U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology

Notice of Funding Opportunity
Leading Edge Acceleration Projects (LEAP) in Health Information Technology

Assistance Listings (CFDA) Number
93.345

Application Due Date: July 16, 2026

Anticipated Award Date: September 26, 2026

Program Contact	Grants Contact
Alison Kemp Anastasia Perchem Office of the National Coordinator 330 C Street SW Washington, D.C., 20201 ONC-LEAP@hhs.gov	Carmel Halloun Office of the National Coordinator 330 C Street SW Washington, D.C., 20201 ONCGrants@hhs.gov

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) seeks Leading Edge Acceleration Projects (LEAP) in Health Information Technology (Health IT) to address well-documented and fast emerging challenges that inhibit the development, use, and/or advancement of well-designed, interoperable health IT. Project solutions are expected to further a new generation of innovative health IT research and inform the development, implementation, and refinement of standards, methods, and techniques for overcoming major barriers in health information access, exchange, and use.

This NOFO outlines three Areas of Interest that are a priority for the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC):

- Area of Interest 1: Accelerate the use of agentic artificial intelligence solutions in clinical care and/or clinical trials;

- Area of Interest 2: Expand Lantern's API monitoring capabilities by integrating secure, community-driven feedback that complements existing automated checks; and

- Area of Interest 3: Assess laboratory interoperability gaps to improve the adoption and use of standard terminology among small, independent laboratories.

ONC expects to issue one cooperative agreement award per area of interest. Area of Interest 1 will be awarded up to $1 million, and Areas of Interest 2 and 3 will be awarded up to $500,000 each, totaling up to $2 million for the three awards in fiscal year 2026. These awards will have a two-year project and budget period at initial award. However, applicants may submit their applications based on a three-year budget period. Additional funding for year three may be provided, contingent upon availability of funds, meaningful progress, and ONC priorities.

This funding opportunity will have a three-year open application period. ONC may issue future awards under this NOFO to other eligible applicants for future areas of interest.

A. Program Description/Purpose

Background Description

Created in 2004 through Executive Order 13335[1] and statutorily authorized by the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH Act) of 2009[2], ONC is the principal federal entity charged with coordination of nationwide efforts to implement the most advanced health IT and the electronic exchange of health information. At the forefront of the administration's health IT efforts, ONC is a resource to the entire health system to support the adoption of health IT and the promotion of nationwide, standards-based health information exchange to improve health care.

Since the HITECH Act was enacted, the health care ecosystem and the technology supporting it have rapidly evolved. Many providers have implemented electronic health record (EHR) systems, and sophisticated health IT tools and applications are quickly coming to market. As the electronic exchange of health information has matured, the amount and types of health data available has expanded. Data standards such as Health Level Seven International (HL7®) Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR®) and application programming interfaces (APIs) are making it easier for consumers to seamlessly access and share their health data with providers and allow health systems to integrate disparate data sources.

Passage of the 21st Century Cures Act[3] (Cures Act) in 2016 strengthened ONC's mandate to improve the interoperability of health information, facilitate information exchange, address barriers to interoperability, and reduce provider burden when using EHRs.

Purpose

While working to implement Cures Act provisions, ONC identified gaps with respect to leveraging EHR data to support population-level analyses and delivery of services, as well as integrating clinical knowledge into routine clinical practice. The reasons for these gaps range from a lack of data standards and interoperability to the digitization, integration, and presentation of new evidence into clinical workflows in safe, useful, and useable ways.

Therefore, this funding opportunity will support innovative and breakthrough solutions critical to maximize the potential of health IT and achieve the goal of a transformed health care delivery system through various methods, such as:

- Determining the fundamental questions, the answers to which will identify barriers to nationwide interoperability and electronic exchange of health data.
- Engaging the health IT industry, along with academic researchers, to identify and develop innovative solutions that address barriers to interoperability.
- Disseminating findings from research while fostering collaboration, advancement, and implementation of solutions and lessons learned with the health IT industry.

Structure and Approach

[1] https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2004-04-30/pdf/04-10024.pdf
[2] https://healthit.gov/resources/health-information-technology-for-economic-and-clinical-health-hitech-act-of-2009/
[3] 21st Century Cures Act, Pub. L. No. 114-255, 130 Stat. 1033 (December 13, 2016).

ONC expects to award three cooperative agreements for a project period of two years for each recipient to focus on areas where breakthrough improvements are needed to address problems that have impeded the innovative use of health IT and thereby accelerate progress in the areas identified.

Areas of Interest

The three Areas of Interest identified below describe priorities ONC is interested in continuing to explore and advance. The descriptions include ways in which applicants may approach developing a project. The Areas of Interest have been assigned numbers for ease of reference, not for prioritization. While there are many challenges associated with the use of health IT, these three Areas of Interest have been identified as critical priority areas for ONC.

Area 1: Accelerate the use of agentic artificial intelligence solutions in clinical care and/or clinical trials

Goal

ONC seeks proposals in this area of interest to accelerate the use of standards-based agentic artificial intelligence (AI) technologies to advance clinical care and enable innovation through AI. The area of interest builds on the recently released request for information Accelerating the Adoption and Use of Artificial Intelligence as Part of Clinical Care.

Background

Agentic AI refers to artificial intelligence systems that can take autonomous actions and make decisions with minimal human intervention. Unlike traditional AI that responds to specific prompts or queries, agentic AI systems can break down complex objectives into subtasks, reason through multi-step processes, learn from feedback, and adapt their strategies to achieve desired outcomes. These systems demonstrate a degree of agency by independently navigating workflows, interacting with various tools and databases, and making context-appropriate decisions while working toward goals. In essence, agentic AI functions as an intelligent assistant or collaborator capable of managing processes rather than just individual tasks.

In health IT, agentic AI has tremendous potential to transform health care delivery and administration. These systems could autonomously manage complex clinical workflows, such as coordinating patient care across multiple specialists, automatically reviewing and reconciling medical records, or orchestrating diagnostic processes by ordering appropriate tests and analyzing results in sequence. Agentic AI could also revolutionize administrative functions by navigating insurance prior authorization systems, identifying and correcting coding errors in medical billing, or managing population health initiatives by proactively identifying at-risk patients and coordinating preventive interventions. For patients, an AI agent could monitor a patient's health records across multiple providers, identify gaps in care, and proactively remind patients about needed follow-ups. For example, if lab results indicate a patient should see a dermatologist but no appointment has been scheduled within a reasonable timeframe, the agent could alert the patient, and in the future, could even help schedule the appointment. Or an AI agent with access to visit notes could translate medical information in the notes, explain test results in plain language, and answer follow-up questions patients think of after appointments. Another example of a program that seeks to support the development of agentic AI is the Agentic AI-Enabled Cardiovascular Care Transformation (ADVOCATE) program, which aims to transform advanced

cardiovascular disease management with an agentic AI system that can provide 24/7 holistic clinical care.

A key advantage of using agentic AI in health care settings is that agentic AI can handle the intricate, multi-step processes that currently require significant human cognitive effort, potentially reducing clinician burnout while improving efficiency and patient outcomes. However, implementing agentic AI systems requires careful attention to safety, careful attention to privacy requirements like those in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), and maintaining appropriate human oversight for critical medical decisions. Additionally, as agentic AI tools are developed, healthcare organizations should consider the appropriate level of human involvement by ensuring end users remain engaged, minimizing automation bias, clarifying stakeholder roles, and supporting a stronger user experience.

The past decade of federal and industry investment in standards, advancements due to the Cures Act, and emerging nationwide interoperability frameworks such as the Trusted Exchange Framework and Common Agreement (TEFCA) has produced a robust foundation for electronic health information exchange across the US. The landscape of AI-API integration standards is rapidly evolving as the industry recognizes the need for consistent ways to connect AI systems with external tools and data sources. There are emerging open standards in the AI industry that provide a unified way for AI systems to discover and interact with data sources and tools through a client-server architecture. Similarly, function calling (or tool calling) has become a core capability standardized across major AI providers, allowing AI models to invoke APIs in structured ways by generating JSON specifications that match predefined schemas.

These emerging standards for AI-API integration allow AI systems to:

- interpret FHIR resources,
- broker interactions across multiple systems and endpoints,
- automatically transform, validate, or summarize data, and
- assist users in navigating the complexity of health data exchange.

However, it's important to note that this remains a fragmented and rapidly changing space—while multiple approaches are gaining traction, the industry has not yet settled on universal standards the way it has for traditional web technologies.

Key Objectives

There are eight key objectives for projects in this area of interest for the two-year period of performance:

1. Develop or adapt an agentic AI solution for at least one specific clinical and/or clinical investigation workflow (e.g., patient triage, diagnosis support, care coordination, clinical trial enrollment, etc.). The solution could improve an existing process or create a new process that was not feasible without AI.
    a. Develop the agentic AI solution using open standards (i.e., publicly available, consensus-driven specifications that promote interoperability) and utilize applicable HHS-adopted data exchange standards. All agentic AI solutions must be compatible with FHIR.
    b. The agentic AI solution must be interoperable with third-party client applications developed by unaffiliated organizations.

    c. It must be independently implementable across multiple environments to support specific use cases.
    d. Ensure that the agentic AI solution complies with all applicable laws, including those related to security and privacy.
    e. The agentic AI solution should include appropriate escalation protocols, recognizing when human judgment is needed and making it easy for patients to access human support.
    f. The agentic AI solution should clearly inform patients when they are interacting with AI and when a situation requires clinical human judgement.
    g. Humans should be able to easily override or modify AI recommendations, with these interactions used as learning opportunities. Developers should also track when and why overrides happen to improve the system over time.
2. Conduct at least one pilot project demonstrating end-to-end agentic AI functionality in a real-world clinical setting of the agentic AI solution.
3. As part of the pilot project, successfully integrate the agentic AI solution with at least two different health IT system platforms, demonstrating cross-platform compatibility.
4. Apply a risk management methodology to evaluate the agentic AI solution used in this project and publish a detailed assessment report. The assessment report must evaluate:
    a. The readiness and maturity of the incorporated agentic AI standards for health care applications and the intersection of AI and APIs,
    b. The AI-enabled workflow and whether it improves efficiency, accuracy, and/or clinical outcomes compared to non-AI baseline approaches,
    c. The usability of the solution, and
    d. Whether the solution is ready for use in production environments.
5. Conduct at least one educational workshop or webinar for appropriate stakeholders within 12 months of the award date. The workshop or webinar should document the current state of agentic AI in health IT and provide stakeholders with information about the current status of this project and solution being developed.
6. Applicants must publicly release 100% of developed software components under an open-source license, accompanied by complete technical documentation, installation guides, and user manuals.
7. Submit for publication at least one peer-reviewed paper or white paper documenting project findings, recommendations for use by health IT developers, best practices, and lessons learned by the end of the 24-month period of performance.
8. Form a technical expert panel of key stakeholders to advise the project team throughout the period of performance. The coalition could include approximately 10 stakeholders and meet at least three times during the period of performance. Stakeholders could include but are not limited to clinical and care delivery teams, patients and patient advocates, AI/machine learning engineers, software developers, health IT specialists, privacy and security experts, and clinical informatics specialists. Applicants should include letters of commitment from proposed members of the panel.

Area 2:

Expand Lantern's API monitoring capabilities by integrating secure, community-driven feedback that complements existing automated checks

Goal

The goal of this area of interest is to enhance Lantern's ability to monitor FHIR endpoints by adding a secure, community-driven feedback layer that complements existing automated checks. This project will enable implementers, vendors, app developers, and certification bodies to share actionable information about real-world API behavior, improving reliability, transparency, and trust in FHIR APIs across the health care ecosystem.

Background

ONC's Cures Act Final Rule (Cures Rule) supports patients' and providers' access to electronic health information through Health Level Seven (HL7®) Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR®) application programming interfaces (APIs). The Maintenance of Certification requirements at 45 CFR 170.404(b)(2) specify that service base URLs, otherwise known as "endpoints," can be used by patients to access their electronic health information.

The FHIR API Monitoring System, otherwise known as Lantern, was created to help ONC monitor and provide nationwide analytics about the availability and standardization of FHIR endpoints deployed by health care organizations. FHIR endpoints can enable patient access to their electronic health information. The Lantern tool consumes public endpoint information, tests the accessibility of these endpoints, and then reports capability information to its public-facing dashboard. Lantern analytics are positioned to help shine a light on the health care industry's usage of FHIR APIs and ongoing support of patient access.

Lantern uses data from several sources. It gathers information from FHIR Server Capability Statements—a publicly accessible FHIR resource that can be retrieved from each service's base URL. The Capability Statement serves as the primary data source Lantern processes, containing details about each FHIR server. Lantern also queries publicly available FHIR endpoints to assess endpoint availability (uptime) and monitors changes to FHIR APIs that may indicate accessibility issues. By combining these data sources, Lantern provides a picture of FHIR API service base URL availability, the health care organizations implementing them, and the software products associated with these endpoints. It also offers visualizations to illustrate FHIR adoption and patient data availability. Updating the existing Lantern system will bring these perspectives together to accelerate issue detection, support coordinated problem-solving and provide a clearer picture of API performance across provider and payer domains. In doing so, the updated system will help standardize how those connecting to FHIR endpoints report observable issues—such as authorization failures, empty datasets, errors, throttling, or data staleness—and will aggregate and report them responsibly so that valid problems are surfaced transparently.

