


**Administration for Children and Families**

Administration on Children, Youth, and Families - Children's Bureau

# State-Tribal Partnerships to Implement Best Practices in Indian Child Welfare

HHS-2024-ACF-ACYF-CT-0056

Application Due Date: 06/07/2024

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**Funding Opportunity Title:**
State-Tribal Partnerships to Implement Best Practices in Indian Child Welfare

**Announcement Type:**
Modification

**Funding Opportunity Number:**
HHS-2024-ACF-ACYF-CT-0056

**Assistance Listing Number:**
93.648

**Due Date for Applications:**
06/07/2024

# Executive Summary

**Notice:**

- **Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the entire notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) carefully and observe the application formatting requirements listed in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*. For more information on applying for an award, please visit "Applying for an ACF Award" at** https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/how-apply-grant.

**A modification to this NOFO was made on April 4, 2024. There are no content changes to application or program requirements. The funding opportunity number was changed from HHS-2024-ACF-ACYF-**CW**-0056 to HHS-2024-ACF-ACYF-**CT**-0056. There were changes made in Section I, Statutory Authority; and Section II, Expected Number of Awards and Estimated Total Funding. In Section III, Eligibility was changed to exclude for-profit organizations and small businesses.

The purpose of this NOFO is to solicit jointly developed proposals by state and tribal governments and, where applicable, nongovernmental partners, to develop and operate a plan to effectively implement best practices in Indian child welfare services; to preserve families of federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes; protect children; and ensure that children remain connected to their families, communities, and culture.

# I. Program Description

**Statutory Authority**
Title IV, part B, subpart 1 - Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program, section 426(a)(1)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 626(a)(1)(A))

**Description**
American Indian and Alaska Native children are over-represented in foster care at a rate of more than 2.5 times their rate in the general population. This NOFO will assist and promote coordinated efforts among state courts, child welfare agencies, and tribes to implement best

practices to minimize the disproportionate placement of Indian children away from families and communities and other disparate treatment experiences by indigenous families.

These awards are intended to generate evidence of how to effectively implement best practices in child welfare for Indian children and families by funding state and tribal partnerships to jointly design and operate Indian child welfare best practice demonstration sites. The evidence generated and lessons learned through this effort are intended to contribute to implementation efforts to preserve families of federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes; protect children; and ensure that children remain connected to their families, communities, and culture.

Over four decades ago, Congress enacted the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978 (Public Law 95-608), in response to Congressional findings that "alarmingly high percentage[s] of Indian families are broken up by the removal, often unwarranted, of their children... by non-tribal public and private agencies" (25 U.S.C.1901(4)). Congress further declared that it is the "policy of this Nation" to protect Indian children, Indian families, and Indian tribes by establishing minimum federal standards for the removal and placement of Indian children (25 U.S.C. 1902).

The legal basis of the Act is tied to the political status of tribal membership or eligibility for tribal membership rather than race. The values embodied in ICWA ensuring that children are connected to family, community, and culture are now widely regarded as a "gold standard" for child welfare practice for all children.

## PURPOSE OF THE NOFO

The purpose of this NOFO is to create and implement intergovernmental partnership models to improve existing and develop new best practices in family preservation and reunification efforts for Indian children. Recipients will serve as demonstration sites to design and implement projects to effectively develop and implement child welfare best practices to prevent the placement of Indian children outside their tribal communities and improve equity in cases involving Indian families. Partnerships must include the state Court Improvement Program; the state child welfare agency; and a tribal government, group of tribal governments, or tribal consortia including tribal corresponding court(s). The "tribal government" partner(s) may be tribal child welfare agencies where appropriate under tribal law or custom.

For purposes of this NOFO, "tribal courts" are defined as "a court with jurisdiction over child custody proceedings and which is either a Court of Indian Offenses, a court established and operated under the code or custom of an Indian tribe, or any other administrative body of a tribe which is vested with authority over child custody proceedings," as under 1903 of the ICWA and 25 CFR § 23.118(c).

Development and implementation of effective Indian child welfare best practice requires a high degree of collaboration between state and tribal courts and child welfare agencies. States and tribes must identify, build, and enhance necessary capacities, such as institutionalization of training curricula, policies, procedures, and data protocols.

This NOFO is intended to encourage state and tribal governments to work together to find creative, common-sense ways to build, enhance, or develop best practices in child welfare to promote the best interests of children and families.

Recipients have the opportunity to work together to craft solutions to longstanding challenges, consistent with the letter and spirit of ICWA, in ways that work best for their communities. The program also provides an important opportunity for states and tribes to build or strengthen relationships of trust by working together toward common goals in preventing the unnecessary removal of children and preserving families.

Examples of creative and common-sense solutions can include training, communication, infrastructure development, or empowerment of tribal child welfare in partnership with state and public and private child welfare agencies. Recipients may, for instance, use funds to develop training curricula, enhance management information systems, strengthen policies and procedures, and gather better data.

For court-related data, the Children's Bureau (CB) supported the development of a suite of tools and measures recipients could use to dig deeper into ICWA practice. These measures were developed by a team that included multiple tribal judges and attorneys and field tested in three states and a tribal court. The measures also lay out connections to related agency outcome measures. For more information see: https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/courts/judicial-court-and-attorney-measures-performance/.

As part of the project, recipients may also consider the role of civil legal services in implementation efforts. Assessment of the success and/or need for legal representation to parties in Indian child welfare cases may be included in project work, as may provision of direct civil legal services, to the extent that such legal services are an identified part of a pilot or practice model to be tested. Recipients are encouraged to consider whether costs of legal representation may be eligible for federal IV-E reimbursement. It should be noted that funds received under this NOFO may not be used as match for federal title IV-E funding. For more information see: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/training-technical-assistance/technical-bulletin-faqs-independent-legal-representation.

**PROJECT REQUIREMENTS**

Recipients will serve as demonstration sites that design, implement, and assess the success of a practice model that has been co-created and agreed upon by the participating state and tribal government(s). While some components of the model may apply primarily to the state government and others to the tribal government, the model will make clear where responsibilities lie, why, and the procedures each government will follow. This process is intended to help ensure transparency, common understanding, collaboration, and trust.

Recipients must dedicate the first year of the project to planning, assessment, and relationship building. State and tribal partners are expected to work together to identify priorities and necessary resources. The planning year shall culminate in an implementation plan. The second year of the project must be dedicated to implementation. In year 3 of the project, recipients must focus on operating the project with monitoring and feedback loops to continuously improve the quality of project work. During the fourth, and final, year of the project, recipients' work shall be heavily informed by learning from previous years and include efforts to institutionalize both the changes and continuous quality improvement efforts found to be successful to ensure positive outcomes.

Recipients may use project funds, as follows:

- Convene or designate a state and tribal partnership team to plan and oversee project work;
- Hire necessary project staff;
- Create relational building opportunities between state and tribal partners (such as site visits in which state partners learn more about the cultures and communities of their tribal partners);
- Conduct practice and needs assessments of state and tribal child welfare and/or court practice relating to Indian children;
- Develop plans to build or enhance state and tribal government capacities, including through technology;
- Provide/engage in capacity building work;
- Craft policies, procedures, and protocols for all aspects of project work;
- Train and cross-train implementing partners;
- Build infrastructure and processes for project maintenance, such as data collection and sharing systems, e-noticing, and other efforts to facilitate automation and interoperability;
- Pilot or assess direct civil legal services models that may assist with best practices implementation;
- Evaluate all stages of project work (assessment, planning, implementation);
- Design and implement systems to continuously monitor and improve Indian child welfare best practice work; and
- Ensure changes that demonstrate success are institutionalized and sustainable.

State and tribal partners are each encouraged to communicate with one another prior to applying to identify the mutual benefits of pursuing this award and the ways in which they may collaborate to better serve American Indian or Alaska Native children and families. Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to meet in person where possible to strengthen relationships, where possible. Face-to-face meetings can provide opportunities to tribes and states to learn more about their respective forms of governance and child welfare systems.

