CDC-RFA-IP21-2101

Surveillance and Response to Avian and Pandemic Influenza by National Health Authorities outside the United States

This document serves as the script from the Informational Conference Calls held on Zoom on the below dates/times:
March 23, 2021, 7 PM; March 24, 2021 7 AM; March 24, 2021 10 AM

Hello, we are glad you could join the call.

This is [name]. I am a Public Health Analyst/Advisor within the Influenza Division.

Welcome to the informational call regarding the new funding opportunity CDC-RFA-IP21-2101 - Surveillance and Response to Avian and Pandemic Influenza by National Health Authorities outside the United States within CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD).

Thank you for taking the time to be on the call today. This meeting is being recorded and a transcript will be posted on the Grants.gov website for your reference. If you do not agree to participate in the recorded session, please disconnect at this time and refer to Grants.gov for the-written responses to all the questions.

We ask that all participants turn their video OFF. All participants are muted and if you have questions during the presentation, please enter them in the chat section. We will take all the questions and provide answers in a document that we will post to the Grants.gov website under the 'Related Documents' section of the opportunity announcement. If you have not already done so, please go to the Grants.gov site and activate the 'receive updates' option so that you will receive all the updates to the announcement.

Today, I will provide a general overview of the funding opportunity, briefly review the strategies and expected outcomes, draw your attention to some key pieces of information and finally, I will provide a description of the application review process. Nicole Comick, Grants Management Specialist within the Office of Grant Services, will discuss the eligibility requirements.

Overview of Program

Please note that all requirements are stated in the published Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) – which is CDC-RFA-IP21-2101, titled Surveillance and Response to Avian and Pandemic Influenza by National Health Authorities outside the United States. The eligibility criteria for this announcement has been updated as of March 23, 2021. Please be sure to visit Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) and download the revised announcement.

This funding opportunity is published by the Influenza Division within the Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases.

The purpose of this funding opportunity is:

- To support foreign governments through ministries of health or their bona-fide agents in low- and middle-income countries to improve or maintain capacity to conduct routine influenza surveillance and detect and respond to pandemic influenza.
- To ensure the capacity of these authorized national health authorities to respond to outbreaks of highly pathogenic viruses transmissible among humans as well as identify outbreaks of severe respiratory illness syndromes.
- To strengthen connections between national institutions in countries, especially National Influenza Centers, to fully participate in the WHO Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) and maintain capacity to share specimens and clinical and epidemiologic data related to circulation of influenza.
- To support monitoring of highly pathogenic viruses and bacteria transmissible to humans and identification of outbreaks of severe respiratory illness.
- A final purpose is to provide flexibility to provide assistance during a declared public health emergency.

This program will continue to support routine influenza surveillance and the development and maintenance of international capacity

to detect and respond to identified influenza pandemics; support coordination and communication of the animal human interface thus facilitating the capacity to detect and monitor novel viruses occurring in animals; and support capacity development to detect and respond to the spread of non-influenza respiratory viruses and bacteria.

This five-year funding opportunity is organized a bit differently than previous Influenza Division opportunities. The current announcement will include the opportunity to conduct work not only in support of influenza surveillance but expansion of surveillance capacity building to include other respiratory pathogens. The opportunity is organized to support activities in 3 distinct components:

- Component 1 – Influenza Activities
- Component 2 - Surveillance for Non-Influenza Viral and Bacterial Respiratory and Vaccine-preventable pathogens
- Component 3 - Rapid Response to Infectious Disease Outbreaks or other Public Health Emergencies

All applicants must apply for Component 1 – Influenza activities. The other Components are optional, and applicants can choose to submit workplans and budgets for these optional components if they would like to be considered for funding at any time during the 5-year project period.