Key Objectives

There are six objectives in this area of interest for the two-year period of performance:

1. Identify the types of information related to performance, accessibility, data quality, and implementation experience that would be most valuable to entities seeking to discover, access, and use a range of FHIR endpoints, beyond those currently focused on patient access. This information could be informed by analysis of the Lantern monitoring system, other efforts to gather feedback on endpoint performance (such as Bulk FHIR), and input from stakeholders across the health IT community. Examples of potential data types may include performance issues not currently

captured, authentication or authorization failures, assessing the availability or completeness of data, errors encountered during the process of accessing the data, data timeliness, assessing the accuracy of the documentation, and observed workarounds or implementation patterns.
2. Create a technical solution integrated with the Lantern open-source tool that enables the collection and incorporation of the information identified in Objective 1. The project must support standardized data collection, so information is captured in a consistent, structured, and comparable format across endpoints, such as through a structured or semi-structured reporting tool linked to a specific endpoint.
3. Develop visualizations and other features that could be used within the Lantern system for categorizing and displaying community feedback so that feedback is integrated with the information that is currently monitored by Lantern. Additionally, features should accelerate issue detection, support collective problem-solving, and improve transparency.
4. Generate a machine readable, downloadable report at the developer level that summarizes information for each endpoint. For each endpoint, the report should include endpoint status, a summary of community feedback, and the existing monitoring approach. The report must be accessible to download using the technical solution developed in Objective 2.
5. Solutions shall rely on non-proprietary approaches and be independently implementable. The solution must be open-source and available on GitHub with complete technical documentation, installation guides, and user manuals.
6. Form a technical expert panel of key stakeholders to advise the project team throughout the period of performance. The panel could include approximately 10 stakeholders and meet at least three times during the period of performance. Applicants should include letters of commitment from interested parties.

Area 3: Assess laboratory interoperability gaps to improve the adoption and use of standard terminology among small, independent laboratories

Goal

The goals of this area of interest are to assess laboratory data quality and implement existing solutions aimed at improving the adoption and use of standard codes such as Logical Observation Identifiers Names and Codes (LOINC), SNOMED Clinical Terms (SNOMED CT), and Unified Codes for Units of Measure (UCUM) among small, independent laboratories. Projects should assess laboratory data quality and use that information to identify and pilot test different solutions (such as mapping tools) to facilitate the use of correct codes in laboratory data and to transition small, independent laboratories from using local laboratory codes to using standardized terminologies. Projects should focus on solutions that support conformance with national laboratory standards and can be widely implemented by small, independent laboratories.

Background

Quality of laboratory data

Laboratory data are a critical piece of information that informs clinical decisions, public health surveillance, research, and population health, among other activities. As noted in the Congressional Report on Standards for Electronic Ordering and Reporting of Laboratory Test Results, robust use of

laboratory standards is necessary to enable a common meaning or interpretation of laboratory tests and results between laboratories, providers, public health entities, and other users of these data.[4]

Despite the importance of using standard terminologies to ensure a common understanding, available assessment data suggest that the use of these standards for laboratory data varies widely – both by standard type and across entities – with smaller laboratories and providers less likely to use standard terminologies. Laboratories' persistent use of locally defined names, terms, and codes instead of standardized vocabularies hinders data exchange. Due to limited resources, many laboratories and health systems continue to rely on internal codes developed to meet local workflow requirements, legacy system constraints, and historical reporting needs. These locally defined codes lack consistent meaning when shared outside of their originating systems, requiring receiving systems to manually map or interpret data. This increases the risk of fragmented patient data, delays, and misinterpretation of results, and adds operational burden—factors that can negatively impact patient safety, clinical decision-making, public health, and other secondary uses of data. Laboratories may select LOINC codes that do not align with the tests performed, resulting in data quality issues that can also impact patient safety. Additionally, laboratories may incorrectly map their test catalog.

Newly developed data quality tools are available to help smaller laboratories assess whether they are over-relying on local codes or using incorrect LOINC codes when reporting data to providers and health information organizations. Existing mapping tools are available to help laboratories align their test catalog with nationally recognized laboratory coding standards, such as LOINC, SNOMED CT, and UCUM, to support and enable accurate and efficient data exchange.

Tools to Assess and Improve Data Quality

Assessing electronic health record (EHR) data quality involves consideration across several dimensions, including conformance to standards.[5][6][7] ONC has been unable to specifically measure the quality of laboratory data in terms of conformance to nationally recognized standards. Surveys have not proven to be a reliable measurement approach due to low response rates and lack of awareness of terminologies among respondents.

Data quality assessment tools that leverage real-world data offer promising new approaches to assess conformance to national laboratory standards. Recent analysis of laboratory data from laboratories and health care providers demonstrated it was possible to use real-world data to generate insights on the use of laboratory standards; however, that analysis involved using a customized tool and data from a small number of organizations.[8] Researchers can now analyze real-world data using open-source tools that do not require customization and can be used by a broad array of organizations. Tools such as CumulusQ, which received LEAP funding in 2023 and 2020, operationalize data quality measurement by evaluating

[4] Report to Congress: Standards for Electronic Ordering and Reporting of Laboratory Test Results. December,19, 2024. https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CMR-HE1-00196380/pdf/CMR-HE1-00196380.pdf

[5] Lewis AE, Weiskopf N, Abrams ZB, Foraker R, Lai AM, Payne PRO, Gupta A. Electronic health record data quality assessment and tools: a systematic review. J Am Med Inform Assoc. 2023 Sep 25;30(10):1730-1740. doi: 10.1093/jamia/ocad120. PMID: 37390812; PMCID: PMC10531113.

[6] Weiskopf NG, Weng C. Methods and dimensions of electronic health record data quality assessment: enabling reuse for clinical research. J Am Med Inform Assoc. 2013;20(1):144-51.

[7] Kahn MG, Callahan TJ, Barnard J, Bauck AE, Brown J, et.al. A Harmonized Data Quality Assessment Terminology and Framework for the Secondary Use of Electronic Health Record Data. EGEMS (Wash DC). 2016 Sep 11;4(1):1244.

[8] Report to Congress: Standards for Electronic Ordering and Reporting of Laboratory Test Results. December 19, 2024. https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CMR-HE1-00196380/pdf/CMR-HE1-00196380.pdf

how EHR data align with interoperability standards encoded in the United States Core Data for Interoperability (USCDI). USCDI serves as a baseline set of data elements for health information exchange and interoperable health IT implementation. USCDI includes laboratory data, with specifications for the use of code systems such as LOINC, to encode these data. These standards-driven approaches, meaning approaches that assess or analyze data against established interoperability standards such as USCDI and LOINC, enable identification of structural and semantic errors, as well as potential approaches to resolve and correct errors.

Data quality tools can evaluate laboratory data to identify instances where data do not conform to nationally recognized standards or rely on using local codes. Determining the types of laboratory tests in laboratory data that are most frequently identified by local codes rather than by national standards is a critical first step towards improving the quality of laboratory data. Identifying commonly performed laboratory tests for which providers select the incorrect LOINC codes in their EHR system is also important to improving the quality of laboratory data. LOINC Regenstrief has a list of the LOINC codes most commonly used in laboratory data exchange.

Tools to Shift away from the Use of Local Codes
Once small, independent laboratories identify laboratory tests using local codes, they can take additional steps to ensure that the correct codes from those national standards are used instead. Those steps include focusing directly on reducing the use of local codes by laboratories. Resources are available from LOINC Regenstrief to enable laboratory staff to map local codes to LOINC codes. Examples of these resources include the Regenstrief LOINC Mapping Assistant (RELMA), a mapping utility to search the LOINC database and map local codes to LOINC codes, and SearchLOINC, a web-based tool to search the LOINC database. LOINC Mapping Guides, summaries of best practices for mapping to LOINC across six laboratory domains, are also available. Laboratory information systems may also have their own mapping tools.

Other solutions to shift away from the use of local codes focus on addressing these issues further upstream. One such solution is embedding LOINC codes in the in-vitro-diagnostic (IVD) devices used to test samples outside the body for diagnosing diseases, monitoring health, or guiding treatment. LOINC to In-Vitro-Diagnostic (LIVD) mapping specifications for IVD devices harmonize how IVD test information is represented using laboratory data standards. LIVD describes the same laboratory test across vendors and laboratories. The LIVD specification has been advanced through the efforts of Systemic Harmonization and Interoperability Enhancement for Laboratory Data (SHIELD), a public-private multi-stakeholder driven endeavor sponsored by the FDA that seeks to build solutions that address interoperability of IVD devices. The SHIELD initiative has developed a small number of LIVD files that provide a definitive source for LOINC to IVD test mapping and has published a white paper on Laboratory Interoperability Data Repository (LIDR), a potential solution for a repository of LIVD files. Other open-source tools such as Komet also support this goal.

Paired with data quality assessment tools that identify data that does not conform to national standards or that does not accurately use standardized code systems (e.g., LOINC), these mapping tools for laboratories and IVD manufacturers have the potential to improve the quality of laboratory data so that it aligns with national standards.

Key Objectives

There are eight objectives in this area of interest for the two-year period of performance:

1. Identify at least three small, independent laboratories to participate in pilot activities that will improve the adoption and use of standard terminologies and support conformance with LOINC for laboratory test identifiers; SNOMED CT for results, organisms, methods and conditions; and UCUM for units of measurement; and align with applicable USCDI data elements.
2. Conduct a readiness assessment for each participating laboratory to:
    a. Understand if the laboratory's staff are prepared to change their laboratory coding processes,
    b. Understand if the laboratory's IT system is capable of adopting new laboratory coding processes,
    c. Identify risks and challenges the laboratory will face in adopting new laboratory coding processes,
    d. Identify laboratory coding processes needing improvement,
    e. Identify how changes and success will be measured,
    f. Identify the most appropriate tools for data quality assessment and mapping, and
    g. Identify any other topics the applicant determines to be necessary.
3. After the readiness assessment, pilot test at each participating small independent laboratory at least one open-source data quality tool to identify laboratory tests that the laboratory staff has frequently incorrectly coded or coded using local codes rather than standardized terminologies. Once laboratory tests that are incorrectly coded or coded with local codes are identified, determine the root causes of incorrect and local code use.
4. Once the tests that are most frequently incorrectly coded or coded using local codes rather than standardized terminologies are identified, pilot test at each participating laboratory, two or more tools to improve the use of standardized terminology. Existing tools are available through LOINC Regenstrief and from the SHIELD community (such as RELMA, SearchLOINC, LOINC Hierarchy Browser, LOINC Mapping Guides, laboratory information system mapping tools, and existing LIVD specifications). The applicant may use these tools or other open-source tools to transform the incorrect or local codes into standard codes to increase the usage of standard codes at each participating laboratory.
5. Describe in a report the results of the readiness assessments and root cause analyses, and lessons learned from the pilot testing of tools that measure the quality of laboratory data and tools that support the use of standard terminologies on a broad scale. Also describe in the report how the tools used can improve consistent adoption and use of nationally recognized laboratory standard codes. Based upon the lessons learned, the report should include specific recommendations to update and improve existing tools to better support use by small, independent laboratories.

    Lessons learned should include at a minimum:
    - Identification of instances where existing tools or approaches were not effective in addressing laboratory interoperability or standardized code adoption challenges.
    - Analysis of the underlying reasons why laboratories continue to rely on local codes or use incorrect standardized codes including technical, operational, workflow, cost, or resource-related factors.
    - Assessment of whether and how the solutions address (or fail to address) these underlying drivers, and the implications for adoption and sustained use by small, independent laboratories.
    - Identification of gaps or unmet needs that limit the effectiveness or uptake of existing tools and solutions.

    - Recommendations for new or enhanced tools, approaches, or capabilities that could better address identified gaps, reduce reliance on local codes, improve the selection of accurate standardized codes, and support broad adoption of standardized laboratory codes.
6. Develop a dissemination plan that includes a public-facing version of the report described in Objective 5 and at least one educational workshop or webinar to share results from the readiness assessments and root cause analyses, lessons learned, and to explain how laboratories can adopt standardized laboratory codes with data quality and laboratory stakeholders.
7. All tools used and any developed processes or suggestions for adopting standardized laboratory codes should be interoperable with third-party client applications developed by unaffiliated organizations to support mapping, validation, and assessment of laboratory standard code usage. All tools should also be use-case agnostic and support laboratory interoperability by enabling consistent use, validation, and assessment of standardized laboratory codes. Applicants should rely on non-proprietary approaches and propose solutions that are independently implementable and applicable across multiple laboratory data elements, using a technical approach to support diverse laboratory and data quality use cases.
8. Applicants shall include a technical expert panel of key laboratory and health IT stakeholders who will be directly involved in the project, such as laboratory information system (LIS) vendors, leadership from small and independent laboratories, developers of third-party laboratory data quality or terminology tools, public health partners, and members of the laboratory and health IT standards communities. Applicants should include letters of commitment from proposed members of the coalition of key laboratory and health IT stakeholders.

Applicants for an award in this area of interest shall include the following in their application:

- Describe in detail the technical barriers that impede laboratory interoperability, including challenges related to the adoption and use of standardized laboratory codes, data quality, conformance to national laboratory standards, and integration with third-party applications.
- Describe in detail technical solutions to the barriers, including:
    - Sufficient technical details to demonstrate that the proposed solution is based on non-proprietary technologies and leverages open-source tools.
    - A detailed plan on how the applicant plans to conduct the readiness assessment for using data quality and mapping tools (Objective 2).
    - A detailed plan on how the applicant intends to complete the pilot tests described in Objective 3 and Objective 4.
    - How the proposed project will inform future improvements to technical infrastructure supporting laboratory interoperability and standards-based laboratory data exchange.
- Identify an approach to improve the exchange and use of standardized laboratory data while adhering to applicable data security and privacy requirements, including compliance with the HIPAA Privacy Rule[9] and other relevant regulations.