**Other Requirements**

- Recipients must have the project fully functioning, as described in the timeline submitted with the application, within 90 days following the notification of the award.
- A minimum of three staff, but not more than five, will be required to attend annual recipient meetings over the course of the project period. These 2-day meetings may be held in Washington, DC, in another location, or may be held virtually. Recipients and other state and tribal partners are expected to participate in peer-to-peer sharing of implementation activities.
- Within 3 months after the award, a kickoff meeting must be held. The Project Director, Tribal Project Lead, state project lead, key court leads, evaluator, and/or other key staff must attend this 2-day meeting and representatives of all key partners, including the participating state and tribe(s), must be in attendance. This meeting may be held in Washington, DC, or virtually.
- CB reserves the right to secure and distribute products and materials, including copies of journal articles written by recipients about their grant projects.

**SUBAWARDS**
Recipients under this program may opt to transfer a portion of substantive programmatic work to other organizations through subaward(s). The prime recipient must maintain a substantive role in the project. ACF defines a substantive role as conducting activities and/or providing services funded under the award that are necessary and integral to the completion of the project. Subrecipient monitoring activities alone, as specified in 45 CFR §75.352, do not constitute a substantive role. Furthermore, ACF does not fund awards where the role of the applicant is primarily to serve as a conduit for passing funds to other organizations, unless that arrangement is authorized by statute.

Subrecipient(s) must meet the eligibility requirements identified in the NOFO, Section III.1. Eligible Applicants. Additionally, all subrecipient(s) must obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number assigned by the System for Award Management (SAM), if they do not already have one. Prime recipients are required to check SAM to verify that the subrecipient(s) is/are not debarred, suspended, or ineligible. Please reference the Award Term and Condition on Subawards on the ACF Administrative and National Policy Requirements website for further requirements involving subawards.

# II. Federal Award Information

**Funding Instrument Type:**
G (Grant)

**Estimated Total Funding:**
$3,000,000

**Expected Number of Awards:**
6

**Award Ceiling:**
$500,000
Per Budget Period

**Award Floor:**
$450,000
Per Budget Period

**Average Projected Award Amount:**
$500,000
Per Budget Period

**Anticipated Project Start Date:**
09/30/2024

**Length of Project Periods:**
48-month project period with four 12-month budget periods

**Additional Information on Project Periods and Explanation of 'Other'**

**Additional Information on Awards:**

**Awards made under this funding opportunity are subject to the availability of federal funds.**

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from the merit review and funding under this funding opportunity. Please see *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors.*

# III. Eligibility Information

## III.1. Eligible Applicants

Per section 426 (a)(1)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 626(a)(1)(A)), eligibility is open to public or other nonprofit institutions of higher learning, and to public or other nonprofit agencies and organizations engaged in research or child-welfare activities.

CB will accept applications that represent partnerships among organizations with relevant experience. Organizations specializing in assigned tasks may be selected as subrecipients (either through contract or subaward) by the primary applicant. Applications from collaborations must identify a primary applicant responsible for administering the grant.

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from the merit review and funding under this funding opportunity. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors.*

Faith-based and community organizations that meet the eligibility requirements are eligible to receive awards under this funding opportunity. Faith-based organizations may apply for this award on the same basis as any other organization, as set forth at and, subject to the protections and requirements of 45 CFR Part 87 and 42 U.S.C. 2000bb *et seq.*, ACF will not, in the selection of recipients, discriminate against an organization on the basis of the organization's religious character, affiliation, or exercise.

**Reference to Legal Status**
See *Section IV.2. Legal Status of Applicant Entity* for documentation required to support eligibility.

## III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement:
No
See *Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification, Commitment of Non-Federal Resources* for more information.

## III.3. Other

**Application Disqualification Factors**
Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from the merit review and funding under this funding opportunity.

### Award Ceiling Disqualification

Applications that request an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period, as stated in *Section II. Federal Award Information,* will be disqualified from the merit review and funding under this funding opportunity. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

### Required Electronic Application Submission

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at Grants.gov. **Paper applications received that have not been approved for an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from the merit review and funding under this funding opportunity.**

If you do not have an internet connection or sufficient capacity to upload large documents to the internet you may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow you to submit your application in paper format. Information and the requirements for requesting an exemption from required electronic application submission are found in "ACF Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Electronic Application Submission."

### Missing the Application Deadline (Late Applications)

**The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 pm ET on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.*** Electronic applications submitted to Grants.gov after 11:59 pm ET on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from Grants.gov, will be disqualified from the merit review and funding under this funding opportunity.

Applications submitted to Grants.gov which fail their validation check, will not be received at, or acknowledged by ACF. If you submit an application for the same NOFO more than once, only the last on-time submission will be acknowledged.

**Paper applications with an approved exemption from the electronic submission requirement must be received by 4:30 pm ET on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*.** Paper applications received after 4:30 pm ET on the due date will be disqualified from the merit review and funding under this funding opportunity.

### Notification of Application Disqualification

Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this NOFO.

# IV. Application and Submission Information

# IV.1. Address to Request Application Package

CB Operations Center
C/O LCG, Inc.
ATTN: HHS-2024-ACF-ACYF-CW-0056
6000 Executive Boulevard
Suite 410
Rockville
MD
20852
(888)203-6161
cb@grantreview.org

**Application Packages**

**Electronic Application Submission:**

The electronic application submission package is available in the NOFO's listing at Grants.gov.

# IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission

**FORMATTING APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS**

**Notice of Two-File Requirement**

Applicants applying via Grants.gov must upload only two electronic files, excluding Standard Forms (SFs) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB)-approved forms. Additional files will be removed prior to the merit review.

***FOR ALL APPLICATIONS:***

**Signature of Authorized Organization Representative (AOR)**

Each applicant must designate an authorized organization representative (AOR) with authority to act on the organization's behalf on matters related to the application submission and administration of awards. The AOR signature must appear on all forms in which a signature is required. By signing, the AOR agrees the organization will abide by all applicable Federal statutes, regulations and terms and conditions of the award.

**Accepted Font Style and Size**

Applications must be in Times New Roman 12-point font, except for footnotes, which may be 10-point font. Pages that contain blurred or illegible text will be removed.

If documents must be scanned, the font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable. You may not scan more than one page of a documents onto a single page. Pages with blurred text will be removed from the application.

**English Language**

Applications must be submitted in the English language and must be in the terms of United

States (U.S.) dollars. See 45 CFR §75.111 for more information.

**Page Limitations**
You must observe the page limitation(s) listed under "PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS" later in this section. **Page limitation(s) do not include SFs and OMB-approved forms.**

**All applications must be double-spaced.** An application that exceeds the cited page limitation for double-spaced pages will have extra pages removed, and those pages will not be reviewed.

**Application Elements Exempted from Double-Spacing Requirements**
The following elements of the application submission are exempt from the double-spacing requirements and may be single-spaced:

- Table of Contents
- One-page Project Summary
- Required Assurances and Certifications
- SFs and OMB-approved forms
- Resumes, Logic Models, Proof of Legal Status/Non-Profit Status, Third-Party Agreements, Letters of Support, footnotes and tables
- Line-Item Budget and/or the Budget Justification

**Adherence to NOFO Formatting, Font, and Page Limitation Requirements**
Applications that fail to adhere to ACF's NOFO formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will be adjusted by the removal of page(s) from the application. Pages will be removed before the merit review and will not be made available to reviewers.

**NOTE:** Applicants failing to adhere to ACF's NOFO formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will receive a letter from ACF notifying them that their application was amended. The letter will be sent after awards have been issued and will specify the reason(s) for removal of page(s).

**Corrections/Updates to Submitted Applications**
When applicants revise a previously submitted application, ACF will accept only the last on-time application for pre-review under the Application Disqualification Factors. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors* and *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options*.

**Copies Required**
Applicants must submit one complete copy of the application package electronically. Applicants must follow the registration and application submission instructions provided at Grants.gov.

**Accepted Application Format**
With the exception of the required SFs and OMB-approved forms, all application materials must be formatted so that they are 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins all around.

If possible, applicants are encouraged to include page numbers for each page within the application.

**PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:**

The Project Description and the Appendices must not exceed a combined total of 85 pages.

