RFA CE-25-031 Questions and Answers

1. Can you provide more information regarding this grant?

   More information about the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) can be found here on grants.gov. The full announcement can be found under section "Related Documents" which provides additional guidance for applying and navigating the application process. Application submissions can be accessed by pressing the red buttons to apply and/or subscribe for updates and research application portal.

2. Can you clarify that grants.gov is the only portal that the application is submitted through?

   As found in **Section IV: Application and Submission Information > 1. Address to Request Application Package** on page 32 of the NOFO, "applicants will use a system or platform to submit their applications through grants.gov and eRA Commons to CDC. *ASSIST, an institutional system to system (S2S), solution, or grants.gov Workspace are options.* ASSIST is a commonly used platform because, unlike other platforms, it provides a validation of all requirements prior to submission and prevents errors."

3. Would this type of program/proposal be appropriate for this grant? Would you be able to review proposed aims?

   While we are not able to provide guidance or information on the appropriateness of your proposal or aims to the NOFO, we can point you to sections of the NOFO that may address your inquiries and assist in developing your application:

   - **Section I: Funding Opportunity Description > 2. Approach** starting on page 14 to understand the objectives and intent of the NOFO, including examples of prevention approaches *eligible* and *not eligible* for evaluation;
   - **Section III: Eligibility Information > 5. Responsiveness** starting on page 28 to review aspects of an application that would be considered responsive and non-responsive; and
   - **Section V: Application Review Information** starting on page 40 to understand the scientific review criteria.

   As a reminder, this NOFO intends to cover a four-year program plan to complete a full-scale rigorous evaluation of a primary prevention program, policy, or practice for intimate partner violence and/or sexual violence. It is ultimately incumbent upon the applicant to justify the appropriate methods of their research and approach.

4. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) involves the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons and is recognized as a form of sexual violence and a crime under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Could you please clarify if proposals focusing on FGM prevention align with the objectives of this funding opportunity?

As stated in **Section I: Funding Opportunity Description > 1. Background and Purpose** starting on page 7, "The CDC defines sexual violence as a sexual act that is committed or attempted by another person without freely given consent of the victim or against someone who is unable to consent or refuse." While we are unable to provide guidance on the appropriateness of your proposal or aims, it is ultimately incumbent upon the applicant to determine whether their violence prevention focus of interest aligns with the definition of sexual violence and the purpose of this NOFO and justify this within the proposal.

5. What prevention approaches, if any, will be considered NOT eligible for this cooperative agreement?

   Prevention approaches not eligible for evaluation include programs, policies, or practices that are implemented in K-12 school-, college-, or university-settings, criminal justice approaches (e.g., community policing, arrest strategies), approaches that are currently being evaluated under existing CDC-funded initiatives, or approaches that have existing evidence of effectiveness for intimate partner violence/sexual violence prevention. This is not an exhaustive list. Please see **Section I: Funding Opportunity Description > 2. Approach > Approaches that are NOT eligible for evaluation** starting on page 15 for more information.

6. To confirm, this evaluation should be done in a program that has been already established for 2 years?
   a. ***Similar question:*** It will be a challenge in finding an organization with an established program for 2 years as intimate partner violence is stigmatizing, and lack of funding is a critical issue. Are there any other alternatives for the evaluation?

   The purpose of this NOFO is to evaluate the effectiveness of prevention approaches that already have traction within the field but have not been rigorously evaluated. To be identified as a "promising practice-based approach," programs, policies, or practices must have evidence of implementation in the field for a minimum of two years (see **NOFO Purpose** on page 2 and **Section III: Eligibility Information > 5. Responsiveness** on page 28). In addition, the application must demonstrate collection of prior data on the prevention approach demonstrating one or more of the following: positive implementation-related outcomes (e.g., data demonstrating reach, fidelity, availability, and/or acceptability of the approach) and/or collection of outcome monitoring data before and after implementing the approach that demonstrate positive changes in intimate partner violence, sexual violence, or established risk and protective factors for intimate partner violence and/or sexual violence.

   We encourage you to review NOFO RFA-CE-25-032 titled, "Formative Research of Community-led Primary Prevention Approaches to Address Elevated Risk of Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence" should you be interested in a grant opportunity surrounding intimate partner violence and/or sexual violence prevention that is focused on formative research instead. It is incumbent upon the applicant to determine which NOFO is best suited for their proposal.

7. Should the evaluation be done in your own state? Or can we do it in a different state?

   The evaluation can be conducted in a different state than the applicant institution as long as it is in the U.S. Applicants may not include collaborators or consultants from foreign institutions as stated in **Section III. Eligibility Information > Foreign Organizations** starting on page 28. All applicable federal laws and policies apply. It is incumbent on the applicant to demonstrate the appropriateness of the proposed research including data sources, collection methods, analysis, collaborations, and partnerships to meet the objectives of the NOFO. Please review **Section I: Funding Opportunity Description > 2. Approach** for more information regarding Research Design, Data Collection and Analysis, and Collaboration and Partnerships.

8. As a nonprofit who does NOT have 501(c)(3) status, would we qualify for this grant opportunity?

   Nonprofits without 501 (c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education, are eligible for this opportunity under category 13. Please see **Section III: Eligibility Information > 1. Eligible Applicants** on page 27 for more information regarding eligible applicants.

9. Regarding [PI] eligibility: The team of researchers have experience in published papers, and the organization has many years of experience in preventative implementation. Are you seeking proof that the researchers have worked with the organization, or do you also approve pertinent background on behalf of the researchers?
   a. ***Similar question:*** Can you please revisit the qualifications required of the research team for the NOFO?