Performance Goals and Objectives

A performance goal is a target level of performance expressed as a tangible, measurable objective, against which actual achievement can be compared.

[9] *Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information*, 45 C.F.R. pts. 160 & 164 (2000)

ONC will utilize the following objectives to assess project performance and progress:

- The quality of the two-year project plan and the description of how performance goals and key objectives will be met.
- The identification and securement of subject matter experts (SMEs), as appropriate, to provide guidance and review strategies, research methods, and results.
- Scheduling, conducting, and participating in status, strategy and/or SME meetings with ONC and the panel of key stakeholders.
- Communicating findings and providing quarterly programmatic progress reports, including a risk mitigation plan to ensure timely deliverables.

B. Funding Opportunity Award Information

Key Award Parameters

Title: Leading Edge Acceleration Projects (LEAP) in Health Information Technology

Federal Funding Agency: Department of Health and Human Services
Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology

Announcement Type: *Cooperative Agreement*

Application Type: *New*

Funding Opportunity Number: *NAP-AX-26-001*

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number*: 93.345*

Eligible Applicants:

This is a competitive funding opportunity open to public or non-profit private institutions, such as a university, college, or a faith-based or community-based organization; units of local or state government, eligible agencies of the federal government, Indian/Native American Tribal Governments (federally recognized, other than federally recognized, and tribally designated organizations).

For-profit organizations may participate in projects as members of a consortia or as a sub-recipient only. Because the purpose of this NOFO is to improve health care in the United States, foreign institutions may participate in projects as members of a consortia or as a sub-recipient only. Applications submitted by for-profit organizations or foreign institutions will not be reviewed. Organizations described in section 501(c)4 of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities are not eligible.

HHS grants policy requires that the grant recipient perform a substantive role in the conduct of the planned project activity and not merely serve as a conduit of funds to another party or parties. If consortium/contractual activities represent a significant portion of the overall project, the applicant shall justify why the applicant organization, rather than the party(s) performing this portion of the overall project, should be the recipient and what substantive role the applicant organization will play.

Applicant organizations may submit more than one application, provided that each application is scientifically distinct.

Legislative Authority: Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2026 (FY2026 LHHS omnibus; H.R.7148; P.L. 119-75)

Approximate Amount of Available Funding (inclusive of direct and indirect costs):

Anticipated Number of Awards: Up to 3 *(1 award per Area of Interest)*

Approximately Amount of Each Award: Up to *$1,000,000 (Area 1)*
Up to *$500,000 (Areas 2 and 3)*

Anticipated Project Period: *September 26, 2026 – September 25, 2029*

Anticipated Budget Period(s): *September 26, 2026 – September 25, 2028*

Funding of future non-competing continuation awards will be determined by ONC and is conditioned on the availability of funds, satisfactory progress by the recipient, and an awarding office determination that continued funding of the award is in the best interests of the Government.

Cooperative Agreement and Substantial ONC Involvement

The funding instrument used for this program will be the cooperative agreement, an assistance mechanism in which substantial ONC programmatic involvement is anticipated during the project period. Under the cooperative agreement, the ONC purpose is to support and stimulate the recipient's activities by involvement in, and otherwise working jointly with, each recipient in a partnership role. ONC's role is not to assume direction, prime responsibility, or a dominant role in the activities. Consistent with this premise, the dominant role and prime responsibility resides with the recipient for the project as a whole. To facilitate appropriate involvement, during the period of this cooperative agreement, ONC and the recipient will be in contact monthly and more frequently when appropriate.

ONC involvement may include, but is not limited to:

- Participating in monthly (minimum) check-in meetings.
- Ensuring compliance of timely programmatic reporting, project progress, and other terms and conditions of the award.
- Reviewing and approving quarterly programmatic progress reports.
    - Quarterly programmatic progress reports are due one month after each quarter (January, April, July, and October).
- Participating in the selection of key personnel.
- Releasing funds based on achievement of performance goals and objectives.
- Agency reviewing and approving of substantive provisions of proposed subawards or contracts.
- Reviewing and approving deliverables.
- Selecting meeting/panel members and subject matter experts.
- Participating in communities of practice.
- Providing tactical guidance and feedback during project execution.
- Engaging with leadership of the recipient's organization to ensure successful execution of the cooperative agreement.
- Ending an activity if performance specifications are not met.

Program Income
There are four potential ways in which ONC may require that a recipient apply program income as specified in the Notice of Grant Award (NGA): 1) **deduct** it from total allowable program costs to determine the net allowable costs on which the Federal share of costs is based; 2) **add** it to funds otherwise available for the program, generally resulting in an increase to the total approved budget; 3) use it to meet a **matching or cost sharing** requirement; or 4) a **combination** of these alternatives.

Costs paid by program income generally are subject to the applicable cost principles and other Federal requirements and shall be disbursed for program purposes **before** requesting additional payments of Federal funds. In the event program income remains at the end of the award, the additional income is considered part of the award funding and shall be returned to ONC. **If program income is generated, the recipient shall use the additive method.**

Intergovernmental Review

Applications for this Cooperative Agreement are not subject to review by states under Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs" (45 CFR 100). Please check box "C" on item 19 of the SF 424 (Application for Federal Assistance) as Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this Cooperative Agreement.

Key Dates

Milestone	Date
NOFO Released	*June 16, 2026*
Informational Session	*June 23, 2026*
Letters of Intent Due	*June 30, 2026*
Applications Due	*July 16, 2026*
Anticipated Award Date	*September 26, 2026*
Anticipated Project Start Date	*September 26, 2026*
Anticipated Project End Date	*September 26, 2028*

Informational Session

ONC will conduct an informational session, via a webinar, to:

- Discuss the background, purpose, scope, terms and conditions and other provisions in the NOFO;
- Explain the eligibility and application requirements;
- Describe the application review process; and
- Provide an opportunity for interested parties to ask questions.

Further details about the informational session – including the date, time, and instructions for joining – are available on healthit.gov.

To ensure that ONC addresses all comments and questions regarding this announcement during the information session, please submit any comments and questions, via email, to *ONC-LEAP@hhs.gov* no later than three days prior to the call.

Letter of Intent

Although not required, applicants are strongly encouraged to submit a non-binding e-mail letter of intent to apply for this funding opportunity. This letter of intent will assist ONC in planning for the application review process.

The Letter of Intent is requested by 11:59 P.M. Eastern Time on June 30 and should be sent to *ONC-LEAP@hhs.gov.* The notice should identify the name of the applicant organization, the city and state in which the applicant organization is located, the Notice of Funding Opportunity title and number, and the area of interest the applicant organization will apply to. No information about project plans is necessary.

C. Eligibility Information

See Section B, Funding Opportunity Award Information, for eligibility, cost-sharing, and other key award information.

D. Application and Submission Information

Application Package

The following documents comprise, as applicable, the application package. Additional information regarding each of these documents is further provided. Tips for writing a strong application are available in Appendix A.

The application package:

- Project Abstract
- Project Narrative
- Appendices
    - Form SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
    - Form SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs
    - Form SF-424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs
    - Form SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
    - Budget Narrative Justification
    - Letters of Commitment
    - Proof of Non-Profit Status (if, applicable)
    - Indirect Cost Agreement(s) – including recipient, sub-recipient, and contractors' agreements (if applicable)

Project Abstract
Applicants shall include a one-page abstract that is no more than 500 words. This abstract is often distributed to the public and Congress and represents a high-level summary of the project. As a result, applicants should prepare a clear, accurate, and concise abstract that can be understood without reference to other parts of the application and that provides a description of the proposed project, including the project's goal(s), objectives, overall approach, anticipated outcomes, products, and duration.

The applicant shall place the following information at the top of the Project Abstract (this information is not included in the 500-word maximum):

- Project Title
- Area of Interest
- Applicant Name
- Physical Address
- Contact Name
- Contact Phone Numbers
- E-Mail Address
- Web Site Address, if applicable

Project Narrative
The project narrative should describe the proposed project in a clear and concise manner. The project narrative should address the elements articulated in the Areas of Interest section of this NOFO. The project narrative should also align with the Performance Goals and Objectives and Merit Review criteria presented in this NOFO.

The maximum length allowed for the project narrative is *35* pages. A project narrative that exceeds the *35*-page limit will not be accepted. Resumes of key personnel (personnel required for the project), are not counted as part of the project narrative and are not included in the *35*-page limit.

The project narrative sections of the application shall be double-spaced, on 8-1/2" X 11" plain white paper with 1" margins on all sides and use either Cambria or Times New Roman font size of not less than 11 point. Smaller font sizes may be used to fill in the Standard Forms, exhibits, and figures, though all text in forms, exhibits, and figures shall not be smaller than 8-point font.

The project narrative should include the following components. These components will be counted as part of the page limit. The suggested lengths of the components are guidelines to help applicants create a balanced document. They are not mandatory restrictions.

1. Understanding of Project Purpose (2-3 pages)
2. Proposed Approach and Activities (10-14 pages)
3. Applicant Capabilities (9-15 pages)
4. Budget Narrative (2-3 Pages)

1. Understanding of Project Purpose
This section should offer the applicant's conceptualization of the selected Area of Interest. This should include, from the applicant's perspective, a delineation of the objectives and research challenges the proposed project will address, specifically distinguishing between challenges that can be addressed in the self-contained project period (two years) and challenges requiring a longer period (three years). Applicants shall clearly state which Area of Interest the proposed project will address. (2-3 pages).

2. Proposed Approach and Activities
This section should provide a clear and concise description of the approach the applicant is proposing to conduct the research and development work, including identifying the major challenges and proposed activities used in the approach. This section should be organized so that each element of the project plan is clear and aligns to the project's key objectives and project goals. The applicant should include the usage of novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools, and/or technologies and provide insight as to how their usage will inform the field of health IT. Additionally, the approach should include proposed strategies on how the results of the project may be disseminated and transitioned to field at large.

The applicant should describe each key objective in the proposed project as a discrete activity. The applicant shall clearly identify each activity and denote whether it is a short-term objective (two years) or a long-term objective (three years).

The approach should include as much detail as possible given the page limitation. Notwithstanding, the plan for each activity, at a minimum, **shall state**:

1. Specific aims,
2. Previous work of the investigative team on which the proposed research is **directly** based,
3. The methods that will be applied,
4. The anticipated outcomes of the work and their potential significance in addressing the challenges of the selected Area of Interest, and
5. The key personnel who will be involved. (8-10 pages)

Statements of previous work should not be redundant with general statements of experience in the "Organizational Capability Statement" section described below.

Disseminating results. The applicant should describe plans for disseminating and transitioning appropriate research results into practice. This should include a plan for engaging industry stakeholders to adopt, disseminate, and transition findings from the project into data standards, data infrastructures, health IT products, tools, and best practices. Collaborative arrangements with industry and other groups outside of the applicant institution should be accompanied by appropriate letters of support. (2-3 pages)

Tool development. The applicant should describe plans to develop the tools proposed in each area of interest and illustrate how it will be made and maintained in a publicly available and acceptable domain at no cost to the general public. (2-3 pages)

Project timeline. In addition, applicants should provide a project timeline as an appendix to the application with a table of key dates and objectives to demonstrate that key objectives can be met within the two-year period.

Citations. Applicants should justify the project's proposed approaches through relevant scholarly articles and other literature. Up to 100 citations may be included. Citations will be judged by quality, not quantity. Applicants should avoid multiple, partially redundant citations. Where an assertion in the narrative is supported by a large number of citations, we recommend applicants consider stating in the narrative the number of citations that support the assertion and then including in the citation list only the most important exemplars. Citations should be included in the project narrative and do count toward the page limit.

3. Applicant Capabilities

Project team and project management. This section should describe the applicant's project team, personnel qualifications, and past performance demonstrating experience consistent with successfully meeting the goals of the cooperative agreement. This section should discuss the project management approach and the types and level of staffing, resources, and infrastructure in place to support the project. This would include identifying the roles of key staff and identifying the roles of subcontractors and/or any other external consultants or subject matter experts, and identify how they will contribute to achieving the research objectives and outcomes. This section should specify who would have day-to-day responsibilities for key tasks such as leadership of project, monitoring the project's on-going progress, preparation of reports, and communications with other collaborating organizations and ONC.