The Project Description must include these items:

1. Table of Contents
2. Abstract
3. Objectives and Need for Assistance
4. Approach
5. Evaluation Plan
6. Organizational Capacity
7. Line-Item Budget and Budget Justification

The Appendices must include these items:

1. Certifications and Assurances
2. Proof of Legal Status (if applicable)
3. Third-party agreements
4. Staff and Position Data (e.g., resumes, job descriptions, organizational charts)
5. Indirect Cost Rate Letter (if applicable)

**ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**
You are required to submit applications electronically unless you have received an exemption that will allow submission in paper format. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* for information about requesting an exemption**.**

Electronic applications will only be accepted via Grants.gov. **ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile.**

**Each applicant is required to upload ONLY two electronic files, excluding SFs and OMB-approved forms.**

**File One**: Must contain the entire Project Description, and the Budget and Budget Justification (including a line-item budget and a budget narrative).

**File Two:** Must contain all documents required in the Appendices.

**Formatting Submission Files**
ACF strongly recommends that File One and File Two be uploaded as Portable Document Files (PDFs).

To adhere to the two-file requirement, you may need to convert and/or merge documents together using a PDF converter software. Applicants using Adobe Acrobat Reader software will be able to merge these documents together. ACF recommends merging documents electronically rather than scanning multiple documents into one document manually.

Applicants must ensure that the version of Adobe Acrobat Reader they are using is compatible with Grants.gov. To verify Adobe software compatibility please go to Grants.gov and click on "Applicants" at the top bar menu and select "Adobe Software Compatibility."

**Naming Application Submission Files**
**Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by Grants.gov.** Limit file names to 50 characters (characters and spaces).Please also see https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/submitting-utf-8-special-characters.html.

**Use only file formats supported by ACF**
While ACF supports all of the following file formats, **we strongly recommend that the two files (Project Description and Appendices) are uploaded as PDFs in order to comply with the two-file upload limitation.**

**ACF supports the following file formats:**

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

**Documents in file formats not listed here will be removed from the application and will not be used in the merit review. This may make the application incomplete, and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.**

**Do Not Encrypt or Password-Protect the Electronic Application Files**
If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they are encrypted or password protected, the affected file will not be reviewed. This may make the application incomplete, and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS:**
You must receive an exemption in order for a paper application to be accepted for review. For more information on the exemption, see "ACF Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission."

Applicants with an approved exemption for paper application submission should download the forms package associated with the NOFO's Synopsis on Grants.gov under the Package tab.

All copies of mailed paper applications must be submitted in a single package. If an applicant is submitting multiple applications under a single NOFO, or multiple applications under separate NOFOs, each submission must be packaged separately. The package(s) must be clearly labeled with the NOFO title and Funding Opportunity Number.

Applicants must submit one original and two copies of the complete application, including all SFs and OMB-approved forms. The original copy must have original signatures. Copies of the application, not the original, will be reproduced by the federal government for review. **All application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes. All pages in the application submission must be sequentially numbered.**

## Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications

**Applicants seeking an award under this funding opportunity must submit the listed SFs, assurances, and certifications with the application.** All required SFs, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package posted for this NOFO at Grants.gov.

| Forms/Assurances/Certifications | Submission Requirement | Notes/Description |
|---|---|---|
| Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Certification | Applicants self-certify their maintenance of effort. The MOE should be on the applicant organization's letterhead. Submission is required for all applicants under this NOFO. See *Section IV.2. Formatting Application Submissions* for instructions on its placement in the application submission. | Required for all applications. |
| SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance | Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date. | Required for all applications. |
| Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM) registration. | Required of all applicants.<br>Applicants must have a UEI and maintain an active SAM registration throughout the application and project award period.<br>Obtain a UEI and SAM registration at: http://www.sam.gov. | See *Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)* for more information. |

| Forms/Assurances/Certifications | Submission Requirement | Notes/Description |
|---|---|---|
| SF-424 Key Contact Form | Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date. | Required for all applications. |
| Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form) | Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it must be submitted prior to award. | Submission of the certification is required for all applicants. |
| SF-424A - Budget Information - Non- Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs | Submission is required for all applicants when applying for a non-construction project. SFs must be used. Forms must be submitted by the application due date.<br>By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. | Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project. |
| SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL) | Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date. | Required for all applications. In the SF-P/PSL, applicants must cite their primary location and up to 29 additional performance sites. |

Additional Required Assurances and Certifications

**Mandatory Grant Disclosures**

All applicants and recipients are required to submit, in writing, to ACF and the HHS Office of the Inspector General, all information related to violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award. (Mandatory Disclosures, 45 CFR § 75.113)

Disclosures must be sent in writing to:

> The Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Grants Management, ATTN: Grants Management Specialist, 330 C Street, SW., Switzer Building, Corridor 3200, Washington, DC 20201

**And to:**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, ATTN: Mandatory Grant Disclosures, Intake Coordinator, 330 Independence Avenue, SW., Cohen Building, Room 5527, Washington, DC 20201

**Fax:** (202) 205-0604 (Include "Mandatory Grant Disclosures" in subject line) or
**Email:** grantdisclosures@oig.hhs.gov

# The Project Description

**The Project Description Overview**

**General Expectations and Instructions**
The Project Description requests the information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for financial assistance. It must address all activities for which federal funds are being requested and all application requirements as stated in this section. The Project Description must explain how the project will meet the purpose of the NOFO, as described in *Section I. Program Description*. As a reminder, reviewers will be evaluating this section in accordance with *Section V.1. Criteria*.

The Project Description must be clear, concise, and complete. ACF is particularly interested in Project Descriptions that convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project Descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length.

Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting documents designated as required must be included in the Appendix of the application.

**Letter of Intent**
Applicants are strongly encouraged to notify ACF of their intention to submit an application under this NOFO. **The letter of intent is optional. Failure to submit a letter of intent will not impact eligibility to submit an application and will not disqualify an applicant from the merit review.** Letter of intent information will be used to determine the number of expert reviewers needed to evaluate applications.

Please submit a letter of intent by the deadline date listed in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. The letter of intent should include the following information: number and title of this funding opportunity; the name and address of the applicant organization; and the name, phone number, fax number and email address of a contact person.

CB Operations Center
c/o LCG, Inc.
ATTN: HHS-2024-ACF-ACYF-CW-0056
6000 Executive Boulevard, Suite 410
Rockville, MD 20852
Phone: (888)203-6161
Email: cb@grantreview.org

**Table of Contents**
List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers. The table of contents may be single spaced.

**Project Summary**
Provide a summary of the project description. The summary must include a brief description of the applicant's proposed project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed activities or services, and if applicable, the population group(s) to be served. The summary must be clear, accurate, concise, and without cross-references to other parts of the application. Please place the following at the top of the Project Summary:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax, Cell)
- Email Address
- Website Address, if applicable

The Project Summary must be single-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, and limited to one page in length. Additional pages will be removed and will not be reviewed.

**Geographic Location**
Describe the precise physical location of the project and boundaries of the area to be served by the proposed project. If the geographic area(s) are served by both the primary recipient and subrecipient organization(s), describe the locations covered by all organizations anticipated to receive funding from the award.

**Non-Profit Organizations**

**Proof of Non-Profit Status Options:**

**Option 1: 501(c)(3) and non-501(c)(3) non-profit organizations are eligible**
Non-profit organizations applying for funding are required to submit proof of their non-profit status. Proof of non-profit status is any one of the following:

- A reference to the applicant organization's listing in the IRS's most recent list of tax-exempt organizations described in the IRS Code.
- 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 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.
- Any of the items in the subparagraphs immediately above for a state or national parent organization and a statement signed by the parent organization that the applicant organization is a local non-profit affiliate.

Unless directed otherwise, applicants must include proof of non-profit status in the *Appendices* file of the application submission.

**For-Profits and Small Businesses**
For-profit organizations (including small businesses) applying for funding must submit the following to provide proof of their legal status: Documentation establishing the power granted to the entity to enter into contractual relationships and/or accept awards (i.e., articles of incorporation, bylaws).

**Need for Assistance**
Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance, including the nature and scope of the problem, must be demonstrated. Supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned parties, may be included in the Appendix. Any relevant data based on planning studies or needs assessments should be included or referred to in the endnotes or footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as available.

**Objectives**
Clearly state the principal and if applicable, subordinate objectives of the project. Applicants must address how the objectives stated relate to the overall purpose of the program and describe how objectives will be achieved.