   Please see **Executive Summary > Eligible Project Directors/Principal Investigators (PDs/PIs)** starting on page 5 as well as **Section III: Eligibility Information > 5. Responsiveness** starting on page 28 of the NOFO for more information regarding eligible PDs/PIs. As stated, "the SF424 Biographical Sketch must clearly document that the PI or Co-PI has previous relevant experience conducting rigorous outcome evaluations by having conducted at least one rigorous outcome evaluation. Evidence of the previous experience must be documented by at least one relevant first-authored, peer-reviewed journal article. The citation of the relevant publication(s) must be clearly identified (by bold text or highlight) in the appropriate SF424 Biographical Sketch. Prior PI experience with violence-related outcome evaluation research, particularly intimate partner violence and/or sexual violence research, is preferred, but not required." Ultimately, "individuals possessing the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to conduct proposed research should collaborate with their institutions to apply. Underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, as well as individuals with disabilities, are especially encouraged to apply."

10. Do you accept two or more PIs?

    As found in the **Executive Summary > Number of PD/PIs** on page 6 of the NOFO, "an application may name more than one PD/PI; their names must appear on the face page of the application. However:

- One (1) principal investigator must be designated as the contact PD/PI for all correspondence related to the application.
- All PD/PIs must include their eRA Commons Identification in the Credential Field of the Senior/Key Person Profile Component of the SF-424 (R&R) Application Package.
- Institutions/organizations proposing multiple PDs/PIs must visit the Multiple Program Director/Principal Investigator Policy and submission details in the Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) Component of the SF-424 (R&R) Application Guide."

11. Should every applicant send a letter of intent? Can you please provide the contact of who the letter should be directed to?

    A letter of intent (LOI) is not mandatory, nor is it binding or a factor in the review of an application. We encourage applicants to submit a letter of intent because the details it provides help CDC Injury Center staff to plan for the scientific and technical merit peer review process. The LOI should be sent to Dr. Carlisha Gentles at NCIPC-Peer-Review@cdc.gov. Please see **Section IV: Application and Submission Information > 3. Letter of Intent** on page 33 of the NOFO for more information.

12. Does the letter of intent (LOI) also need to include a letter from the Dean's office?

    The LOI does not require a letter from the Dean's office. Interested applicants are encouraged to submit a letter of intent containing the following details:

    - Descriptive title of proposed research
    - The objective(s) the application will address
    - A brief description (one to two paragraphs) of the proposed research, including its objectives
    - Contact information of the Principal Investigator/Project Director (name, institution, address, and telephone number)
    - Name(s) of all other Senior/Key Personnel
    - Name(s) of participating institutions
    - Number and title of this funding opportunity

13. Could you clarify your expectations for how collaboration/partnerships between the research team and eligible institutions should be structured?

    Please see **Section I: Funding Opportunity Description > 2. Approach > Collaboration/Partnerships** and **Letters of Support** on pages 23 and 24 of the NOFO for more information. As stated here, "applications must demonstrate significant and meaningful partnerships and connections to the community to ensure successful implementation and evaluation of the prevention approach. This should include partnerships and connections in the jurisdiction where implementation of the practice-based program, policy, or practice will occur…

Letters of Support are required documentation for collaborations/partnerships and must document the roles and responsibilities of the applicant and the partner organization. They should include:

- The partner organization's anticipated involvement and scope of work.
- Any necessary permission from the state/tribal/local organization for the applicant to conduct a rigorous evaluation and an agreement of collaboration in the evaluation.
- Agreement from the state/tribal/local organization to join the Research Advisory Board and research team.
- Specific roles of PI(s), Co-PI(s), and partners, detailing site and participant recruitment, data collection and analysis, results interpretation, presentation of findings and development of recommendations and dissemination products.
- Duties, time commitments, and responsibilities of project personnel, including authority and supervision over behavioral, administrative, data management, and statistical aspects.
- Plans for facilities, equipment, assessment programming, data processing, analysis capacity, and procedures for managing data security and participant confidentiality."

Additionally, please review the peer review criteria found in **Section V: Application Review Information > 1. Criteria** (starting on page 40) for information on how partnerships will be evaluated.

14. Would you accept an implementing partner that focuses on domestic violence, but also other underprivileged social segments, e.g. housing for homeless persons - many of which are also victims of domestic and/or sexual violence?

    As long as an implementing partner is a state, tribal, or local organization that addresses the prevention of intimate partner violence and/or sexual violence, it is permissible. This does, however, need to be clearly stated in your application. Please see **Section I: Funding Opportunity Description > 2. Approach > Collaboration/Partnerships** on page 23 for more information on partnerships.

15. If a research team were to propose to evaluate a state level policy, there is no obvious implementing partner and the implementing governments would need to be across all 50 states, making the letters of support requirement (i.e., letter of support needed from state, tribal, and/or local organization that is responsible for implementing the program, policy, or practice to be evaluated) infeasible. Would it be acceptable to obtain Letters of Support from national policy advocates related to the policy?

    In order for the application to be minimally responsive, you only need one letter of support from an organization that is involved in the policy at the state level. Please remember that being responsive does not speak to the scientific or technical merit of the application, which will be assessed during peer review. In particular, the peer review criteria found in **Section V: Application Review Information > 1. Criteria** include two questions relevant to the Letter(s) of

Support (page 44). Regarding partnerships with policy advocacy groups, please also review **AR-12: Lobbying Restrictions** linked on page 49 of the NOFO to ensure the proposal complies with this requirement.

16. Is there a preference as to what is a desirable/acceptable budgeting item vs what is not?

    Application budgets should only include costs that are allowable, allocable, reasonable, and necessary for the successful execution of the research. Please see CDC's Budget Preparation Guidelines as well as **Section V: Application Review Information > 3. Additional Review Considerations > Budget and Period of Support** on page 46 of the NOFO for additional information regarding budget preparation and budget justifications.