The application should describe the approach that will be used to assess project performance and monitor and track progress toward meeting key objectives and any quality assurance or quality control processes that will be conducted throughout the project. and identifying a communication strategy with ONC to provide updates and progress reports. The applicant should also include an organizational chart as an appendix that reflects roles and responsibilities. The organizational chart will not count towards the narrative page limit. (5-7 pages)

It is recommended that the project team be comprised of, but is not limited to, the following roles:

- Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI):
    - Only one PD/PI may be designated on the application.
    - An eligible PD/PI may come from a variety of areas including, but not limited to, nurses, pharmacists, medical doctors, health service researchers, economists, health system administrators, health IT experts, industrial and systems engineers, computer and cognitive scientists, human factors professionals, and health informatics professionals. Any individual with the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to carry out the proposed research is invited to work with their institution to develop an application for support.
    - The PD/PI is expected to contribute a minimum of 10% effort annually throughout the course of the cooperative agreement.
- At least one person on the proposed team shall possess health IT expertise.
- For Area of Interest 1: Accelerate the use of agentic artificial intelligence solutions in clinical care and/or clinical trials, the applicant's proposed project team should possess and demonstrate the following at a minimum:
    - Experience developing, deploying, and validating AI/ML models in health care settings, including integration in clinical workflows and EHR systems.
    - Familiarity with agentic AI architectures (such as goal-directed systems, autonomous task orchestration, or tool-using agents) and their safe application in clinical environments.
    - Understanding of health IT standards to support interoperable, standards-based integration.
- For Area of Interest 2: Expand Lantern's API monitoring capabilities by integrating secure, community-driven feedback that complements existing automated checks, the applicant's proposed project team should possess and demonstrate the following at a minimum:
    - Understanding of Lantern and its current API monitoring and reporting capabilities.
    - Familiarity with HL7®, FHIR® APIs, and related health IT interoperability standards.
    - Experience developing secure, authenticated feedback submission mechanisms.
- For Area of Interest 3: Assess laboratory interoperability gaps to improve the adoption and use of standard terminology among small, independent laboratories, the applicant's proposed project team should possess and demonstrate the following at a minimum:
    - Familiarity with national laboratory terminology standards.
    - Understanding laboratory data quality and standards conformance challenges.
    - Experience engaging with the health IT standards community and stakeholders across the laboratory community.

Stakeholder Coordination. This section should describe plans to establish and operate a technical expert panel of relevant and appropriate stakeholders, including names of members who have committed to join or proposed to join to help inform the work to be conducted on the relevant Area of Interest. (2-3 pages)

Organizational Capability Statement. The statement should describe the organization's capabilities, qualifications, and approach to address the work to be completed. Applicants are strongly encouraged to propose the development of technology using open-source approaches (freely available without a license) and share the outcomes of their research in open-source communities. The statement should include the relevant organizational resources available to perform the proposed project (e.g., facilities, equipment, and other resources). The applicant should include information about any organization(s) that will have a significant role(s) in the LEAP project, including those proposed to receive sub-awards. The statement should highlight potential strategies the organization may employ to sustain research efforts and activities beyond the scope of the project timeframe. Applicants who are working with project counterparts as part of a consortia shall also provide letters of commitment from them. The letters of commitment shall be included with the appendices and will not count towards the page limit. (2-4 pages)

4. **Budget Narrative**
   This section should include a detailed breakdown of how the applicant plans to spend the allotted resources to complete the activities detailed in this NOFO. (2-3 Pages)

Required Appendices
Applicants may submit no more than 30 pages of appendix material. Appendix material should be used to provide additional materials (for example, key papers or reports or excerpts) that will be of assistance in evaluating the merit of the application. Do not use the Appendix to circumvent the page limitations of the project narrative component. Applications that use appendix material as a mechanism to exceed the page length limitations of the project narrative will not be considered for award.

Form SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
Appendix B provides line-by-line instructions to complete the form. Please note that the SF-424 is used for a wide variety of Federal grant programs, and Federal agencies have the discretion to require some or all of the information on these forms. Accordingly, when completing the form, please use the instructions in Appendix B in lieu of the standard instructions attached to SF-424.

Form SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs
Appendix C provides line-by-line instructions to complete the form. Please note that the SF-424A is used for a wide variety of Federal grant programs, and Federal agencies have the discretion to require some of or all the information on these forms. Accordingly, when completing the form, please use the instructions in Appendix C in lieu of the standard instructions attached to SF-424A. All direct and indirect costs shall be allowable, allocable, reasonable, and necessary.

Form SF-424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs
This form contains laws and other assurances applicants shall comply with under the discretionary funds programs administered by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology. Please note that a duly authorized representative of the applicant organization shall certify that the organization is in compliance with these assurances.

Form SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
This form contains the name and address of lobbying registrants. Please note that a duly authorized representative of the applicant organization shall sign the disclosure form. Failure to complete and sign the form may result in civil penalties ranging from $10,000 to $100,000. If this does not apply to your organization, please respond with N/A and sign the form to include with the application.

Budget and Narrative Justification
The budget and narrative justification describes how the proposed budget, as articulated in the SF-424A, aligns with the applicant's project narrative. That is to ensure that costs are realistic (not artificially too low) and reasonable (not inflated) in view of programmatic requirements. Appendix D provides a template to complete the budget and narrative justification populated with *sample* information.

When more than 33% of a project's total budget falls under a contractual expense, a detailed budget justification narrative shall be provided for each sub-contractor or sub-recipient. Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grant programs are required to provide a combined multi-year budget and narrative justification, as well as a detailed budget and narrative justification for each year of potential grant funding.

The full budget and narrative justification should be included in the application immediately following the SF 424 forms. The budget and narrative justification shall be formatted to 8 ½" x 11" (letter-size) pages, 1" or larger margins on all sides, and a font size of not less than 11 point.

Letters of Commitment
Include letters of commitment confirming the support to the project (should it be funded) made by key collaborating organizations and agencies. Any organization that is specifically named to have a significant coordination role in carrying out the project should be considered an essential collaborator. At a minimum, the letter shall explain the demonstrated commitment to the project and how they will advance coordination and collaboration among critical stakeholders. See Appendix E for an example letter of commitment. These letters should not be considered as part of the page limit. Signed letters of commitment should be scanned and included as attachments.

Applicants will also provide a letter of commitment from entities that will be responsible for generating reports based on transactional data (e.g. health information service providers, technology developers or vendors, or others). These entities should have the capacity and resources to produce required reports on adoption and use in a timely manner. See Appendix E for an example letter of commitment.

Proof of Non-Profit Status
Non-profit applicants shall submit proof of non-profit status. Any of the following constitutes acceptable proof of such status:

- A copy of a currently valid IRS tax exemption certificate.
- A statement from a state taxing body, state attorney general, or other appropriate state official certifying that the applicant organization has a non-profit status and that none of the net earnings accrue to any private shareholders or individuals.
- A certified copy of the organization's certificate of incorporation or similar document that clearly establishes non-profit status.

Indirect Cost Agreement(s)
Applicants that have included indirect costs in their budgets shall include a copy of the current indirect cost rate agreement approved by the Department of Health and Human Services or another federal agency. This is optional for applicants that have not included indirect costs in their budgets. Further, if

any sub-contractors or sub-recipients are requesting indirect costs, copies of their indirect cost agreements shall also be included with the application. Cost allocation plans are not accepted.

Application Submission Instructions

1) You shall access the electronic application for this program via http://www.grants.gov. You can search the downloadable application page by the Notice of Funding Opportunity Number *NAP-AX-26-001* or CFDA number *93.345*.
2) Applicants will be able to download a copy of the application packet and complete it off-line. In order to complete the application, an organization shall have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). A UEI can be obtained via registering at http://SAM.gov and typically takes 7 to 10 business days. Please plan accordingly.
3) Completed applications are uploaded into Grants.gov. APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED THROUGH ANY OTHER WEBSITE, AND WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED THROUGH PAPER MAIL, COURIER, OR DELIVERY SERVICE.

   In order to upload applications into Grants.gov:
   a) An applicant shall be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM), at sam.gov and use their UEI. The SAM registration process takes 7 to 10 business days so please plan accordingly. If you have already registered with the SAM, but have not renewed your registration in the last 12 months, you will need to renew your registration.
   b) Please note that entities registering in SAM shall submit a notarized letter appointing their authorized Entity Administrator. This will not impact the registration approval process, but is required as part of your registration. For additional information, read SAM's updated FAQs to learn more about changes to the notarized letter review process and other system improvements.

      The following website depicts the SAM registration process:
      http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html
   c) An applicant shall be registered in Grants.gov which can take several days. To that end, applicants are strongly encouraged to register and test Grants.gov logins and passwords well in advance of the application deadline date. For assistance with www.grants.gov, please contact them at support@Grants.gov or 1-800-518-4726. Resources are available 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

      A depiction of the Grants.gov application process can be found at
      http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html
4) After electronically submitting your application, Grants.gov will generate an email a tracking number and date of receipt verification confirming that the application was received, the date and time the application was received, and a tracking number. This notification does not ensure that your application could be opened and read -- only that the application was received.

The deadline for the submission of applications under this Funding Opportunity is 12:00PM Eastern Standard Time on July 16, 2026. Applications that fail to meet the application deadline will not be reviewed and will receive no further consideration.

Restrictions on Oral Conversations

This funding opportunity is subject to restrictions on oral conversations during the period of time commencing with the submission of a formal application by an individual or entity and ending with the award of the competitive funds. Federal officials may not participate in oral communications initiated by any person or entity concerning a pending application for a competitive grant or other competitive form of federal financial assistance, whether the initiating party is a federally registered lobbyist or not.

This restriction applies unless:

- The communication is purely logistical.
- The communication is made at a widely attended gathering.
- The communication is to or from a federal agency official and another federal government employee.
- The communication is to or from a federal agency official and an elected chief executive of a state, local, or tribal government, or to or from a federal agency official and the Presiding Officer or Majority Leader in each chamber of a state legislature.
- The communication is initiated by the federal agency official.

Funding Restrictions

Funds cannot be used for the following purposes:

- To supplant or replace current public or private funding.
- To supplant ongoing or usual activities of any organization involved in the project.
- To purchase or improve land, or to purchase, construct, or make permanent improvements to any building.
- To reimburse pre-award costs.

E. Application Review Information

Screening Review

Applicants that do not meet the following screening criteria will be eliminated and will not be sent forward for merit review:

- The application is received by the required deadline through http://www.grants.gov.
- The application contains all required components (e.g., project abstract, project narrative, SF-424, etc.).
- The application meets the formatting and length requirements. The project narrative shall not exceed *35* pages. The project abstract and resumes do not count as part of the project narrative length limitation.
- Appendices and attachments are not used as a mechanism to exceed page limits of the project narrative.

Merit Review

An independent review panel will evaluate applications that meet the screening review criteria identified above. These reviewers will be experts in their fields from academic institutions, private and non-profit organizations, and state, tribal, local, territorial, and federal government agencies. Panelists will review, evaluate, and score applications, in accordance with the criteria identified below.

- Understanding of Project Purpose (10 points)
- Proposed Approach and Activities (40 points)
- Applicant Capabilities (30 points)
- Budget Narrative (20 points)

Understanding of Project Purpose (10 points)

- The extent to which the application identifies an Area of Interest from this NOFO.
- The extent to which the application addresses the key objectives and goals of this identified Area of Interest from this NOFO.
- The extent to which the application identifies a project plan and activities that align with the identified Area of Interest within this NOFO.
- The extent to which the application identifies barriers and ways to mitigate those barriers with the identified Area of Interest within this NOFO.
- The extent to which the applicant describes how the project, expected outcomes, and results will inform future health IT development, research, and implementation.

Proposed Approach and Activities (40 points)

- The extent to which the approach, design, methods, and analyses are specifically stated, adequately developed, well-integrated, well-reasoned, and appropriate to the project goals/key objectives of the Area of Interest **(20 points)**, to include:
    - The extent to which proposed activities for achieving the key objectives are clear, feasible, and appropriate.
    - The extent to which development or utilization of novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools, or technologies, or a combination of common elements, are

described and generate insight to inform the field of health IT.

- The extent to which the applicant proposes a clear and detailed plan for disseminating and transitioning appropriate research results into practice. This section of the application should include a plan for engaging industry stakeholders to adopt, disseminate, and transition findings from the project to stakeholders who will continue to advance the work. **(15 points)**
- The extent to which the plan describes a project management approach for ensuring project success. **(5 points)**

Applicant Capabilities (30 points)

- The extent to which the applicant identifies all the resources necessary to perform the proposed work and outline strategies to complete this work within a two-year time frame. **(5 points)**
- The extent to which the environment(s) in which the work will be done contributes to the probability of success, employs useful collaborative arrangements, and has evidence of support within the awardee's institution. **(5 points)**
- The extent to which the project proposal integrates and provides an appropriate level of research, technical knowledge, and subject matter expertise. **(20 points)**.
    - Does the application include a project team drawing from diverse fields? Are needed expertise or relevant disciplines adequately represented across the project team?
    - Does the application demonstrate that the project team will have adequate administrative structure and processes in place to oversee the successful conduct of the proposed project, which includes addressing weaknesses encountered during the project?
    - If applicable, does the proposed project team have the minimum expertise listed in this NOFO?
    - Does the applicant's proposal include a collaborative team of key stakeholders who will be directly involved in the project, which we refer to as the technical expert panel? Panel members shall include stakeholders such as health care providers, health information exchanges, patients, health IT developers and vendors, or other stakeholders as specified in the Area of Interest. An applicant's proposal shall include letters of commitment from stakeholders who will be part of the coalition.

Budget Narrative (20 points)

- Does the application provide the proposed levels of effort of the project team and consultants (if needed) and describe how they are adequate and appropriate to advance the project in accordance with the project plan?
- Does the application include an explanation of how the proposed budget supports the project and is cost-efficient and reasonable for meeting the project activities?
- Does the application include all required budget information, including a budget section in the project narrative and the supplemental budget and narrative justification?
- Does the budget align logically with the project's goals, objectives, and timeline?