**Approach**
Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed project will be accomplished. Applicants must account for all functions or activities identified in the application.

Cite potential obstacles and challenges to accomplishing project goals and explain strategies that will be used to address these challenges.

The applicant must provide an overview of their current state and tribal Indian child welfare infrastructures, policies, procedures, and practices; describe known challenges; and highlight areas likely to require assessment. The applicant must also clearly identify what Indian child welfare-related data they currently collect in courts and child welfare agencies, how those data are collected and tracked, if any of those data are currently shared between the partners and how they are shared, and how all Indian child welfare-related data are used. The applicant must also provide data that will help demonstrate the need for the project, such as disproportionality data concerning Indian children in foster care or U.S. Census data. Equally important, the applicant must also identify data the state and tribe do not currently collect that would be helpful to better understand the number of American Indian and Alaska Native children in state systems and factors that contribute to that, including ICWA implementation challenges.

The application must describe how the primary applicant worked together with its partners to co-create the application and provide a clear and specific plan for how they will continue to work together to:

- Form or expand an existing state and tribal partnership team to plan and oversee the project;
- Ensure meaningful and appropriate representation, participation, and voice among state and tribal team members;

- Establish a process for joint planning that includes assessment, intervention strategies, implementation, evaluation, and continuous quality improvement; and
- Promote effective ongoing communication on Indian child welfare issues and concerns between state and tribal partners.

If the applicant intends to assess direct civil legal services as a component of the proposed project, the application must articulate a clear plan for how such work will be done. The application must contain and provide details of an initial planning year to ensure that the project includes adequate time for relationship building, assessment and planning. The applicant is expected to, with its partners, jointly identify the priorities for year 1 of the project and the processes for addressing them.

The application must include approaches to ensure the information gained during the planning year is used to create an implementation plan. The application must discuss a proposed implementation strategy or strategies for year 2 of the project. The application should reflect a thoughtful implementation approach by identifying strategies, tasks, staging, and responsibilities. The application must also discuss how a plan will be designed to evaluate progress using monitoring and feedback loops to continuously improve the quality of project work for year 3. The application must also provide an overview of how the fourth, and final year, of the project, displays stabilization and reflects a culmination of all work completed in years 1-3. To the greatest extent practicable, the applicant must identify the issues they expect to address, including, but not limited to, jointly developing protocols and practices with its partners that promote effective and timely:

- Identification of American Indian and Alaska Native children;
- Notice to and engagement of tribes in matters involving American Indian and Alaska Native children;
- Tribal participation in hearings involving Indian children;
- Tribal intervention in dependency cases;
- Transfer of Indian child welfare cases to tribal courts; and
- Placement of Indian children according to tribal placement preferences.

The applicant is free to identify additional areas or priorities they wish to address through the partnership grant on the condition that they provide a justification for how grant funds would contribute to the applicants' ability to effectively strengthen state and tribal relationships and implement Indian child welfare best practices.

**Project Timeline and Milestones**
Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections (for the entire project period) of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function or activity, in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

**Organizational Capacity**
Provide the following information on the applicant organization and, if applicable, on any cooperating partners:

- Organizational charts.
- Resumes.
- Curricula Vitae (CV).
- List of Board of Directors.
- Copy or description of the applicant organization's fiscal control and accountability procedures.
- Evidence that the applicant organization, and any partnering organizations, have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of programs similar to that offered under this funding opportunity.
- Evidence that each participating organization, including partners, contractors and/or subrecipients, possess the organizational capability to fulfill their role(s) and function(s) effectively.
- Copy or description of the applicant organization's personnel policies.
- Information on compliance with federal/state/local government standards.
- Job descriptions for each vacant key position.

The application must include a jointly signed letter of agreement or memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the state and tribal government, or their government designee, in which they agree to work together collaboratively and in good faith to further jointly formed goals. States and tribes must be familiar with, and make reference to, the 2016 Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Guidelines (which are written to include best practices) and the BIA's 2016 ICWA Regulations for guidance. The application must address areas in which both the state and the tribal partners may need to build or expand their capacities for effective, coordinated Indian child welfare implementation.

The jointly signed letter of agreement or MOU must also specify who the lead partner will be for grant administration and for financial management purposes, how and why that decision was made, and include an assurance that funds will be distributed in an equitable and appropriate manner to support project goals and activities. The application must also describe the roles and responsibilities of any collaborating agencies or organizations in carrying out activities under the grant. The application must include individual letters of commitment from each partner (minimally the state child welfare agency, Court Improvement Program and tribal government or designated agency or agencies). The applicant's management plan must be sound for the purpose of achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality.

The applicant and its partners must consider the current capacities in key areas of state and tribal court and agency infrastructure, or inter-agency coordination needed to operate the project. If the applicant represents a consortium of partner agencies, the applicant must identify the consortium

partners, describe their background and experience, and explain how such knowledge and experience supports planning and implementation of the proposed project.

If known at the time of application submission, the applicant must disclose their intent to enter into subaward arrangements in their application. For each proposed subaward, the applicant must include a description of the work to be performed by the subrecipient(s).

**Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds and Activities**
Recipients are required to ensure proper oversight in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart D.

These regulations set forth the following standards for effective oversight:

- Financial and Program Management
- Property Management
- Procurement
- Performance and Financial Monitoring and Reporting
- Subrecipient Monitoring and Management
- Record Retention and Access
- Remedies for Noncompliance
- Prior Written Approval

Describe the framework (e.g., governance, policies and procedures, risk management, systems) in place to ensure proper oversight of federal funds and activities in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart D. The description must include: system(s) for record-keeping and financial management; procedures to identify and mitigate risks and issues (e.g., audit findings, continuous program performance assessment findings, program monitoring); and those key staff that will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities staff, and, if applicable, partner(s) and/or subrecipient(s).

**Program Performance Evaluation Plan**
Applicants must describe a plan for the program performance evaluation that will contribute to continuous quality improvement. The program performance evaluation must monitor ongoing activities and the progress towards the goals and objectives of the project. Include descriptions of the inputs (e.g., organizational profile, collaborative partners, key staff, budget, service processes and other resources), key activities, and expected outcomes of the funded activities. The plan must explain how the inputs, activities, and outcomes will be measured; how the information will be used to inform improvement of funded activities; and any processes that support data quality.

Applicants must describe the organizational systems and processes that will effectively track performance outcomes, including a description of how the organization will collect and manage data (e.g., assign skilled staff, data management software, data integrity, etc.) in a way that allows for accurate and timely reporting of performance outcomes. Applicants must describe any potential obstacles for implementing the program performance evaluation and how those obstacles will be addressed. Applicants must include a timeline for how information from the quality improvement evaluation will be reviewed and applied to the ongoing project.

The application must also detail and discuss efforts to ensure that the partnership model is co-created by states and tribes, jointly implemented, and designed to generate and capture clear,

measurable outcomes that enable partners to promote continuous quality improvement in all of the above categories and learn what works. The applicant should identify and develop performance indicators (data) that will assist them with the work. Note that a suite of court measures which include ICWA elements and tools to implement them was developed by CB which recipients may find useful https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/courts/reform/jcamp/. Key measures may include the:

- Number of American Indian and Alaska Native children identified;
- Number of American Indian and Alaska Native children to whom the ICWA is found to apply;
- Length of time from removal or petition filed until identification is made;
- Number of notices sent to tribes;
- Length of time from identification until notice sent;
- Number of notices received;
- Length of time from notice received to tribal response;
- Length of time for tribal intervention or participation;
- Number of cases in which a tribe intervenes;
- Number of transfers made to tribal courts; and
- Number of Indian children placed according to Indian child welfare placement preferences.

**Logic Model**

Applicants must submit a logic model for designing, managing and/or evaluating the project. A logic model is a diagram that presents how inputs drive activities to produce outputs, outcomes, and the ultimate goals of the proposed project, and explains the links among program elements. Logic models must target the identified objectives and goals of the project. While there are many versions of logic models, for the purposes of this funding opportunity, the logic model may include connections between the following items:

- Inputs (e.g., additional resources, organizational profile, collaborative partner(s), key staff, budget);
- Target population (e.g., the individuals to be served, identified needs);
- Activities, Mechanisms, Processes (e.g., evidence-based practices, best practices, approach, key intervention and evaluation components, continuous quality improvement efforts);
- Outputs (i.e., the immediate and direct results of program activities);
- Outcomes (i.e., the expected short and long-term results the project is designed to achieve, typically described as changes in people or systems), and
- Goals of the project (e.g., overarching objectives, reasons for proposing the project).

