program guidance by program. This is linked in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Note that the NCOA website includes programs on the pre-approved list in Appendix A as well as other programs not on the list. For this funding opportunity, please only propose programs on the pre-approved list in Appendix A.

All applicants should contact the program administrators for any programs they are interested in delivering remotely to confirm that 1) the programs are allowed for remote delivery and 2) training is readily available for applicants who need it.

Your targets for your proposed program should be realistic and achievable. As noted in the funding opportunity on Page 7, awardees will be held accountable for achieving approximately 25% of their program participant targets by the end of year one, 50% of their target by the end of year two and 100% of that target by the end of year three. Awardees will be asked for an affirmation to reach these goals within the funding period.

The National Falls Prevention Resource Center has developed a tool to assist applicants with developing realistic and achievable targets. This tool is included as Appendix D in the funding opportunity.

All applicants must also describe any underserved populations to be served by the proposed program as well as the relevant partners and their role in the dissemination of the programs.

Let's talk about goal number two, which revolves around sustainability of these programs. All applicants must describe how they will establish or enhance the sustainability of their proposed falls prevention program.

The goal of sustainability is to integrate and embed evidence based programs into a community's network of coordinated health and social services so that they become a routine and integral component of your organization's operation.

Sustainability strategies can include a combination of approaches, including funding from health care entities, other federal funding, philanthropy, public funding, Older Americans Act IIID or development of referral partnerships, et cetera.

Applicants will be expected to detail how they will address these two goals of this funding opportunity in the project narrative of their application.

All applications are also required to include letters of commitment. Letters should be included from 1) key partners, such as collaborating organizations and agencies that were named in the project abstract, 2) the State Unit on Aging, 3) all Area Agencies on Aging within your identified geographic service area and 4) the program administrator for the programs proposed if there is not adequate capacity and training as needed by the program.

Applicants are expected to be able to begin delivering their proposed Falls prevention program within three to six months after receiving their Notice of Award. It is important for you to get in touch with the program administrator while you're developing your application to ensure training for your proposed programs will be available if you need it.

If the State Unit on Aging or the Area Agencies on Aging decline to provide a letter, you should still include evidence that you made the request, for instance, an email in your application.

The State Unit on Aging and Area Agency on Aging letters are not required for applicants that are Tribal entities. In lieu of these letters, Tribal applicants should include a Tribal resolution that states the reason they are applying for the grant and commitment to executing the grant activities should it be awarded.

It's important to emphasize that each of these letters should clearly describe the specific role each of these entities will play. The quality of the letter's content is more important than the quantity of the letters submitted.

Please also carefully review the requirements for the work plan and the budget narrative justification. There are sample templates provided to guide you. It's strongly recommended that you use these templates and follow these guidelines.

For more details about the required sections of the project narrative, see pages 12 through 20 of the funding opportunity.

The review criteria are the criteria by which your application will be scored. Those begin on Page 22 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

You'll notice that these criteria mirror the detail requested in the project narrative. We encourage you to closely study the review criteria and make sure that you're addressing these in your narrative and your application materials.

Lastly, the appendices of the funding opportunity provide a wealth of resources and information, for example, the list of allowable programs, definitions of terms and links to useful documents. These are provided to assist in completing the application so please take the time to review these.

So now, Tara, we can open up the call for any questions.

Coordinator: Thank you. We will now begin the question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question, please press *1 on your phone and record your name clearly. Your name is needed in order to introduce your question. If you'd like to withdraw the question asked, please press *2. Again if you would like to ask a question, please press *1. It will take a few moments for questions to come through. Please stand by. Our first question comes from Dr. David Harden. Your line is open.

Dr. Harden: Hi. Regarding the requirement that we select two programs, one of which must be virtual, can the virtual be a mixture between the two programs or must one of the selected programs be always virtual?

We would like to have the opportunity to allow the program administrator for the program to provide virtual and in-person training to allow for flexibility. Thank you.