Pre-Award Risk Assessment

ONC is required to conduct a risk assessment to assess the risk posed by a potential recipient, prior to issuing an award. In doing so, ONC will consider the applicant's financial stability, quality of management systems, history of performance, reports and findings from audits, and the applicant's

ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. To facilitate this assessment, ONC may review information available in systems, review documentation, such as previous audits, and/or desk reviews or site visits conducted from previous awards. ONC may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial instability that directly relates to the organization's ability to implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements (2 CFR § 200.206).

For any Federal award issued under a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), if the HHS awarding agency anticipates that the total Federal share will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold on any Federal award under a notice of funding opportunity may include, over the period of performance (see § 200.320(a)(2)(ii) Simplified Acquisition Threshold), this section shall also inform applicants:

- That the HHS awarding agency, prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313).
- ONC 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 greater than 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. ONC will consider any commentsby 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 2 CFR § 200.206(a)(2) Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants.

Award Decisions

The final award decision will be made by ONC or an authorized designee, taking into consideration several factors such as the results of the merit review process; results of the pre-award risk assessment; compliance with programmatic and grants management requirements; the reasonableness of the estimated costs, available funding, geographical dispersion, program priorities, any mandatory statutes or regulations associated to this program; and the likelihood that the proposed project will result in the benefits expected. All applicants will receive a summary of the independent review panel's assessment of the application's strengths, weaknesses, and score.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

Federal Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive a letter of notification acknowledging that an award was funded but does not provide authorization for the applicant to begin performance and expend funds associated with the award.

Following this notice, successful applicants will receive a Notice of Award (NOA). The NOA will include, at a minimum, the following:

- Legal name and address of the organization or institutions to whom ONC has issued an award.
- Award number assigned by ONC.
- Project period, specifying the amount of time ONC intends to support the project without requiring re-competition for funds.
- Total amount of financial assistance approved by ONC during the project period.
- Budget period, specifying the increments in which the project will be funded, subject to the availability of funds.
- Applicable award terms and conditions.
- Performance goals, indicators, objectives, or expected outcomes (such as outputs, or services performed or public impacts of any of these) with an expected timeline for accomplishment.

The successful applicants' Authorized Representatives will receive the NOA electronically from ONC. The recipient accepts the award by drawing down funds. By accepting an ONC award, the recipient assumes legal, financial, administrative, and programmatic responsibility for administering the award in accordance with the terms and conditions of the award, as well as applicable laws, rules, regulations, and Executive Orders governing HHS assistance awards, all of which are to be incorporated into the award by reference. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in suspension or termination of the awards and/or ONC's recovery of award funds.

Terms and Conditions

Administrative and National Policy Requirements
As of October 1, 2025, HHS has adopted 2 CFR Part 200, along with some HHS-specific modifications included at 2 CFR Part 300. These regulations replace those in 45 CFR Part 75.

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to the above referenced federal regulations 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.

All activities proposed in your application and budget narrative must align with applicable law, including but not limited to statutes, executive orders, federal regulations, and applicable judicial holdings. Accordingly, discretionary awards shall not be used to fund, promote, encourage, subsidize, or facilitate: racial preferences or other forms of racial discrimination by the recipient, including activities where race or intentional proxies for race will be used as a selection criterion for employment or program participation; denial by the recipient of the sex binary in humans, or the belief that sex is a chosen or mutable characteristic; illegal immigration; or any other initiatives that compromise public

safety. If an application does not align, the application will not receive funding to the extent permitted by law and applicable court orders.

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. ONC 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 Notice of Award (NOA).

Specific terms and conditions are further delineated below due to their importance in terms of integrity, achieving programmatic objectives, and/or sound financial stewardship of federal funds.

- https://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/for-providers/provider-obligations/index.htmlhttps://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/for-individuals/nondiscrimination/index.htmlhttps://www.lep.gov/http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/understanding/disability/index.htmlhttps://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/for-individuals/sex-discrimination/index.htmlhttps://www.hhs.gov/conscience/conscience-protections/index.htmlhttps://www.hhs.gov/conscience/religious-freedom/index.html

Performance Reporting

ONC Program Progress Reports (PPR) are due quarterly. The PPR will address, to the extent applicable:

- Degree to which performance goals were attained (actual performance versus targeted performance)
- Data source and validation method for performance measures
- Opportunities to address performance deficiencies
- Accomplishments
- Next steps
- Challenges/barriers
- Recommendations to address challenges and barriers

ONC will provide specific guidance regarding the content, format, and deadlines for submitting the PPRs before each report is due.

Each report will be due throughout the fiscal year as follows:

Reporting Period	**Reporting Due Date**
October 1 through December 31	No later than January 31
January 1 through March 31	No later than April 30
April 1 through June 30	No later than July 31
July 1 through September 30	No later than October 31

Additional programmatic requirements, include, but not limited to:

- A kick-off meeting no later than two (2) weeks after award date with members of each recipient team and ONC is required. The purpose of this meeting is to establish points of contacts, expectations, and set-up regular check-in calls.

- A monthly (minimum) check-in meeting to be scheduled with project team and your ONC Project Officer to discuss implementation trajectory, accomplishments, next steps, challenges, barriers, and recommendations to address challenges and barriers.

- A draft of the final report shall be submitted to ONC at least three (3) months prior to the end of the grant period of performance in Microsoft Word. An updated version of the final report incorporating ONC feedback is due at the end of the grant period of performance. After the end of the grant period of performance, the ONC Project Officer will review the final report. Any changes requested by the Project Officer must be completed no later than 120 days after the end of the period of performance.

- The final report should include the following elements:
    - Title page that includes the following:
        - Title of project
        - Principal investigator and team members
        - Organization
        - Project dates
        - Federal project officer
        - Acknowledgment of agency support
        - Grant award number
    - Include the following sections using these headings:
        - Structured abstract not to exceed 500 words and with the following sections:
            - Purpose
            - Scope
            - Methods
            - Results
            - Key words
        - Purpose (project objectives)
        - Scope (e.g., background, context, settings, participants, incidence, prevalence)
        - Approach (e.g., study design, data sources/collection, interventions, measures, limitations)
        - Results (principal findings, outcomes, discussion, conclusions, significance, implications)
        - List of publications, products, and bibliograph

Additional closeout information and requirements may be disseminated prior to the expiration of the period of performance.

Final Prototype Development
In the event an applicant's solution includes the development of a prototype, the applicant will obtain ONC's approval of the prototype and make the prototype publicly available at no cost to the general public.

Financial Reporting
Expenditures shall be reported, on a semi-annual basis, using the SF-425, Federal Financial Report (FFR). Reports are due to HHS no later than April 30 of each year the award is active for funds expended between October and March, and no later than October 31 for funds expended between April

and September. The semi-annual FFR will be submitted using the Payment Management System (PMS). ONC will not accept reports sent directly to the ONC Grants mailbox.

Federal Funding and Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006
The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Transparency Act) includes a requirement for recipients of Federal grants to report information about first-tier sub-awards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards issued in FY2011 or later. All recipients of ONC grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.fsrs.gov on all sub-awards over $25,000.

Federal Recipient Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)
As of January 1, 2016, recipients of Federal grants and cooperative agreements are subject to mandatory disclosure requirements. Recipients that have Federal contracts, grants, and cooperative agreement awards from all Federal awarding agencies with a cumulative total value greater than $10,000,000 shall maintain the currency of information reported to the System for Award Management (SAM) that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system (currently FAPIIS), any information about criminal, civil, and administrative proceedings that reached its final disposition during the most recent five-year period in connection with the award or performance of a grant, cooperative, agreement, or procurement contract from the Federal Government. Reporting shall specifically include the following:

Proceedings About Which You Shall Report

Submit the information required about each proceeding that:

a. Is in connection with the award or performance of a grant, cooperative agreement, or procurement contract from the Federal Government;
b. Reached its final disposition during the most recent five year period; and
c. If one of the following:
    (1) A criminal proceeding that resulted in a conviction, as defined in paragraph 5 of this award term and condition;
    (2) A civil proceeding that resulted in a finding of fault and liability and payment of a monetary fine, penalty, reimbursement, restitution, or damages of $5,000 or more;
    (3) An administrative proceeding, that resulted in a finding of fault and liability and your payment of either a monetary fine or penalty of $5,000 or more or reimbursement, restitution, or damages in excess of $100,000; or
    (4) Any other criminal, civil, or administrative proceeding if:
        (i) It could have led to an outcome described in paragraph 2.c.(1), (2), or (3) of this award term and condition;
        (ii) It had a different disposition arrived at by consent or compromise with an acknowledgement of fault on your part; and
        (iii) The requirement in this award term and condition to disclose information about the proceeding does not conflict with applicable laws and regulations.

Reporting Procedures
Enter in the SAM Entity Management area the information that SAM requires about each proceeding described in paragraph 2 of this award term and condition. You do not need to submit the information a second time under assistance awards that you received if you already provided the information through SAM because you were required to do so under Federal procurement contracts that you were awarded.

Reporting Frequency
During any period of time when you are subject to this requirement in paragraph 1 of this award term and condition, you shall report proceedings information through SAM for the most recent five-year period, either to report new information about any proceeding(s) that you have not reported previously or affirm that there is no new information to report. Recipients that have Federal contract, grant, and cooperative agreement awards with a cumulative total value greater than $10,000,000 shall disclose semiannually any information about the criminal, civil, and administrative proceedings.

For purposes of this award terms and conditions:

a. Administrative proceeding means a non-judicial process that is adjudicatory in nature in order to make a determination of fault or liability (e.g., Securities and Exchange Commission Administrative proceedings, Civilian Board of Contract Appeals proceedings, and Armed Services Board of Contract Appeals proceedings). This includes proceedings at the Federal and State level but only in connection with performance of a Federal contract or grant. It does not include audits, site visits, corrective plans, or inspection of deliverables.
b. Conviction, for purposes of this award term and condition, means a judgment or conviction of a criminal offense by any court of competent jurisdiction, whether entered upon a verdict or a plea, and includes a conviction entered upon a plea of nolo contendere.
c. Total value of currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts includes -
(1) Only the Federal share of the funding under any Federal award with a recipient cost share or match; and
(2) The value of all expected funding increments under a Federal award and options, even if not yet exercised

This is a statutory requirement under section 872 of Public Law 110-417, as amended (41 U.S.C. 2313). All information posted in the designated integrity and performance system on or after April 15, 2011, except past performance reviews required for Federal procurement contracts, will be publicly available.

Conflict of Interest
The term "organizational conflict of interest" means that the applicant, including its chief executives, directors, consultants, sub recipients, or any other personnel that are substantially involved in the performance of this assistance agreement, has interests which:

- May diminish its capacity to give impartial, technically sound, objective assistance and advise in performing this task.
- May otherwise result in a biased work product under this assistance agreement; or,
- May result in an unfair competitive advantage to itself or others.

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.112 of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, a recipient or subrecipient must disclose in writing any potential conflict of interest to the Federal agency or pass-through entity in accordance with the established Federal agency policies. The applicant shall notify the ONC grants management officer (GMO) when they believe an actual or potential COI may exist.

If, after award, a recipient discovers a COI with respect to the assistance agreement, it shall make an immediate and full disclosure in writing to the ONC GMO. The disclosure shall identify the actual or

potential conflict, identify the manner in which it arose, and describe the action the recipient has taken, or proposes to take, to avoid, eliminate, or neutralize the conflict.

In the event the recipient was aware of an organizational COI prior to award of the assistance agreement, and did not disclose the conflict to the GMO, or becomes aware of an organizational COI after award of this assistance agreement and does not disclose the COI within ten (10) days of becoming aware of such conflict, the Government may terminate the assistance agreement and the recipient shall not be entitled to reimbursement of any costs incurred in performing the assistance agreement.

The rights and remedies of the Government, under this term and condition, shall not be exclusive and are in addition to any other rights and remedies provided to the Government under law, regulation, or any other available enforcement mechanism.

Non-Disclosure Requirements
The federal award may require the recipient to have access to information relating to any and all aspects of grants management operations that may be of a technical, legal, sensitive and/or confidential nature and which may be the sole property of the U.S. Government. To mitigate risks associated with such access, the recipient shall ensure that all its personnel, including chief executives, directors, consultants, sub recipients, or any other personnel substantially involved in the performance of this award sign a non-disclosure agreement prior to the commencement of any work on the award.

In addition, recipients shall put in place appropriate procedures for the protection of such information and shall be liable to the Government for any misuse or unauthorized disclosure of such information by its personnel.

The rights and remedies of the Government, under this term and condition, shall not be exclusive and are in addition to any other rights and remedies provided to the Government under law, regulation, or any other available enforcement mechanism.

Mandatory Disclosures
As stated in 2 CFR 200.113, Mandatory Disclosures, of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, an applicant, recipient, or subrecipient of a Federal award must promptly disclose whenever, in connection with the Federal award (including any activities or subawards thereunder), it has credible evidence of the commission of a violation of Federal criminal law involving fraud, conflict of interest, bribery, or gratuity violations found in Title 18 of the United States Code or a violation of the civil False Claims Act (31 U.S.C. 3729-3733). The disclosure must be made in writing to the Federal agency, the agency's Office of Inspector General, and pass-through entity (if applicable). Recipients and subrecipients are also required to report matters related to recipient integrity and performance in accordance with Appendix XII of this part. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in § 200.339. (See also 2 CFR part 180, 31 U.S.C. 3321, and 41 U.S.C. 2313.)