See Change and Implementation in Practice: Monitoring, Evaluating, and Applying Findings Brief and the Logic Model Builder for more information about how to develop a logic model.

**Project Sustainability Plan**

Applicants must propose a plan for project sustainability after the period of federal funding ends. Recipients are expected to sustain key elements of their projects, e.g., strategies or services and

interventions, which have been effective in improving practices and outcomes.

Describe the approach to project sustainability that will be most effective and feasible. Provide a description of key individuals and/or organizations whose support will be required. Address the types of alternative support that will be required to maintain the program. If the proposed project involves key project partners, describe how their cooperation and/or collaboration will be maintained after the end of federal funding.

**Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information**
Provide a description of how protected PII and other information that is considered sensitive, consistent with applicable federal, state, local and tribal laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality, will be collected and safeguarded. The applicant must provide the methods and/or systems that will be used to ensure that confidential and/or sensitive information is properly handled and if applicable, address the process for subrecipient(s) and/or contractors. Also, provide a plan for the disposition of such information at the end of the project period. See 45 CFR § 75.303(e) for more information.

**Dissemination Plan**
Applicants must propose a plan to disseminate reports, products, and/or project outputs so that information is provided to key target audiences. Dissemination plans must include:

- Dissemination goals and objectives;
- Strategies to identify and engage with target audiences;
- Allocation of sufficient staff time and budget for dissemination purposes;
- A preliminary plan to evaluate the extent to which target audiences have received project information and have used it as intended, and
- The timeline for dissemination.

**Third-Party Agreements**

Third-party agreements include Letters of Commitment, Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Memoranda of Agreement (MOA). Letters of Commitment, MOUs and MOAs must clearly describe the roles and responsibilities for project activities and the support and/or resources that the third-party (i.e., subrecipient, contractor, or other cooperating entity) is committing. Letters of Commitment, MOUs, and MOAs must be signed by the person in the third-party organization with the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their organization. General letters of support are **not** considered third-party agreements.

Applicants must provide Letters of Commitment, MOUs, or MOAs between recipients and third-parties (i.e., subrecipients, contractors, or other cooperating entities).

Applicants must provide Letters of Commitment, MOUs, or MOAs between recipients and third-parties (i.e., subrecipients, contractors, or other cooperating entities). In addition to clearly describing the roles and responsibilities for project activities and support and/or resources that the third-party is committing, these agreements must detail work schedules and estimated remuneration with an understanding that a finalized agreement will be negotiated once the aware is made to the successful applicant.

Collaboration/consortia applicants must provide Letters of Commitment, MOUs, or MOAs identifying the primary applicant and all collaborators that are responsible for project activities.

## The Project Budget and Budget Justification

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is entered on the Budget Information SF, either SF- 424A or SF-424C. Applicants are encouraged to review the form instructions in addition to the guidance in this section. The project budget consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information SF. Applicants must indicate the method they are selecting for their indirect cost rate. See Indirect Charges for further information.

Project budget calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If cost sharing or matching is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance). See the table in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* listing the appropriate budget forms to use in this application.

**Special Note:** *Annual appropriations legislation for the Department of Health and Human Services limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this funding opportunity may not be used to pay the salary of an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. For the Executive Level II salary, please see "Executive & Senior Level Employee Pay Tables" under https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/. The salary limitation reflects an individual's base salary exclusive of fringe benefits, indirect costs and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties of the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards and subcontracts under an ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

Provide a budget for the initial budget period only (typically the first 12 months of the project) using the SF-424A and/or SF-424C, as applicable.

Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for only the first budget period of the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

Kickoff meeting: Allocate sufficient funds in the budget to support required travel: a) Within 3 months after the award, the Project Director, Child Welfare Liaison (if different from the Project Director), evaluator and/or other key staff must attend a 2-day kick-off meeting in Washington, DC; and b) Representatives of all key partners, including the participating state and tribe(s), must, be in attendance.

Recipient meetings: Allocate sufficient funds in the budget to support travel for a minimum of three staff, but not more than five, to attend annual meetings over the course of the project period. These 2-day meetings may be held in Washington, DC. Recipients and other tribal leaders are expected to participate in peer-to-peer sharing of implementation activities.

For applicants proposing to use subaward(s), if the total amount budgeted for subawards exceeds 50 percent of total direct costs for the budget period, the applicant must provide a justification for subawarding the portion of the project and must explain how the prime recipient plans to maintain a substantive role in the project. Applicants must explain why the participation of the subrecipient is necessary, and why the applicant cannot achieve the objectives without the subrecipient(s)' participation.

**General**

Use the following guidelines for preparing the project budget and budget justification. The budget justification includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail. Applications should only include allowable costs in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart E.

**Personnel**

**Description:** Costs of employee salaries and wages. See 45 CFR § 75.430 for more information on allowable personnel costs. Do not include the personnel costs of consultants, contractors and subrecipients under this category.

**Justification:** For each position, provide: the name of the individual (if known), their title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; project salary; wage rates; etc. Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application.

**Fringe Benefits**

**Description:** Costs of employee fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees in addition to regular salaries and wages. For more information on Fringe Benefits please refer to 45 CFR § 75.431. **Do not include** the fringe benefits of consultants, contractors, and subrecipients because those costs should be listed under the "Contractual" category as part of the total value of the contract or agreement.

Typically, fringe benefit amounts are determined by applying a calculated rate for a particular class of employee (full-time or part-time) to the salary and wages requested. Fringe rates are often specified in the approved indirect cost rate agreement. Fringe benefits may be treated as a direct cost or indirect cost in accordance with the applicant's accounting practices. Only fringe benefits as a direct cost should be entered under this category.

**Justification:** Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act taxes, retirement, taxes, etc.

**Travel**

**Description:** Costs of project-related travel (i.e., transportation, lodging, subsistence) by employees of the applicant organization who are in travel status on official business. Travel by non-employees such as consultants, contractors or subrecipients should be included under the Contractual line item. Local travel for employees in non-travel status should be listed on the Other line. Travel costs should be developed in accordance with the applicant's travel policies and 45 CFR § 75.474.

**Justification:** For each trip show: the total number of travelers; travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key project staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops/conferences/recipient orientations should be detailed in the budget justification.

**Equipment**

**Description:** "Equipment" means tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) $5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation, shall be included in, or excluded from, acquisition cost in accordance with the organization's regular written accounting practices.) See 45 CFR § 75.439 for more information.

**Justification:** For each type of equipment requested provide: a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use on the project; as well as use and/or disposition of the equipment after the project ends.

**Supplies**

**Description:** Tangible personal property other than those included under the Equipment category. A computing device is a supply if the acquisition cost is less than the lesser of $5,000, or the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, regardless of the length of its useful life. See 45 CFR § 75.2, 75.321, and 75.453 for more information.

**Justification:** Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

**Contractual**

**Description:** Cost of all contracts and subawards except those that should be placed under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, procurement contracts, and subawards. Recipients are required to use 45 CFR §§ 75.326-.340 procurement procedures, and subawards are subject to the requirements at 45 CFR §§ 75.351-.353. Costs related to professional and consultant services rendered by persons who are members of a particular profession or possess a special skill, and who are not officers or employees, must be listed in the Other category. (Typically, these arrangements will take the form of a consultant agreement directly with an individual as opposed to a contract with a company that employs the consultant. The latter case must still be listed under Contractual line item.)

**If applicable and charged as a direct cost, include** cost of third-party renting or leasing agreements for equipment; and third-party renting or leasing agreements for real property by

address for each building, facility, administrative office, space, structure, land, and other real property.