Donna Bethge: Thank you, Dr. Harden. Yes, so you will need to choose two, at a minimum, two of the programs to implement and one program needs to be virtual.

In this case for the virtual program, any program you offer can be offered virtually, but at least one needs to be offered remotely in a format that's exclusively remote with no in-person component. So I hope that answers your question.

You can offer multiple programs in a remote format, but at least one has to be offered in a format that's exclusively remote. If you can reference the FAQ document that was also on grants.gov with the Notice of Funding Opportunity, there are several questions and answers that may clarify that question also.

So if that's not clear for you, you can still reach out to me via email and we can clarify that further.

Coordinator: As a reminder if you would like to ask a question, please press *1 on your phone and record your name. The next question comes from Colton Strasser. Your line is open.

Colton Strasser: Thank you. So my question is for the fact that we have to propose two programs as part of this application and I'm wondering if the two programs can include the same program.

I know that many of the programs listed in Appendix A offer both a fully in-person as well as now a fully online component. And so understanding that, you know, some of these programs need to be offered completely online or remote and some offered completely in-person face to face, is it possible to propose the same program but in two different formats to meet the same program proposal requirement or do they need to be completely different programs offered by two different providers?

Donna Bethge: Thank you, Colton. The two programs that must be implemented would have to be two separate individual programs offered by two different programs that have been created.

So if you are offering one program in-person and remote, you also do need to offer a second falls prevention program in addition to that.

Coordinator: Again as a reminder if you'd like to ask a question, please press *1 on your phone and record your name. The next question comes from Colin Powell. Your line is open. Colin Powell, please check your mute button. Your line is open.

Colin Powell: Oh sorry about that. Thank you. Yes, my question is in regards to the background on Page 4. It seems to be kind of heavy focused on COVID and post-pandemic and dealing with these individuals.

Are these the selected groups that are on the list, or are they incorporating that into it or is that going to be something that is really going to fall onto us in the education and the training, if that makes sense?

Donna Bethge: Thank you, Colin. The focus of this Notice of Funding Opportunity is not centered on COVID-19. That was just a little bit of basis to understand the status of where our aging population may be today and how these programs are still needed in terms of fall risk today.

The focus does not have to be on servicing COVID-19 at all. That's just simply for background information and status of the world today.

Colin Powell: Okay, perfect. Thank you, Donna.

Coordinator: The next question comes from Otis Owens. Your line is open.

Otis Owens: Hello. Thank you so much. I have a two-part question. The first is: do the programs we're choosing, at least a couple programs. So if we chose, let's just say three, would those programs have to run simultaneous or could we run one specific program online and in person during year one, a different in year two and a different in year three? That's my first question.

Donna Bethge: Okay, Otis, we'll address that one first. So if you choose three programs, they do not all have to run simultaneously at the same time. One thing to keep in mind is the sustainability piece of this funding opportunity.

So goal two of this is to sustain these programs to be able to keep them going in the community. So if you would like to have one program run at one time in one year and the next program run in the next year, we just don't want those programs to go away. We would like you to find a way to be able to sustain them within your organization to be offered to the senior population.

Otis Owens: Got you. Thank you so much. And the second part of the question is that you mentioned something to the effect that each fundee needed to show their own sustainability, whatever it may be.

We have a partner here in our state who is already running a program but it's only in rural areas. They are missing some other areas. So we wanted to possibly expand their reach just generally across the rest of the state. That's why we would target those urban areas since they're working in rural areas. Is this acceptable?

Donna Bethge: Most definitely, we encourage partnerships with organizations that are already established and running these programs and expansion of those programs is definitely allowable. We would love to see it offered both rural and urban.

If you can develop a partnership with them, what they're already offering can be part of your program also. So we definitely, we strongly encourage, a partnership of that kind. Does that answer your question?

Otis Owens: Yes, it does. Thank you so much.

Coordinator: As a reminder, if you'd like to ask a question, please press *1 on your phone and record your name. The next question comes from Ann Turner. Your line is open.