Health IT Coordination Requirements
Title XIII of the HITECH Act provides for the advancement of health information technology and health information exchange through the use of standards and implementation specifications, and through health information technology certification criteria established by the Secretary.

For grants or cooperative agreements where funding will be utilized for implementing, acquiring, or upgrading health IT for activities funded by any entity Use health IT that meets standards and implementation specifications adopted in 45 CFR 170, Subpart B, if such standards and implementation specifications can support the activity.
Visit 45 CFR 170, Subpart B learn more.

For grants or cooperative agreements where funding will be used to implement, acquire, upgrade, or utilize health information technology for activities involving health care providers in ambulatory or hospital settings (as such health care providers are defined as eligible under Sections 4101, 4102 and 4201 of the HITECH Act), the recipient must use health IT certified under the ONC Health IT Certification Program if certified technology can support the activity.

Visit https://www.healthit.gov/topic/certification-ehrs/certification-health-it to learn more.

If standards and implementation specifications adopted in 45 CFR part 170, Subpart B cannot support the activity, recipients and subrecipients are encouraged to use health IT that meets non-proprietary standards and implementation specifications developed by consensus-based standards development organizations. This may include standards identified in the ONC Interoperability Standards Advisory, available at https://www.healthit.gov/isp/. Please Note: Beginning on January 20, 2025, President Trump issued several Executive Orders (EOs) which have an impact on HHS grants and cooperative agreements.
Consistent with President Trump's priorities and agenda, to the extent permitted by law, ONC has exercised enforcement discretion as to certain requirements in the ONC Health IT Certification Program. Therefore, HHS is providing the following exceptions to the requirements for funded entities which may otherwise apply under this guidance:

(1) Health IT acquired or obtained for activities by a funded entity:
(a) Is not required to have the capability to categorize data on individuals using the sexual orientation and gender identity data elements found in the United States Core Data for Interoperability (USCDI) version 3; and
(b) May have the capability to only categorize data on individuals for the sex data element in accordance with the 248152002 |Female (finding)|; and 248153007 |Male (finding) SNOMED CT® codes.

2) Health IT acquired or upgraded by eligible clinicians in ambulatory settings, or hospitals, eligible under Sections 4101, 4102, and 4201 of the HITECH Act, certified under the ONC Health IT Certification Program to the "patient demographics and observations" certification criterion (45 CFR 170.315(a)(5)):
(a) Is not required to demonstrate conformance with any or all of the following data and observations in paragraph (a)(5)(i): sex parameter for clinical use, sexual orientation, gender identity, name to use, and pronouns;
(b) Is not required to demonstrate conformance with the following paragraphs of (a)(5)(i): (D) ("sexual orientation"), (E) ("gender identity"), (F) ("sex parameter for clinical use"), (G) ("name to use"), and (H) ("pronouns"); and
(c) May demonstrate, for conformance with paragraph (a)(5)(i)(C) ("sex"), that it can record sex solely in accordance with the standard specified in § 170.207(n)(1) for the period up to and including December 31, 2025, or the following SNOMED CT® codes found in the standard specified in § 170.207(n)(2):
- 248152002 |Female (finding)|; and

o 248153007 |Male (finding)|.May demonstrate, for conformance with paragraph (a)(5)(i)(C) ("sex"), that it can record sex solely in accordance with the standard specified in § 170.207(n)(1) for the period up to and including December 31, 2025, or the following SNOMED CT® codes found in the standard specified in § 170.207(n)(2):

Intangible Property and Copyrights

Intangible property, as defined in 2 CFR 200.1, means property having no physical existence, such as trademarks, copyrights, patents and patent applications and property, such as loans, notes and other debt instruments, lease agreements, stock, and other instruments of property ownership of either tangible or intangible property, such as intellectual property, software, or software subscriptions or licenses.

(a) Title to intangible property (see 2 CFR §200.315 Intangible property) acquired under a Federal award vests upon acquisition in the recipient or subrecipient. The recipient or subrecipient must use that intangible property for the originally authorized purpose and must not encumber the property without the approval of the Federal agency or pass-through entity. When no longer needed for the originally authorized purpose, disposition of the intangible property must occur in accordance with the provisions in § 200.313(e).

(b) To the extent permitted by law, the recipient or subrecipient may copyright any work that is subject to copyright and was developed, or for which ownership was acquired, under a Federal award. The Federal agency reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the work for Federal purposes and to authorize others to do so. This includes the right to require recipients and subrecipients to make such works available through agency-designated public access repositories. **(Please note, for the purpose of this funding opportunity "work" can be considered as: writings, films, sound recordings, pictorial reproductions, drawings, designs, or other graphic representations, procedural manuals, forms, diagrams, work flow charts, equipment descriptions, data files, data processing or computer programs (software), statistical records, and other technical research data.)**

(c) The recipient or subrecipient is subject to applicable regulations governing patents and inventions, including government-wide regulations issued by the Department of Commerce at 37 CFR part 401.

(d) The Federal Government has the right to:

(1) Obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data produced under a Federal award; and
(2) Authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data for Federal purposes

(e) (1) The recipient or subrecipient must provide research data relating to published research findings produced under the Federal award and that were used by the Federal Government in developing an agency action that has the force and effect of law if requested by the Federal agency in response to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. When the Federal agency obtains the research data solely in response to a FOIA request, the Federal agency may charge the requester a fee for the cost of obtaining the research data. This fee should reflect the costs incurred by the Federal agency and the recipient or subrecipient. This fee is in addition to any fees the Federal agency may assess under the FOIA (5 U.S.C. 552(a)(4)(A)).

(2) Published research findings means when:

(i) Research findings are published in a peer-reviewed scientific or technical journal; or
(ii) Research findings publicly cited by a Federal agency in developing an agency action that has the force and effect of law.

(3) Research data means the recorded factual material commonly accepted in the scientific community as necessary to validate research findings. Research data does not include any of the following:

(i) Preliminary analyses, drafts of scientific papers, plans for future research, peer reviews, or communications with colleagues. This "recorded" material excludes physical objects (for example, laboratory samples).

(ii) Trade secrets, commercial information, materials necessary to be held confidential by a researcher until they are published, or similar information which is protected under law; and

(iii) Personnel, medical, and other personally identifiable information that, if disclosed, would constitute an invasion of personal privacy. Information that could identify a particular person in a research study is not considered research data.

(f) Federal agencies should work with recipients to maximize public access to Federally funded research results and data in a manner that protects data providers' confidentiality, privacy, and security. Agencies should provide guidance to recipients to make restricted-access data available through a variety of mechanisms. FOIA may not be the most appropriate mechanism for providing access to intangible property, including Federally funded research results and data.

For any work owned by a third party that was licensed by the recipient under this award, recipient will assure that said license also reserves for the Government a royalty free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the work for Federal purposes and to authorize others to do so.

Records Retention

The recipient and subrecipient must retain all Federal award records for three years from the date of submission of their final financial report. For awards that are renewed quarterly or annually, the recipient and subrecipient must retain records for three years from the date of submission of their quarterly or annual financial report, respectively. Records to be retained include but are not limited to, financial records, supporting documentation, and statistical records.

2 CFR Part 200.334 provides exceptions and qualifications to the three-year retention requirement. For example, if any litigation, claim, financial management review, or audit is started before the expiration of the three-year period, the records shall be retained until all litigation, claims, or audit findings involving the records have been resolved and final action taken. This section also specifies the retention period for other types of grant-related records, including indirect cost proposals and property records. See 2 CFR Part 200.337 for additional record retention and access requirements for Federal awards.

Modifications

Modifications and/or amendments to the cooperative agreement shall be effective upon the mutual agreement of both parties, except where ONC is authorized under the Terms and Conditions of award, 2 CFR Part 200, or other applicable regulation or statute to make unilateral amendments.

Audit Requirements

OMB's Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements, Subpart F, Audit Requirements sets forth standards for obtaining consistency and uniformity among Federal agencies for the audit of non-Federal entities expending Federal awards. In general, a non-Federal entity that expends $1,000,000 or more during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in Federal awards shall have

a single or program-specific audit. Subpart F provides further guidance including the manner in which expenditures are determined, the distinction between a single audit and a program-specific audit, frequency of audits, and roles and responsibilities in the conduct of audits.

Enforcement Actions/Termination

This award is subject to the termination provisions at 2 CFR 200.340. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.340, the recipient agrees by accepting this award that continued funding for the award is contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds, recipient satisfactory performance, compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the award, and may also otherwise be terminated, to the extent authorized by law, if the agency determines that the award no longer effectuates program goals or agency priorities.

ONC will generally allow the recipient an opportunity to take appropriate corrective action before terminating a program. ONC may terminate the Cooperative Agreement if the recipient does not take appropriate corrective action. ONC may also terminate the award, without the option for corrective action, if the deficiency is so serious as to warrant immediate termination or if public health or welfare concerns require immediate action.

The parties may mutually terminate a Cooperative Agreement, partially or totally, if the two parties agree upon the termination conditions, including the effective date and the portion to be terminated. If the recipient decides to terminate a portion of a Cooperative Agreement, ONC may determine that the remaining portion of the Cooperative Agreement will not accomplish the purposes for which the Cooperative Agreement was originally awarded and may terminate the remaining portion of the award. The recipient shall contact the ONC representative should it decide to terminate all, or part of its Cooperative Agreement as outlined in 2 CFR 200.340.

When an award is terminated or partially terminated, the recipient is still responsible for closing out the award per 2 CFR 200.344. The recipient is required to contact their assigned Grants Management Specialist to obtain closeout instructions. In the event of termination, the recipient will be required to continue supporting functions of the Cooperative Agreement throughout a 120-day closeout period. This support includes the transfer of all Work Products created under the Cooperative Agreement to ONC immediately upon completion/termination of the award.

For the purpose of this program, if the recipient is terminated, the recipient agrees to the transfer of and future use by ONC and any successor recipient of any Work Products developed under this Cooperative Agreement.

Please review all regulations governing termination of a Federal award at 2 CFR 200.339- 2CFR 200.343.

Steven's Amendment

When issuing statements, press releases, requests for proposals, bid solicitations, and other documents describing projects or programs funded in whole or in part with Federal money, all receiving Federal funds included in this Act, including but not limited to State and local governments and recipients of Federal research grants, shall clearly state—

(1) the percentage of the total costs of the program or project which will be financed with Federal money;
(2) the dollar amount of Federal funds for the project or program; and
(3) percentage and dollar amount of the total costs of the project or program that will be financed by non-governmental sources.

Recipients are required to use the following acknowledgement and disclaimer on all products produced by ONC grant funds:
"This project is/was supported by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number and title for grant amount (specify grant number, title, total award amount and percentage financed with nongovernmental sources). This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by ONC, HHS or the U.S. Government."

Recipients are required to use this language when issuing statements, press releases, requests for proposals, bid solicitations, and other ONC supported publications and forums describing projects or programs funded in whole or in part with ONC funding. Examples of ONC supported publications include, but are not limited to, manuals, toolkits, resource guides, case studies, and issues briefs.

508 Compliance
ONC requires its recipients to ensure that any material meant for public release developed by way of ONC funding is in compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794d) accessible to people with disabilities.

Whistleblower Protections
Recipients of this award must comply with the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 (Pub. L. 112-239, 41 U.S.C. § 4712) "Enhancement of contractor protection from reprisal for disclosure of certain information," and 48 CFR part 3 subpart 3.9, "Whistleblower Protections for Contractor Employees." For more information see:
https://oig.hhs.gov/fraud/whistleblower/

G. Appendix

Appendix A

Tips for Writing a Strong Application

Include your organization's Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). You shall include a UEI to have your application reviewed. For additional information regarding UEI, please access https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/organization/federal-acquisition-service/office-of-systems-management/integrated-award-environment-iae/iae-systems-information-kit/unique-entity-identifier-update https://sam.gov/entity-registration

Keep your audience in mind. Reviewers will use only the information contained in the application to assess the application. Be sure the application and responses to the program requirements and expectations are complete and clearly written. Do not assume that reviewers are familiar with the lead recipient organization. Keep the review criteria in mind when writing the application.

Prepare early. Start preparing the application early. Allow plenty of time to gather required information from various sources.

Follow the instructions in this guidance carefully. Place all information in the order requested in the guidance. If the information is not placed in the requested order, you may receive a lower score.

Be brief, concise, and clear. Make your points understandable. Provide accurate and honest information, including candid accounts of problems and realistic plans to address them. If any required information or data is omitted, explain why. Make sure the information provided in each table, chart, attachment, etc., is consistent with the proposal narrative and information in other tables.

Be organized and logical. Many applications fail to receive a high score because the reviewers cannot follow the thought process of the lead recipient or because parts of the application do not fit together.

Be careful in the use of attachments. Do not use the attachments for information that is required in the body of the application. Be sure to cross-reference all tables and attachments to the appropriate text in the application.

Carefully proofread the application. Misspellings and grammatical errors will impede reviewers in understanding the application. Be sure that page limits are followed. Limit the use of abbreviations and acronyms and define each one at its first use and periodically throughout application. Make sure you submit your application in final form, without markups.

Print out and carefully review an electronic application to ensure accuracy and completion. When submitting electronically, print out the application before submitting it to ensure appropriate formatting and adherence to page limit requirements. Check to ensure that all attachments are included before sending the application forward.