**Justification:** Indicate whether the proposed agreement qualifies as a subaward or contract in accordance with 45 CFR § 75.351. Provide the name of the contractor/subrecipient (if known), a description of anticipated services, a justification for why they are necessary, a breakdown of estimated costs, and an explanation of the selection process. In addition, for subawards, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each subaward, by entity name, along with the same justifications referred to in these budget and budget justification instructions.

For contracts, demonstrate that procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. Applicants must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold stated in 48 CFR § 2.101(b). Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc., available to ACF.

**If applicable and charged as a direct cost,** for each real property proposed or claimed for rent or lease include: the rent amount with calculation; terms of lease; maintenance and repair amounts with details on each type of expense proposed and its associated cost; minor A&R with specifics for each type of proposed expense and its associated cost; show the computation and provide other information that supports the amount requested. Only when allowable and with prior approval, describe the financing costs (including interest) including terms for the real property address. For applicable ACF programs with real property authority, see ACF Property Guidance. **Do not include** real property owned by the recipient or arrangements considered "less-than-arms-length," "sale and lease back," "finance lease" per Financial Accounting Standards Board, "financed purchase" per Government Accounting Standards Board standards because these costs (e.g., depreciation costs) if charged as 1) a direct cost, should be listed under the "Other" category or 2) an indirect cost as with any indirect costs, as part of their indirect cost pool that is used to calculate an indirect cost rate). These costs must be treated as either direct or indirect costs, not both. For more information, see 45 CFR §75.2, 75.414, 75.430-75.431, 75.434, 75.436, 75.439, and 75.452.

**Other**

**Description:** Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include, but are not limited to: individual consultant costs; local travel; insurance (when not included under the Fringe category); food (when allowable); medical and dental costs (non-personnel); professional service costs (e.g., audit charges); depreciation of real property and equipment (when not treated as an indirect cost), printing and publications, training costs (such as tuition and stipends), staff development costs, and administrative costs (when not treated as an indirect cost). Please note costs must be allowable per 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart E.

**Justification:** Provide a breakdown of costs, computations, a narrative description, and a justification for each cost under this category.

**If applicable and charged as a direct cost, include** depreciation by real property address for each building, facility, administrative office, structure, land, and other real property proposed for use and depreciation of equipment proposed for use. For each real property owned by the

recipient or less-than-arms-length lease intended to be proposed or claimed for use provide, if applicable, and in accordance with 45 CFR §§75.436 and 75.465: the allocable percentage and total dollar amount; the depreciation amount with type of method and calculation used; tax amount; insurance amount and what it covers; maintenance and repair amounts with details on each type of expense proposed and its associated cost; minor A&R with specifics for each type of proposed expense and its associated cost; the ownership type (e.g., owned, leased, or intent to lease); show the computation and provide other information that supports the amount requested. For more information, please see ACF Property Guidance. **Do not include** costs of third-party renting or leasing real property and equipment because those costs should be under the "Contractual" category.

**Indirect Charges**

**Description:** Indirect or Facilities & Administration (F&A) (F&A means those costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective, and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefitted, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved. F&A costs are generally used by institutions of higher education). Typical examples of indirect or F&A costs include but are not limited to depreciation on buildings and equipment, equipment and capital improvements, operation and maintenance expenses, and general administration and expenses, such as the salaries and expenses of personnel administration and accounting. For more information, see 45 CFR §75.2, 75.414, 75.430-75.431, 75.434, 75.436, and 75.439. Enter the total amount of indirect costs. This category has one of two methods that an applicant can select. An applicant may only select one.

1. The applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by HHS or another cognizant federal agency.

   **Justification:** An applicant must enclose a copy of the current approved rate agreement. If the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed. Choosing to charge a lower rate will not be considered during the merit review or award selection process.

2. Per 45 CFR § 75.414(f) Indirect (F&A) costs, "any non-Federal entity [i.e., applicant] that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, ... may elect to charge a *de minimis* rate of 10% of modified total direct costs which may be used indefinitely. As described in Section 75.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as the non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time."

   **Justification:** This method only applies to applicants that have never received an approved negotiated indirect cost rate from HHS or another cognizant federal agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposal may request the 10 percent *de minimis* rate. When the applicant chooses this method, costs included in the indirect cost pool must not be charged as direct costs to the award.

**Commitment of Non-Federal Resources**

**Description:** Amounts of non-federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424. This line should be used to indicate required and/or voluntary committed cost sharing or matching, if applicable.

**For all federal awards**, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR § 75.306. For awards that require matching by statute, recipients must meet the required level of cost sharing. Recipients that have voluntarily decided to contribute cost sharing when it is not required, or at a higher level than required, will be held accountable for the proposed cost-sharing, if accepted by ACF and included in the Notice of Award (NoA). **A recipient's failure to provide cost sharing that has been accepted by ACF may result in the disallowance of federal funds.**

**Justification:** If an applicant is relying on cost share or match from a third-party, then a firm commitment of these resources (letter(s) or other documentation) is required to be submitted with the application. Detailed budget information must be provided for every funding source identified in Item 18. "Estimated Funding ($)" on the SF-424.

Applicants are required to fully identify and document in their applications the specific costs or contributions they propose in order to meet a matching requirement. Applicants are also required to provide documentation in their applications on the sources of funding or contribution(s). In-kind contributions must be accompanied by a justification of how the stated valuation was determined. Matching or cost sharing must be documented by budget period (or by project period for fully funded awards).

Applications that lack the required supporting documentation will not be disqualified from the merit review; however, it may impact an application's scoring under the evaluation criteria in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this funding opportunity.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Disclaimer**

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the Project Description is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. The Project Description information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, which expires 03/31/2026. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

# Application Submission Options

Please read the following instructions carefully and completely.

**Electronic Delivery**

ACF applicants are required to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

**How to Register through Grants.gov**

Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process.

Organizations must have an active System for Award (SAM) registration which provides a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), and Grants.gov account to apply for awards under funding opportunities.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but SAM registration may take several weeks. Therefore, an organization's registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the entities ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Organization applicants can find complete instructions here:
https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html

***Register with SAM*:** All organizations (entities) applying online through Grants.gov must register with SAM. Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. For detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to:
https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html

***Create a Grants.gov Account*:** The next step in the registration process is to create an account with Grants.gov. Follow the on-screen instructions provided on the registration page.

***Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account*:** For detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html

***EBiz POC Authorized Profile Roles:*** After you register with Grants.gov and create an Organization Applicant Profile, the applicant's request for Grants.gov roles and access is sent to the EBiz POC. The EBiz POC is then expected to log into Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles. For detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:
https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html

Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov.

For questions related to this funding opportunity, please contact the number listed in the application package.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist ACF with tracking and understanding background information on the issue.

**Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission**

All applications must be received by 11:59 pm ET on the due date established for each program. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. The applicant AOR will receive an acknowledgment of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When ACF successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submission, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role.

Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by ACF.

**Issues with Federal Systems**

For any systems issues experienced with Grants.gov or SAM.gov, please refer to ACF's "Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues" for complete guidance.

**Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission**

To request an exemption from required electronic submission, please refer to ACF's "Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission" for complete guidance.

**Paper Application Submission**

See *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements* of this funding opportunity for address information for paper application submissions.

## IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)

All applicants must have a UEI and an active registration with SAM (https://www.sam.gov) prior to applying to a funding opportunity.

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal funds from any HHS Agency to:

- Be registered in SAM prior to submitting an application or plan;
- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information until the process is complete. If you receive an award, your SAM registration must be active throughout the life of the award. It must be renewed every 365 days to keep it active;
- Provide its UEI in each application or plan it submits; and
- Ensure any proposed subrecipient(s) have obtained and provided to the recipient their UEI(s) prior to making any subawards (**Note:** Subrecipients are not required to complete full SAM registration.).

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and
- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

## IV.4. Submission Dates and Times

**Due Date for Letter of Intent**

05/07/2024

**Due Date for Applications**

06/07/2024

# Explanation of Due Dates

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* and in this section.

**Electronic Applications**

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via Grants.gov is 11:59 pm ET on the due date.

Applications submitted to Grants.gov at any time during the open application period prior to the due date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged.