- Applicants must submit a separate budget and workplan for all Components they would like to be considered for during the 5-year project period.
    - Non-research surveillance project protocols (in English) will be requested from all successful applicants.
    - Protocols should clearly demonstrate the plans and authority to conduct public health surveillance in the identified country.
- Component 3 is designed to provide the ability for the CDC Influenza Division to assist countries in responding to identified outbreaks or public health emergencies. The current COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for expanding our current mechanisms to include the ability to quickly respond and provide technical and financial assistance to our partner countries. Please review the detailed description provided in the funding opportunity regarding the designation of a public health emergency. This information begins on page 22 of the funding opportunity document.

    - If you apply for Component 3, an overarching work plan and budget for activities is required during the initial application.
    - This Component is not pathogen specific and should be flexible and adaptable to any designated public health emergency.
        - The strategy and activities may be quite broadly defined but should include activities leveraging epidemiologic, laboratory or infrastructure categories to support and respond to a public health emergency. You may want to utilize your country's response to the current pandemic as a guide or model for broad activities needed for this component.
    - Funds will only be available if a public health emergency is declared per the US Health and Human Services guidelines. Specific work plans and budgets will be requested at the time of any declared emergency.

Please note: Funds for Component 2 and Component 3 will only be considered if the application is accepted and funded under Component 1 – Influenza Activities. Applications without awards for Influenza activities will not be considered for other component funding. As always, award amounts are dependent on availability of funds.

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Strategies and Evaluation

Applicants should carefully review each of the components and the strategies and identified activities. Applicants should decide which Components they are interested in applying to and prepare a detailed workplan to support the strategies and activities identified within that Component.

Component 1 – Influenza Activities:
Strategies within the Influenza Activities component focus on 4 main themes:

- Infrastructure
- Epidemiologic Surveillance
- Laboratory Surveillance and
- Pandemic Preparedness.

Component 2 – Surveillance for Non-Influenza Viral and Bacterial Respiratory and Vaccine-preventable pathogens:
Strategies within this component focus on 3 main themes:

- Epidemiologic Surveillance
- Laboratory Surveillance and
- Respiratory Pathogen Surveillance

Component 3 – Rapid Response to Infectious Disease Outbreaks or other Public Health Emergencies:
Strategies within this component focus on Emergency Response.

A high-level overview of strategies and activities is provided in table format (logic model) in the funding opportunity announcement with detailed information provided in the Outcomes and Strategies/Activities sections immediately below the logic model. **Bolded** items in the logic model are of particular interest to CDC.

During each funding cycle, recipients will be expected to show progress on the outcomes and work plan submitted within the application:

- Progress will be documented in the annual progress report submitted as part of the continuation application.
- Additionally, progress and issues should be discussed with the assigned CDC Project Officer on a regular basis but no less than quarterly.

Applicants must provide an overall evaluation plan (in writing) indicating how they plan to monitor and document performance on activities proposed within each Component.

Application Review

All submitted applications will undergo an initial review to determine completeness and if they meet the eligibility requirements to move forward to objective review.

- Applications must be submitted by the due date: **May 4, 2021 by 11:59pm US ET**.
    - Applications must be submitted via the Grants.gov website (www.grants.gov)
    - Registrations with DUNs and Sam.gov must be active in order to complete an application.
        - Updates to these systems can take time, please ensure to start the update process early. (at least 2 weeks in advance of the due date).
    - To ensure time to resolve any submission issues via the Grants.gov site, please apply as early as possible. **Do not wait** until the end of the day on May 4th.
    - Extensions to the application deadline will **not be granted**.
- Applicants must adhere to the page limits outlined in the funding opportunity document:
    - Job Descriptions for Key personnel – maximum of 1 page for each identified key position – for example - Principal Investigator, Project Director, Business Official.
    - Organizational Chart – 1 page.
    - Capacity statement – 1 page.
    - Financial management statement - 1 page.
        - Please provide details on how funds will be managed, including drawing funds, utilization of funds and reporting of project costs as well as documentation of specific financial requirements of your organization.
    - Project Abstract – 1 page.
    - Project Narrative – 20 pages.
        - **Please note:** Those applicants applying to Component 2 and/or Component 3 will be

allowed an additional 20 pages in the narrative section.
    - Please clearly identify Components within the narrative section.