Ensure that all information is submitted at the same time. We will not consider additional information and/or materials submitted after your initial submission, nor will we accept e-mailed applications or supplemental materials once your application has been received.

Appendix B

Instructions – SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance

This is a standard form required for use as a cover sheet for submission of pre-applications and applications and related information under discretionary programs. Some of the items are required and some are optional at the discretion of the applicant or the federal agency (agency). Required fields on the form are identified with an asterisk (*) and are also specified as "Required" in the instructions below.

Item	Field Name	Information
1.	Type of Submission:	(Required) Select one type of submission in accordance with agency instructions. • Pre-application • Application • Changed/Corrected Application - Check if this submission is to change or correct a previously submitted application. Unless requested by the agency, applicants may not use this form to submit changes after the closing date.
2.	Type of Application:	(Required) Select one type of application in accordance with agency instructions. • New - An application that is being submitted to an agency for the first time. • Continuation - An extension for an additional funding/budget period for a project with a projected completion date. This can include renewals. • Revision - Any change in the federal government's financial obligation or contingent liability from an existing obligation. If a revision, enter the appropriate letter(s). More than one may be selected. If "Other" is selected, please specify in text box provided. A. Increase Award B. Decrease Award C. Increase Duration D. Decrease Duration E. Other (specify)
3.	Date Received:	Leave this field blank. This date will be assigned by the Federal agency.
4.	Applicant Identifier:	Enter the entity identifier assigned by the Federal agency, if any, or the applicant's control number if applicable.
5a.	Federal Entity Identifier:	Enter the number assigned to your organization by the federal agency, if any.
5b.	Federal Award Identifier:	For new applications leave blank. For a continuation or revision to an existing award, enter the previously assigned federal award identifier number. If a changed/corrected application, enter the federal identifier in accordance with agency instructions.

Item	Field Name	Information
6.	Date Received by State:	Leave this field blank. This date will be assigned by the state, if applicable.
7.	State Application Identifier:	Leave this field blank. This identifier will be assigned by the state, if applicable.
8.	Applicant Information:	Enter the following in accordance with agency instructions:
	a. Legal Name:	(Required) Enter the legal name of applicant that will undertake the assistance activity. This is the organization that has registered with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). Information on registering with CCR may be obtained by visiting www.Grants.gov.
	b. Employer/Taxpayer Number (EIN/TIN):	(Required) Enter the employer or taxpayer identification number (EIN or TIN) as assigned by the Internal Revenue Service. If your organization is not in the US, enter 44-4444444.
	c. Unique Entity Identifier:	(Required) Enter the organization's UEI received from SAM.gov, upon registering. Information on obtaining a UEI may be obtained by visiting https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/organization/federal-acquisition-service/office-of-systems-management/integrated-award-environment-iae/iae-systems-information-kit/unique-entity-identifier-update
	d. Address:	Enter address: Street 1 (Required); city (Required); County/Parish, State (Required if country is US), Province, Country (Required), 9-digit zip/postal code (Required if country US).
	e. Organizational Unit:	Enter the name of the primary organizational unit, department or division that will undertake the assistance activity.
	f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:	Enter the first and last name (Required); prefix, middle name, suffix, title. Enter organizational affiliation if affiliated with an organization other than that in 7.a. Telephone number and email (Required); fax number.
9.	Type of Applicant: (Required) Select up to three applicant type(s) in accordance with agency instructions.	A. State Government B. County Government C. City or Township Government D. Special District Government E. Regional Organization F. U.S. Territory or Possession G. Independent School District H. Public/State Controlled Institution of Higher Education I. Indian/Native American Tribal Government (Federally Recognized) J. Indian/Native American Tribal Government (Other than Federally Recognized) K. Indian/Native American Tribally Designated Organization L. Public/Indian Housing M. Nonprofit N. Private Institution of Higher Education O. Individual P. For-Profit Organization (Other than Small Business)

Item	Field Name	Information
		Q. Small Business R. Hispanic-serving Institution S. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) T. Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs) U. Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions V. Non-US Entity W. Other (specify)
10.	Name of Federal Agency:	(Required) Enter the name of the federal agency from which assistance is being requested with this application.
11.	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number/Title:	Enter the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number and title of the program under which assistance is requested, as found in the program announcement, if applicable.
12.	Funding Opportunity Number/Title:	(Required) Enter the Funding Opportunity Number and title of the opportunity under which assistance is requested, as found in the program announcement.
13.	Competition Identification Number/Title:	Enter the competition identification number and title of the competition under which assistance is requested, if applicable.
14.	Areas Affected by Project:	This data element is intended for use only by programs for which the area(s) affected are likely to be different than the place(s) of performance reported on the SF-424 Project/Performance Site Location(s) Form. Add attachment to enter additional areas, if needed.
15.	Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:	(Required) Enter a brief descriptive title of the project. If appropriate, attach a map showing project location (e.g., construction or real property projects). For pre-applications, attach a summary description of the project.
16.	Congressional Districts Of:	15a. (Required) Enter the applicant's congressional district. 15b. Enter all district(s) affected by the program or project. Enter in the format: 2 characters state abbreviation - 3 characters district number, e.g., CA-005 for California 5th district, CA-012 for California 12 district, NC-103 for North Carolina's 103 district. If all congressional districts in a state are affected, enter "all" for the district number, e.g., MD-all for all congressional districts in Maryland. If nationwide, i.e. all districts within all states are affected, enter US-all. If the program/project is outside the US, enter 00-000. This optional data element is intended for use only by programs for which the area(s) affected are likely to be different than place(s) of performance reported on the SF-424 Project/Performance Site Location(s) Form. Attach an additional list of program/project congressional districts, if needed.
17.	Proposed Project Start and End Dates:	(Required) Enter the proposed start date and end date of the project. The budget should cover a two-year period-of-performance and may also include an extended budget and project proposal for year three.
18.	Estimated Funding:	

Item	Field Name	Information
(Required) Enter the amount requested, or to be contributed during the first funding/budget period by each contributor. Value of in-kind contributions should be included on appropriate lines, as applicable. If the action will result in a dollar change to an existing award, indicate only the amount of the change. For decreases, enclose the amounts in parentheses. Applicants should review matching principles contained in 2 CFR _part 200 before completing Item 18. All budget information entered under item 18 should cover the upcoming budget period. For sub-item 18a, enter the federal funds being requested. Sub-items 18b-18e is considered matching funds. The dollar amounts entered in sub-items 18b-18f shall total at least *[cite percentage or fraction]* of the amount of federal funds being requested (the amount in 18a). For sub-item 18f, enter only the amount, if any, which is will be used as part of the required match. There are two types of match: 1) non-federal cash and 2) non-federal in-kind. In general, costs borne by the applicant and cash contributions of any and all third parties involved in the project, including sub-recipients, contractors and consultants, are considered matching funds. Generally, most contributions from sub-contractors or sub-recipients (third parties) will be non-federal in-kind matching funds. Volunteered time and use of facilities to hold meetings or conduct project activities may be considered in-kind (third party) donations. Examples of non-federal cash match include budgetary funds provided from the applicant agency's budget for costs associated with the project. ***ONC's Match Requirement – (Sample Language-if applicable)*** *Under this program, the applicant's match requirement is $1 for every $3 Federal dollars In other words, for every three (3) dollars received in Federal funding, the applicant shall contribute at least one (1) dollar in non-Federal resources toward the project's total cost. This "three-to-one" ratio is reflected in the following formula which you can use to calculate your minimum required match:* *Federal Funds Request/3 = Minimum Match Requirement* *For example, if you request $100,000 in Federal funds, then your minimum match requirement is $100,000/3 or $33,333. In this example the project's total cost would be $133,333.* *If the required non-Federal share is not met by a funded project, ONC will disallow any unmatched Federal dollars.* 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 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 HHS requirements. If indirect costs are to be included in the application, a copy of the approved indirect cost agreement shall be included with the application. Further, if any sub-contractors or sub-recipients are requesting indirect costs, copies of their indirect cost agreements shall also be included with the application.		
19.	Is Application Subject to Review by State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?	(Required) Applicants should contact the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for Federal Executive Order 12372 to determine whether the application is subject to the State intergovernmental review process. Select the appropriate box. If "a." is selected, enter the date the application was submitted to the State.

Item	Field Name	Information
20.	Is the Applicant Delinquent on any Federal Debt?	(Required) Select the appropriate box. This question applies to the applicant organization, not the person who signs as the authorized representative. Categories of federal debt include but, may not be limited to: delinquent audit disallowances, loans and taxes. If yes, include an explanation in an attachment.
21.	Authorized Representative:	To be signed and dated by the authorized representative of the applicant organization. Enter the first and last name (Required); prefix, middle name, suffix. Enter title, telephone number, email (Required); and fax number. A copy of the governing body's authorization for you to sign this application as the official representative shall be on file in the applicant's office. (Certain federal agencies may require that this authorization be submitted as part of the application.)

Appendix C

Instructions – SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs

Standard Form 424A is designed to accommodate applications for multiple grant programs; thus, for purposes of this program, many of the budget item columns and rows are not applicable. You should only consider and respond to the budget items for which guidance is provided below. Unless otherwise indicated, the SF 424A should reflect a two-year budget.

Section A Budget Summary
Line 5: Leave columns (c) and (d) blank. Enter TOTAL federal costs in column (e) and total nonfederal costs (including third party in-kind contributions and any program income to be used as part of the recipient match) in column (f). Enter the sum of columns (e) and (f) in column (g).

Section B Budget Categories
Column 3: Enter the breakdown of how you plan to use the federal funds being requested by object class category (see instructions for each object class category below).

Column 4: Enter the breakdown of how you plan to use the non-federal share by object class category.

Column 5: Enter the total funds required for the project (sum of Columns 3 and 4) by object class category.

Separate Budget and Narrative Justification Requirement

You shall submit a separate budget and narrative justification as part of your application. When more than 33% of a project's total budget falls under a contractual expense, a detailed budget narrative/justification shall be provided for each sub-contractor or sub-recipient. Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grant programs are required to provide a combined multi-year budget and narrative justification, as well as a detailed budget narrative/justification for each year of potential grant funding. A separate budget and narrative justification is also required for each potential year of grant funding requested.

In your budget and narrative justification, you should include a breakdown of the budgetary costs for all of the object class categories noted in Section B, across three columns: federal; non-federal cash; and non-federal in-kind. Cost breakdowns, or justifications, are required for any cost of $1,000 or more. The budget and narrative justification should fully explain and justify the costs in each of the major budget items for each of the object class categories, as described below. Non-federal cash as well as, sub-contractor or sub-recipient (third party) in-kind contributions designated as match shall be clearly identified and explained in the budget and narrative justification. The full budget and narrative justification should be included in the application immediately following the SF 424 forms. This should include a budget narrative for the entire period of performance.

Line 6a: Personnel: Enter total costs of salaries and wages of applicant/recipient staff. Do not include the cost of consultants. Consultant costs should be included under 6h, Other. In the budget narrative/justification: Identify the project director, if known. Specify the key staff, their titles, brief summary of project related duties, and the percent of their time commitments to the project in the budget narrative/justification.

Some Points to Consider:

- ♦Is the basis for determining each employee's compensation described (annual salary and % time devoted)?
- ♦Is each position identified by title/responsibility?
- ♦Are time commitments and the amount of compensation stated and reasonable?
- ♦Are salary increases anticipated during the grant period and are they justified (COLA, etc.)?
- ♦Are any personnel costs unallowable?
  - o Dual Compensation
  - o Federal Employee

Line 6b: Fringe Benefits: Enter the total costs of fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate. In the justification: Provide a breakdown of amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs, such as health insurance, FICA, retirement insurance, etc.

Some Points to Consider:

- ♦Is the amount specified as a separate line item?
- ♦Is each type of benefit indicated separately or does the organization have an approved fringe benefit rate?
- ♦Are fringe increases contemplated during the grant period?
- ♦Are any fringe costs unallowable?

Line 6c: Travel: Enter total costs of out-of-town travel (travel requiring per diem) for staff of the project. Do not enter costs for consultant's travel - this should be included in line 6h. In the justification: Include the total number of trips, destinations, purpose, and length of stay, subsistence allowances and transportation costs (including mileage rates).

Line 6d: Equipment: Enter the total costs of all equipment to be acquired by the project. For all recipients, "equipment" is nonexpendable tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more per unit. If the item does not meet the $5,000 threshold, include it in your budget under Supplies, line 6e. In the justification: Equipment to be purchased with federal funds shall be justified as necessary for the conduct of the project. The equipment shall be used for project-related functions; the equipment, or a reasonable facsimile, shall not be otherwise available to the applicant or its sub recipients. The justification also shall contain plans for the use or disposal of the equipment after the project ends.

Some Points to Consider:

- ♦Are equipment items specified by unit and cost?
- ♦Is the request reasonable and allowable under the project?
- ♦Does the organization have a procurement policy in place?
- ♦Is a lease vs. purchase study necessary (vehicles, large items of equipment)?
- ♦Are purchases distinguishable from rentals?

Line 6e: Supplies: Enter the total costs of all tangible expendable personal property (supplies) other than those included on line 6d. In the justification: Provide general description of types of items included.

Some Points to Consider**:**

- ♦ Are supplies listed separately?
  - o Office
  - o Training
  - o Research
  - o Other types of supplies
- ♦ How was cost determined?
- ♦ Is the basis for the cost reasonable? Monthly estimates are sufficient
- ♦ Are costs consistently treated?