**Mailed Paper Applications**

The deadline for receipt of mailed paper applications is 4:30 pm ET on the due date listed in the Overview and in this section. Applications should be mailed to the address provided in *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements.*

**No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:**

- Applications submitted electronically via Grants.gov are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 pm ET on the due date.
- Paper applications received by mail after 4:30 pm ET on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

**Emergency Extensions**

ACF may extend an application due date when circumstances make it impossible for an applicant to submit their applications on time. Only events such as documented natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or a verifiable widespread disruption of electrical service, or mail service, will be considered. The determination to extend or waive the due date, and/or receipt time, requirements in an emergency situation rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s).*

# Acknowledgement of Received Application

**Acknowledgement from Grants.gov**

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to Grants.gov. This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which

serves as the official record of the application's submission**.** Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation check.

Applicants will also receive an email acknowledging that the received application is in the **Grants.gov validation process.**

**Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:**

Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from Grants.gov by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

**Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper application:**
ACF will provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail.

# IV.5. Intergovernmental Review

This program is covered under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Executive Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

Applicants should go to the following URL for the official list of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in E.O. 12372 https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf.

Applicants from participating jurisdictions should contact their SPOC, as soon as possible, to alert them of their prospective applications and to receive instructions on their jurisdiction's procedures. Applicants must submit all required application materials to the SPOC and indicate the date of submission on the SF-424 at item 19.

Under 45 CFR § 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application due date to comment on proposed new awards.

SPOC comments may be submitted directly to ACF at: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, 330 C St. SW, 3rd Floor, Washington, DC 20201.

Entities that meet the eligibility requirements of this funding opportunity are still eligible to apply for an award even if a State, Territory or Commonwealth, etc., does not have a SPOC or has chosen not to participate in the process. Applicants from non-participating jurisdictions need take no action with regard to E.O. 12372. Applications from Federally-recognized Indian Tribal governments are not subject to E.O. 12372.

# IV.6. Funding Restrictions

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this award.

Purchase of real property is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this award.

Major renovation is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this award.

## IV.7. Other Submission Requirements

Submit paper applications to the following address.

**Submission by Mail**
CB Operations Center
C/O LCG, Inc.
ATTN: HHS-2024-ACF-ACYF-CW-0056
6000 Executive Boulevard
Suite 410
Rockville
MD
20852

# V. Application Review Information

## V.1. Criteria

**Please note:** With the exception of the notice of funding opportunity and relevant statutes and regulations, reviewers must not access, or review, any materials that are not part of the application documents. This includes information accessible on websites via hyperlinks that are referenced, or embedded, in the application. Reviewers must evaluate and score an application based on the documents that are presented in the application and must not refer to, or access, external links during the merit review.

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in this section. Points will be allocated based on the extent to which the application proposal addresses each of the criteria listed. Applicants should address these criteria in their application materials, particularly in the project description and budget justification, as they are the basis upon which competing applications will be judged during the merit review. The required elements of the project description and budget justification may be found in *Section IV.2. The Project Description* of this funding opportunity.

**Objectives and Needs for Assistance** **Maximum Points:** 20

In reviewing objectives and needs for assistance, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The applicant provides a brief and candid description of current Indian child welfare practice in and between their respective jurisdictions and, to the extent possible, an overview of the effectiveness of current efforts.
2. The applicant presents data demonstrating the need for the project, such as data on the disproportionate representation of American Indian and Alaska Native children in state foster care.
3. The applicant presents a clear vision of how the proposed project will benefit Indian children and families involved in state child welfare systems and the expected outcomes for the project.

4. The application includes a clear statement of the goals and objectives that should lead to building or enhancing relationships, systems, policies, and procedures that must be in place for successful Indian child welfare implementation.

**Approach** **Maximum Points:** 40

In reviewing the approach, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The applicant clearly identifies and describes the areas (such as relationship building, identification of Indian children, notice to tribes, jurisdiction, transfer, participation of parties, intervention, data collection, data sharing and interoperability, automation etc.) it intends to address through the grant.
2. The applicant details a clear and reasonable plan to successfully complete year 1 of the grant, which is designated for planning, assessment and relationship building. The plan must include strategies to strengthen or build relationships between the partners, a timeline for in-person meetings and start-up, and methods for identifying assessment priorities. The application includes a description of priority areas of work that have already been identified by partners.
3. The applicant reflects a thoughtful approach to how the project will be implemented in the second year of the project by identifying strategies, tasks, staging, and responsibilities.
4. The applicant describes their plan for operating the project in years 3 and 4 with monitoring and feedback loops to continuously improve the quality of project work.
5. The application provides an overview of how the fourth, and final year, reflects stabilization of the project, which demonstrates the work from years 1-3.
6. The applicant's timeline for implementing the proposed project is comprehensive and reasonable (including major milestones and target dates).
7. The applicant clearly explains how team members will be chosen, how the team will oversee the work, and efforts that will be made to ensure equal representation, participation, and voice of state and tribal partners.
8. The applicant identifies any existing state and tribal agreements between the partners. If applicable, the proposal provides a brief description of what is covered by those agreements.
9. The applicant describes the roles and responsibilities of any collaborating agencies or organizations in carrying out activities under the grant and includes individual letters of commitment from each partner (minimally the state child welfare agency, Court Improvement Program, and tribal government or government designated agencies), as well as a jointly written and signed letter of agreement or MOU from state and tribal government designated officials.
10. The applicant demonstrates a thorough understanding of the challenges in carrying out proposed grant activities and Indian child welfare best practice implementation overall. The applicant provides a sound plan for overcoming these challenges.
11. The applicant's proposed project is likely to lead to the successful implementation of Indian child welfare best practice and will enhance the capacity of state and tribal governments to work together to ensure better outcomes for Indian children and families.

12. The applicant presents a plan to disseminate reports, products, and/or grant project outputs so that project information is provided to key target audiences as described in *Section IV.2., Project Description, Dissemination Plan*.

**Evaluation** **Maximum Points:** 20

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

1. The applicant presents a sound plan for evaluating year one of the project that includes components specific to state government performance, tribal government performance, and state and tribal partnership performance.
2. The applicant explains the steps that will be taken to ensure that the evaluation plan is jointly crafted by state and tribal partners and contains measures that are culturally appropriate and meaningful to tribal partners.
3. The applicant included a detailed and reasonable plan for evaluation for years 2-4.
4. The applicant's evaluation plan is designed to contain measures that demonstrate a good fit with the evaluation questions they intend to answer. Strong justification is provided for the selection of these measures as methods of information collection that are likely to yield findings that help state and tribal government partners discern how implementation efforts are working.
5. The applicant provides a preliminary logic model that is clearly described and consistent with the intent of the project.

**Organizational Capacity** **Maximum Points:** 10

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

1. The applicant and its staff have sufficient, relevant experience with performance measurement and working with federal evaluations to successfully complete the proposed project. The applicant's history and relationship with the targeted community would assist in the effective implementation of the proposed project. The applicant has experience in developing collaborative working agreements with other relevant agencies. The applicant organization's capabilities and experience relative to this project, including experience with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of similar projects, would enable them to implement the proposed project effectively.
2. If the applicant represents a consortium of partner agencies, their background and experience would support the planning and implementation of the proposed project. There are letters of commitment from each partner authorizing the applicant to apply on behalf of the consortium and agreeing to participate if the proposal is funded.
3. The proposed Project Director and key project staff possess sufficient relevant knowledge, experience, and capabilities to implement and manage a project of this size, scope, and complexity effectively. The role, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors, and/or partners, are clearly defined and appropriate to the successful implementation of the proposed project.
4. The applicant's management plan is sound for the purpose of achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality. The plan clearly defines the role and responsibilities of the lead agency. The plan clearly describes

the effective management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors, and consultants (if appropriate). There would be a mutually beneficial relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated, or underway with federal assistance by the applicant.

**Budget and Budget Justification** **Maximum Points:** 10

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

1. The applicant provides a detailed line-item budget (not to exceed a total of $500,000 the first year). There is a detailed budget justification (in narrative form) clearly explaining how grant funds will be spent over the first year. The line-item budget and budget narrative clearly reflect the roles and responsibilities of the partners.
2. The costs of the proposed project are reasonable and programmatically justified in view of the targeted population and community, the activities to be conducted, and the expected results and benefits.
3. The applicant's fiscal controls and accounting procedures would ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement, and accurate accounting of funds received under this NOFO.