- Eligible applications will be reviewed and scored by objective reviewers.
    - Influenza staff including Project Officers will not participate in the application review and scoring.
    - Reviewers will read applications and score according to the criteria outlined in the funding opportunity and can be reviewed in the Objective Review section.
    - Reviewers will provide an overall score for each application and a rank order list will be developed.
    - CDC reserves the right to fund out of rank order in order to align with USG and or agency prioritized technical areas and activities, to ensure maximum coverage of activities geographically, to avoid duplication of activities in other CDC funding mechanisms, and to respond to unforeseen public health emergencies of international concern.
    - Please carefully review the Phase III Review section for specific information on funding priorities.

As a reminder - all participants are muted and if you have questions please enter them in the chat section.

Now, I will turn it over to Nicole Comick to discuss the eligibility criteria and available funding.

Eligibility Criteria

Thank you. As listed in the updated Notice of Funding Opportunity, this is an OPEN or UNRESTRICTED competition. Applicants may include State, County, City/Township or Special District Governments; Public and State Controlled Institutions of Higher Education; Federally Recognized Native American Tribal Governments or Other Than Federally Recognized Native American Governments; Public or Indian Housing Authorities; Nonprofits with or without 501(c)(3) status; Private Institutions of Higher Education; For Profit Organizations; Small Businesses; as well as Ministries of Health or their bona fide agents in countries designated by the World Bank as low- or middle-income. Bona fide agents are entities that the ministry of health or country government have approved to act on their behalf to implement surveillance capacity in the country. Bona fide agents applying on behalf of ministries of health will need to provide a letter of support from the ministry of health within the country where work is planned.

All final awards and amounts are dependent upon availability of funds. There are no cost sharing or matching requirements with this NOFO.

CDC anticipates funding up to 60 applications. The average first year award will range from $50,000 to $200,000 US Dollars per award for Components 1 and 2:

- There will be 5 annual budget periods within the 5-year project period.
- Each year, CDC will assess evidence of satisfactory progress by the recipient (as documented in required reports):
    - Annual funding is subject to availability of funds.
    - Annual funding will be determined based on progress achieved against stated objectives.
    - Unsatisfactory performance will be documented in discussions between the recipient, CDC Project Officer and the Office of Grants Services and improvement action plans implemented.

Applicants must submit an itemized budget narrative, as part of the Organizational Capacity of Recipients to Implement the Approach. When developing the budget narrative, applicants must consider whether the proposed budget is reasonable and consistent with the purpose, outcomes, and program strategy outlined in the project narrative.

For guidance on completing a detailed budget, see Budget Preparation Guidelines at:
https://www.cdc.gov/grants/documents/budget-preparation-guidance.pdf

Thank you Nicole. Now I would like to provide a few reminders.

Reminders:

- The NOFO was posted on March 8, 2021 and will remain open for 60 days until the application due date has

passed.

- A revised NOFO document has been posted and is available for your review and download. Please ensure that you have indicated in Grants.gov that you would like to be notified of any updates to the funding opportunity.
- The application due date is May 4, 2021, 11:59 PM US ET. Applications will not be accepted after the deadline.
- The CDC has not requested that interested candidates submit a letter of intent (LOI).
- All applicants meeting the requirements (as listed in the NOFO) will be accepted for review.
- The project period is targeted to begin 9/30/2021.

Questions and Answers:

Questions and answers from this call will be posted on the Grants.gov website as an addendum to the application package. Visit www.grants.gov/ and select the Funding Announcement for CDC-RFA-IP21-2101 and navigate to the 'Related Documents' tab.

For technical assistance with Grants.gov, please refer to the "support" tab on the grants.gov website. (www.grants.gov)

If you have any last-minute questions, please submit in the chat box now and we will keep the meeting chat open to capture them.

Thank you for your participation in today's call and as a reminder, please refer to the "Program Office Contact" section of the funding announcement for the email address for additional questions you would like to submit.

This concludes todays call.