Line 6f: Contractual: Enter the total costs of all contracts, including (1) procurement contracts (except those, which belong on other lines such as equipment, supplies, etc.). Also include any contracts with organizations for the provision of technical assistance. Do not include payments to individuals or consultants on this line. In the budget narrative/justification attach a list of contractors indicating the name of the organization, the purpose of the contract, and the estimated dollar amount. If the name of the contractor, scope of work, and estimated costs is not available or have not been negotiated, indicate when this information will be available. Whenever the applicant/recipient intends to delegate more than 33% of a project's total budget to the contractual line item, the applicant/recipient shall provide a completed copy of Section B of the SF 424A Budget Categories for each sub-contractor or sub-recipient, and separate budget narrative/justification for each sub-contractor or sub-recipient for each year of potential grant funding.

Some Points to Consider:

- ♦ Is the type of each service to be rendered described?
- ♦ For Consultants/Individuals
  - o Is an hourly, daily or weekly base rate given?
  - o Are rates allowable, justified, reasonable and comparable to market?
- ♦ Is the total amount for any contract in excess of $150,000?
  - o Is procurement method described?

o If the contract is not competitively bid, has a sole source justification been provided?

Note: The competitive process shall be used if goods and services will be provided through a contract (e.g., vendor or consultant). All costs associated with contracts should be included in this category. Sub awards are made to entities carrying out part of the program effort, project, and objectives. Sub awards are to be listed individually in the "Other" cost category.

Line 6g: Construction: Leave blank since construction is not an allowable cost under this program.

Line 6h: Other: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable, may include, but are not limited to: insurance, medical and dental costs (i.e. for project volunteers this is different from personnel fringe benefits); non-contractual fees and travel paid directly to individual consultants; local transportation (all travel which does not require per diem is considered local travel); postage; space and equipment rentals/lease; printing and publication; computer use; training and staff development costs (i.e. registration fees). If a cost does not clearly fit under another category, and it qualifies as an allowable cost, then rest assured this is where it belongs. In the justification: Provide a reasonable

explanation for items in this category. For individual consultants, explain the nature of services provided and the relation to activities in the project. Describe the types of activities for staff development costs.

Some Points to Consider:

- ♦ Are items listed by major type (space rental, printing, phone, maintenance, etc.)?
- ♦ Are all costs justified, reasonable and allowable?
- ♦ Is there a reasonable basis for costs?
- ♦ List each sub award and amount of award
- ♦ Provide description of activities to be performed
- ♦ Describe method used to select the sub award and type of agreement to be awarded
- ♦ Provide a separate budget and budget narrative for each sub award

Note: Costs for contractual arrangements (vendors, consultants) should be budgeted in the "Contractual" cost category.

Line 6i: Total Direct Charges: Show the totals of Lines 6a through 6h.

Line 6j: Indirect Charges: Enter the total amount of indirect charges (costs), if any. If no indirect costs are requested, enter "none." Indirect charges may be requested if: (1) the applicant has a current indirect cost rate agreement approved by the Department of Health and Human Services or another federal agency; or (2) the applicant is a state or local government agency.

Budget narrative/justification: State governments should enter the amount of indirect costs determined in accordance with HHS requirements. An applicant that will charge indirect costs to the grant shall enclose a copy of the current indirect cost rate agreement. If any sub-contractors or sub-recipients are requesting indirect costs, copies of their indirect cost agreements shall also be included with the application.

If the applicant organization is in the process of initially developing or renegotiating a rate, it should immediately upon notification that an award will be made, develop a tentative indirect cost rate proposal based on its most recently completed fiscal year in accordance with the principles set forth in the cognizant agency's guidelines for establishing indirect cost rates, and submit it to the cognizant agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposals may also request indirect costs. It should be noted that when an indirect cost rate is requested, those costs included in the indirect cost pool should not also be charged as direct costs to the grant. Also, if the applicant is requesting a rate which is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization shall submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

Line 6k: Total: Enter the total amounts of Lines 6i and 6j.

Line 7: Program Income: As appropriate, include the estimated amount of income, if any, you expect to be generated from this project. Program income shall be used as additional program costs and cannot be used as match (non-federal resource).

Section C Non-Federal Resources - Not applicable.

Section D Forecasted Cash Needs - Not applicable.

Section E Budget Estimate of Federal Funds Needed for Balance of the Project
Line 20: Section E is relevant for multi-year grant applications, where the project period is 24 months or longer. This section does not apply to grant awards where the project period is less than 17 months.

Section F Other Budget Information
Line 22: Indirect Charges: Enter the type of indirect rate (provisional, predetermined, final or fixed) to be in effect during the funding period, the base to which the rate is applied, and the total indirect costs. Include a copy of your current Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.

Line 23: Remarks: Provide any other comments deemed necessary.

Appendix D

Budget and Narrative Justification Template

SAMPLE BUDGET AND NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION FOR COMPLETING SF 424A:

A. Personnel:
An employee of the applying agency whose work is tied to the application

TABLE 1: FEDERAL REQUEST

Position	Name	Annual Salary/Rate	Level of Effort	Cost
Program Director	John Doe	$164,890	10%	$6,489
Project Coordinator	To be selected	$46,276	100%	$46,276
			TOTAL	$52,765

NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION: Enter a description of the Personnel funds requested and how their use will support the purpose and goals of this proposal. Be sure to describe the role, responsibilities and unique qualifications of each position.

FEDERAL REQUEST (enter in Section B column 1-line 6a of form SF424A): **$52,765**

B. Fringe Benefits:
Fringe benefits may include contributions for social security, employee insurance, pension plans, etc. Only those benefits not included in an organization's indirect cost pool may be shown as direct costs.

List all components of fringe benefits rate

TABLE 2: FEDERAL REQUEST

Component	Rate	Wage	Cost
FICA	7.65%	$52,765	$4,037
Workers Compensation	2.5%	$52,765	$1,319
Insurance	10.5%	$52,765	$5,540
		TOTAL	$10,896

NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION: Enter a description of the Fringe funds requested, how the rate was determined, and how their use will support the purpose and goals of this proposal.

FEDERAL REQUEST (enter in Section B column 1-line 6b of form SF424A)**: $10,896**

C. Travel:

Explain need for all travel other than that required by this application. The lowest available commercial fares for coach or equivalent accommodations shall be used. Local travel policies prevail. Please note,

the below is sample information to depict what travel requests should look like. Please ensure to follow all GSA approved per diem and mileage rates when developing your budget information.

TABLE 3: FEDERAL REQUEST – THIS IS A SAMPLE REQUEST

Purpose of Travel	Location	Item	Rate	Cost
State HIE Leadership Training	Washington, DC	Airfare	$200/flight x 2 persons	$400
		Hotel	$200/night x 2 persons x 3 nights	$1200
		Per Diem (meals)	$64/day x 2 persons x 3 days	$384
State HIE Forum	Chicago, IL	Airfare	$200/flight x 2 persons	$400
		Hotel	$140/night x 2 persons x 3 nights	$840
		Per Diem (meals)	$49/day x 2 persons x 4 days	$392
State Travel		Airfare	$200/flight x 2 persons	$400
		Hotel	$200/night x 2 persons x 2 nights	$800
		Per Diem (meals)	$64/day x 2 persons x 3 days	$384
Local Travel		Mileage	3,000 miles@.38/mile	$1,140
			TOTAL	$6,340

NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION: Describe the purpose of travel and how costs were determined.

The grant requires travel of two members to attend the two-day State HIE Leadership Training in Washington, DC. also required to send two members to Chicago, IL for a two-day State HIE Forum. In addition to the required trainings, funds for local travel are needed to attend local meetings, project activities, and training events. Local travel rate is based on agency's personally owned vehicle (POV) reimbursement rate. Please reference the GSA site for most current approved rates. **FEDERAL REQUEST** (enter in Section B column 1-line 6c of form SF424A): **$6,340**

D. Equipment:

Permanent equipment is defined as nonexpendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more.

If applicant agency defines "equipment" at lower rate, then follow the applying agency's policy.

TABLE 4: FEDERAL REQUEST

Item(s)	Rate	Cost
None		0
	TOTAL	

NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION: Enter a description of the Equipment and how its purchase will support the purpose and goals of this proposal.

FEDERAL REQUEST (enter in Section B column 1-line 6d of form SF424A): **$ 0**

E. Supplies: Materials costing less than $5,000 per unit and often having one-time use

TABLE 5: FEDERAL REQUEST

Item(s)	Rate	Cost
General office supplies	$50/mo. x 12 mo.	$600
Postage	$37/mo. x 8 mo.	$296
Laptop Computer	$900	$900
Printer	$300	$300
Projector	$900	$900
Copies	8000 copies x .10/copy	$800
Computer update (if needed)		$250
	TOTAL	$4,046

NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION: Enter a description of the Supplies requested and how their purchase will support the purpose and goals of this proposal.

FEDERAL REQUEST (enter in Section B column 1-line 6e of form SF424A): **$4,046**

F. Contract:
The costs of project activities to be undertaken by a third-party contractor should be included in this category as a single line item charge. A complete itemization of the cost comprising the charge should be attached to the budget. If there is more than one contractor, each shall be budgeted separately and shall have an attached itemization.

A contract is generally the amount paid to non-employees for services or products. A consultant is a non-employee who provides advice and expertise in a specific program area.

TABLE 6: FEDERAL REQUEST

Name		Cost
1. To be selected	Environmental Strategy Consultation Rate is $150/day for 35 days = $5,250 Travel 500 miles @ .38/mile = $190	$5,440
2. To be selected	Media 1.5-minute Public Service Announcement (PSA)	$3,000
3. To be selected	Evaluation Report	$4,500
4. To be selected	Training for Staff members Trainers: rate is $300/day for 4 days = $1,200 Materials: approx. $5/person X 25 people = $125 Room Rental = $75 Travel for Trainers = Flight $300/person X 2 people = $600 Per Diem - $46/day x 4 days x 2 people = $368	$2,368

Name		Cost
5. To be selected	Data Analysis	$1,800
6. To be selected	Responsible Server Training Trainer: rate $500/day	$500
7. To be selected	Television advertising to run ads 5x/week x $50/ad X 52 wks.	$13,000
	TOTAL	$30,608

NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION: Explain the need for each agreement and how their use will support the purpose and goals of this proposal. For those contracts already arranged, please provide the proposed categorical budgets. For those subcontracts that have not been arranged, please provide the expected Statement of Work, Period of Performance and how the proposed costs were estimated and the type of contract (bid, sole source…etc.)

FEDERAL REQUEST (enter in Section B column 1-line 6f of form SF424A): **$30,608**

G. Construction: NOT ALLOWED
On your SF424A, leave the following section blank: Section B, columns 1 & 2, line 6g

H. Other: Expenses not covered in any of the previous budget categories

TABLE 7: FEDERAL REQUEST

Item	Rate	Cost
1. Rent	$500/mo x 12 mo.	$6,000
2. Telephone	$100/mo. x 12 mo.	$1,200
3. Student Surveys	$1/survey x 2784	$2,784
4. Brochures	.89/brochure X 1500 brochures	$1,335
5. Web Service	$100/mo x 12 mo	$1,200
	TOTAL	$15,819

NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION: Explain the need for each item and how their use will support the purpose and goals of this proposal. Be sure to break down costs into cost/unit: i.e. cost/square foot and explain the use of each item requested.

FEDERAL REQUEST (enter in Section B column 1, line 6h of form SF424A): **$15,819**

TOTAL DIRECT COSTS:
FEDERAL REQUEST (enter in Section B column 1, line 6i of form SF424A): **$120,474**

TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS:
FEDERAL REQUEST (enter in Section B column 1, line 6j of form SF424A): **$4,526**

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS: Sum of Total Direct Costs and Indirect Costs
FEDERAL REQUEST (enter in Section B column 1, line 6k of form SF424A): **$125,000**

TABLE 8: BUDGET SUMMARY

Category	Federal Request	Total
Personnel	$52,765	$52,765
Fringe	$10,896	$10,896
Travel	$6,340	$6,340
Equipment	0	0
Supplies	$4,046	$4,046
Contractual	$30,608	$30,608
Other	$15,819	$15,819
Total Direct Costs*	$120,474	$120,474
Indirect Costs	$4,526	$4,526
Total Project Costs	$125,000	$125,000

Appendix E

Letter of Commitment Template

Dr. Thomas Keane
National Coordinator for Health Information Technology
Department of Health and Human Services
330 C. Street, 7th Floor, Office 7009A, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Date

Dear Dr. Keane,
(Name of organization/group submitting the letter) is very interested in addressing (insert the issue being addressed by the grant application) and (state why the issue is a concern).

(State knowledge of proposal, knowledge of agency submitting proposal, and encouragement of funding entity to provide resources to address issue identified above).

(State that the need to address the issue is significant and how other resources to address the need are insufficient to address or impact the need).

(Specifically state how your organization will support this project-through assistance with meeting matching requirements, board/commission participation, advocacy etc.).

(Describe your capacity and resources to produce required deliverables or services for the applicant)

(State how the organization will coordinate with appropriate partners to ensure efficient and effective use of grant funds).

(Conclude with general statement of confidence in and support for the organization seeking assistance, based on past experience with the applicant entity, reputation for effectiveness).

(Provide the following information for the point of contact in the supporting organization).
Name
Title
Agency
Division (if applicable)
State
Address
Phone
Email