# V.2. Review and Selection Process

No award will be made under this funding opportunity on the basis of an incomplete application.

**Initial ACF Screening**

Disqualified applications are considered “non-responsive” and are excluded from the merit review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this NOFO.

**Merit Review and Results**

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by review panels using only the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this funding opportunity. Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the merit review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, merit review scores and rankings are not binding. Scores and rankings are only one element used in the award decision-making process. ACF reserves the right to consider preferences to fund organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations, including those populations located in pockets of poverty. In addition, ACF reserves the right to evaluate applications in the larger context of the overall portfolio by considering geographic distribution of federal funds (e.g., ensuring coverage of states, counties, or service areas) in its pre-award decisions.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. In addition, ACF may elect to not allow a prime recipient to subaward if there is any indication that they are unable to properly monitor and manage subrecipients.

Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested.

ACF may refuse to fund projects with what it regards as unreasonably high start-up costs for facilities or equipment, or for projects with unreasonably high operating costs.

**Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants**

ACF is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), https://sam.gov/reports/ei/static, before making any award in excess of 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. ACF will consider any comments by 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 45 CFR § 75.205(a)(2) Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants.

**Approved but Unfunded Applications**
Applications recommended for approval in the merit review process, but not selected for award may receive funding if additional funds become available in the current Fiscal Year. For those applications determined as “approved but unfunded,” notice will be given of the determination by email.

## V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Announcement of awards and the disposition of applications will be provided to applicants at a later date. ACF staff cannot respond to requests for information regarding funding decisions prior to the official applicant notification.

# VI. Federal Award Administration Information

## VI.1. Federal Award Notices

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a NoA that sets forth the amount of funds awarded, the terms and conditions, the effective date, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NoA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via email or by GrantSolutions, or the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES), whichever is relevant.

Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head. Any other correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Recipients may translate the Federal award and other documents into another language. In the event of inconsistency between any terms and conditions of the Federal award and any translation into another language, the English language meaning will control. Where a significant portion of the recipient’s employees who are working on the Federal award are not fluent in

English, the recipient must provide the Federal award in English and in the language(s) with which employees are more familiar.

# VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Awards issued under this funding opportunity are subject to 45 CFR Part 75 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for HHS Awards 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. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is available at www.ecfr.gov. Unless otherwise noted in this section, administrative and national policy requirements that are applicable to discretionary awards are available at: www.acf.hhs.gov/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements.

An application funded with the release of federal funds through an award does not constitute or imply compliance with federal regulations. Funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with all applicable federal regulations.

**HHS Grants Policy Statement**

ACF awards are subject to the requirements of the HHS Grants Policy Statement (HHS GPS), which covers basic award processes, standard terms and conditions, and points of contact, as well as important agency-specific requirements. The HHS GPS is available at https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/grants/grants/policies-regulations/hhsgps107.pdf.

**Equal Treatment of Faith-Based Organizations**

A faith-based organization that participates in this program will retain its independence from the federal government and may continue to carry out its mission consistent with religious freedom, nondiscrimination, and conscience protections in federal law, including the Free Speech and Free Exercise Clauses of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (42 U.S.C. 2000bb *et seq.*), the Coats-Snowe Amendment (42 U.S.C. 238n), Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e–1(a) and 2000e–2(e)), Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12113(d)(2), section 1553 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 18113), the Weldon Amendment (e.g., Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020, Public Law 116–94, 133 Stat. 2534, 2607, div. A, sec. 507(d) (Dec. 20, 2019)), or any related or similar federal laws or regulations. Religious accommodations may also be sought under many of these religious freedom and conscience protection laws.

Consistent with 45 CFR § 87.3(b), a faith-based organization that receives direct financial assistance from HHS may not engage in any explicitly religious activities (including activities that involve overt religious content such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization) as part of the programs or services funded with direct financial assistance from the HHS awarding agency. Such an organization, whether faith-based or not, also shall not, in providing services funded by HHS, discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion, a religious belief, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice, as provided in 45 CFR § 87.3(d).

# VI.3. Reporting

Performance Progress Reports:

Semi-Annually

**Reporting Requirements**

Recipients will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. Information on reporting requirements is available on the ACF website at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/manage-grant/reporting.

For planning purposes, the frequency of required reporting for awards made under this funding opportunity are as follows:

Financial Reports:
Semi-Annually

# VII. HHS Award Agency Contact(s)

**Program Office Contact**

Carlette
Randall
Administration for Children and Families
Administration for Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau
CB Operations Center c/o LCG, Inc.
6000 Executive Boulevard, Suite 410
Rockville
MD
20852
(888)203-6161
cb@grantreview.org

**Office of Grants Management Contact**

Telina
Bennett-Reed
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Grants Management
CB Operations Center, c/o LCG, Inc.
6000 Executive Boulevard, Suite 410
Rockville
MD
20852
(888)203-6161
cb@grantreview.org

# VIII. Other Information

## Reference Websites

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) www.hhs.gov/.

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) www.acf.hhs.gov/.

ACF Funding Opportunities Forecasts and NOFOs www.grants.gov/.

ACF "Applying for an ACF Award" https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/how-apply-grant.

ACF Property Guidance https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/real-property-and-tangible-personal-property

Grants.gov Accessibility Information www.grants.gov/ web/grants/accessibility-compliance.html.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) http://www.ecfr.gov/.

United States Code (U.S.C.) http://uscode.house.gov/.

# Application Checklist

Applicants may use this checklist as a guide when preparing an application package.

| What to Submit | Where Found | When to Submit |
|---|---|---|
| Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Certification | Referenced in *Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications*. | Submission is due by the application due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.* If it is not submitted with the application package, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant. |
| SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance | Referenced in *Section IV.2.Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.*<br><br>This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at www.Grants.gov in the Mandatory section. | Submission is due by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.* |
| Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM) registration. | Referenced in *Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)* in the funding opportunity.<br><br>To obtain a UEI and SAM registration, go to http://www.sam.gov. | A UEI and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants.<br><br>Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period. |

| What to Submit | Where Found | When to Submit |
|---|---|---|
| SF-424 Key Contact Form | Referenced in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.*<br>This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at www.Grants.gov. | Submission is due with the application by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.* |
| Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form) | Referenced in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.*<br>This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at www.Grants.gov. | Submission is due with the application package or prior to award. |
| SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs | Referenced in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.*<br>These forms are available in the NOFO's forms package at www.Grants.gov in the Mandatory section.<br>They are required for applications that include only non-construction activities. | Submission is due by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.* |
| SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL) | Referenced in *Section IV.2.Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.*<br>This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at www.Grants.gov. | Submission is due by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.* |
| Letter of Intent | Referenced in *Section IV.2. Project Description.* | Submission is due by the Letter of Intent due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4.* |
| Table of Contents | Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Description.* | Submit with the application by the due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section* |

| What to Submit | Where Found | When to Submit |
|---|---|---|
| | | *IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.* |
| Project Summary | Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Description.*<br>The Project Summary is limited to one single-spaced page. | Submission is due by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.* |
| Proof of Non-Profit Status | Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Description, Legal Status of Applicant Entity*. | Proof of non-profit status should be submitted with the application package by the application due date and time listed in the *Overview* and *Section IV.4.* of the NOFO.<br>If it is not available at the time of application submission, it must be submitted prior to award. |
| Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities" | Applicants should go to the following URL for the official list of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in E.O. 12372 https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf | Submission of application materials is due to SPOC by the application due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.* |
| The Project Budget and Budget Justification | Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification.* | Submission is required in addition to submission of SF-424A and / or SF-424C.<br>Submission is required with the application package by the due date in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.* |

| What to Submit | Where Found | When to Submit |
|---|---|---|
| Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (IDR) | Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification*.<br><br>The IDR must be submitted with the application package. | If the IDR is available by the application due date, it must be submitted with the application package.<br><br>If it is not available by the application due date, listed in the *Overview* and *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*, it may be submitted prior award. |
| The Project Description | Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Description*. | Submission is due by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. |
| Eligibility Documentation by For-Profit Organizations | Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Description, Legal Status of Applicant Entity*. | Submission is required with the application by the Application Due Date in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. |