Ann Turner: Hello. Yes, thank you. I was wondering if you could define further the target population as well as kind of the numbers that you're looking for in terms of this grant for year one, two and three.

Donna Bethge: Our target population, I'm not sure I completely understand your question. You know, our target population is to serve older Americans so we define that as anyone 60 and above.

Now we do want some focus put on those underserved populations, which were defined in the funding opportunities. You can review that if you like. We are focused on providing services for our older American population. Does that answer your question?

Ann Turner: That makes sense. Yes, I understand that. I guess what I'm trying to figure out is how to narrow it down. Our agency services a heavy senior population where a third of the total population are considered seniors so 60 and above.

So I'm just trying to determine when we say cite the target population, are we looking at all of that or are we looking at just strictly people who are disabled? And then I'm trying to determine what is considered an acceptable number of people to be serving.

Donna Bethge: You're going to develop your target number of participants that you want to serve. There are aids for doing that that are listed in the funding opportunity. So if you would like to review those that may help you.

The goal of this funding opportunity, which is funded by the Older Americans Act, is to expand the reach of these programs to all of our older population. We would like you to look at those underserved populations, whether it be disability or rural or any other populations. But the goal of this funding opportunity is to expand the reach and capacity of these programs to our older population.

Ann Turner: Okay, great. Thank you.

Coordinator: The next question comes from Christine McKibbin. Your line is open.

Christine McKibbin: Hi, thank you so much. I had a two part question. The first part has to do with whether we might be considered a new applicant or an existing applicant.

Currently one of our partners has an ACL grant focused on falls prevention. I think they're in a no cost extension period, but we are thinking of changing who would be the lead applicant.

So our university may want to submit as the lead applicant this time. Does that mean that we would be a new applicant or would we be in the situation where we would be talking about justifying the expansion of those existing services? So that's my first question.

Donna Bethge: Okay. Thanks, Christine. It depends on your proposal. If they are in a no cost extension, they are getting ready to close out their funding period within the next year anyway.

But what we would like to see is if your proposal is using some of the infrastructure that was already put in place by this project, we do want to see an expansion of it. We want to see that it is fully sustainable and that what you're doing is an expansion of that program, whether it be new partners, new population served or otherwise.

If the partners or the organizations that are part of this proposal are similar to a previous proposal, it just needs to show the expansion of how that will expand reach to all of the senior population in your area.

Christine McKibbin: That's great. I think building on that question, I think you've kind of answered my second question. We are thinking of expanding in a way where we would add a new program that hasn't been available before.

Then potentially we might continue to work with an existing program that's currently offered that seems to be successful. So we would need to look at expansion of that existing program that seems to be successful as well as offering the new program correct?

Donna Bethge: Yes, that is correct. A new population being reached, a new partnership that might be joining with that previous program that's already in place, that's correct.

Christine McKibbin: Great. Perfect. Thank you so much.

Coordinator: As a reminder, if you'd like to ask a question, please press *1 on your phone and record your name. The next question comes from Dr. David Harden. Your line is open.

Dr. Harden: Hello again. Another question. The instructions talk about sub-applicants or sub-providers being registered. Does every sub-provider that the primary applicant works with have to be registered with grants.gov under the requirements for the primary applicant?

Donna Bethge: Dr. Harden, I'm going to refer you to Page 10 of the funding opportunity. It talks about the requirements of applicants with the DUNS number and the SAM system.

You can refer to some of those links that can clarify your question about your sub-applicants. If that does not clarify it, go ahead and reach out to me if you still have additional questions by email.

Dr. Harden: Thank you.

Coordinator: As a reminder, if you would like to ask a question, please press *1 and record your name. One moment. We have no further questions at this time.

Donna Bethge: Thank you, Tara. We can go ahead and end the call then.

Coordinator: I'd like to thank all participants for joining today's conference. The conference has ended. You may disconnect at this time. Again, the conference has ended. You may disconnect at this time.

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