

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Application due July 9, 2024



Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)

National Refugee Leadership and Lived Experience Council (NRLLEC) Program

Opportunity number: HHS-2024-ACF-ORR-RB-0060



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Before you begin

If you believe you are a good candidate for this funding opportunity, secure your [SAM.gov](#) and [Grants.gov](#) registrations now. If you are already registered, make sure your registration is active and up-to-date.

SAM.gov registration (this can take several weeks)

You must have an active account with SAM.gov. This includes having a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

[See Step 2: Get Ready to Apply](#)

Grants.gov registration (this can take several days)

You must have an active Grants.gov registration. Doing so requires a Login.gov registration as well.

[See Step 2: Get Ready to Apply](#)

Apply by July 9, 2024

Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on July 9, 2024.



To help you find what you need, this NOFO uses internal links. In Adobe Reader, you can go back to where you were by pressing Alt + Left Arrow (Windows) or Command + Left Arrow (Mac) on your keyboard.



Step 1:

Review the Opportunity

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Basic information

Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)



Have questions?
See [Contacts and Support](#).

Empowering refugee leaders and integrating their voices into ORR-funded programs and services.

Summary

The National Refugee Leadership and Lived Experience Council (NRLLEC) Program is a new program funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) that designs, implements, evaluates, and promotes national-level councils consisting of refugees and other ORR-eligible populations who have resettled into communities throughout the United States within the last five years. The NRLLEC Program will facilitate a National Young Adult Leadership Council comprised of members ages 18 to 24 every year for three years, as well as two additional councils with thematic focus to be determined in consultation with ORR. The NRLLEC Program will design, implement, evaluate, and promote five councils during the three-year project period.

The program's primary goal is to positively impact the lives of council members and their refugee and larger communities by building council members' capacity to serve as leaders. In addition, ORR recognizes that its engagement with these groups will enhance its ability to gather information from individual members firsthand about their lived experiences integrating into the United States. This will help inform ORR and its recipient network about how to best meet refugee needs through enhancing or changing ORR guidance, programming, and future councils.

The NRLLEC Program will foster inclusivity, with council members attuned to the diversity, demographics, needs, and viewpoints of [the populations eligible for ORR Refugee Resettlement Program benefits and services](#). The NRLLEC Program will not seek consensus advice from council members.

Key facts

Opportunity name:

National Refugee Leadership and Lived Experience Council (NRLLEC) Program

Opportunity number:

HHS-2024-ACF-ORR-RB-0060

Federal assistance listing:

93.576

Statutory authority number:

[8 U.S.C. 1522\(c\)\(1\)\(A\)](#), section 412(c)(1)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act

Key dates

Application deadline:

July 9, 2024

Expected award date:

September 30, 2024

Expected start date:

September 30, 2024

See [deadlines](#).

Funding details

Type: Cooperative agreement

Estimated total program funding: \$1.5 million

Total expected awards: 1

Minimum award amount for the first budget period (award floor): \$1 million

Maximum award amount for the first budget period (award ceiling): \$1.5 million

Funding periods: 36-month period of performance with three 12-month budget periods

ORR will continue to fund the project for the second and third budget periods based upon:

- Satisfactory progress in the project.
- Approval of the noncompetitive application for continuation.
- A determination that continued funding is in the federal government's best interest.
- Availability of federal funds.

Eligibility

Who can apply

Eligible applicants

Public and private nonprofit organizations may apply.

Individuals, including sole proprietorships, and foreign entities may not apply.

Other eligibility criteria

See the [initial review](#) section for disqualification factors.

Faith-based and community organizations that meet the eligibility requirements are eligible for awards under this funding opportunity.

Cost sharing

This program has no cost-sharing requirement. If you choose to include cost-sharing funds, we won't consider it during review. However, we will hold you accountable for any funds you add, including through reporting.

Program description

Background

ORR, within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF), supports the resettlement and integration of refugees, asylees, and other eligible populations, including certain humanitarian parolees (hereafter “refugees”), once they arrive in U.S. communities. ORR provides funding to state governments and national and local nonprofit agencies to implement integration services for refugees for up to five years after their arrival in the United States.

In 2020 and 2021, several Presidential Executive Orders—[Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government](#), [Restoring Faith in Our Legal Immigration Systems and Strengthening Integration and Inclusion Efforts for New Americans](#), and [Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government](#)—encouraged the federal government to request feedback directly from clients so that their voices can be represented at the highest levels of government.

ORR recognizes the importance of engaging the populations we serve and is committed to incorporating their lived experience into decision-making about programs and services. Lived experience refers to “representation and understanding of an individual’s human experiences, choices, and options and how those factors influence one’s perception of knowledge” based on one’s own life.^[1] In the context of ORR, people with lived experience include beneficiaries of ORR-funded programs or services.

Program scope

Goal

The RLLEC’s goal is to positively impact the lives of council members and their refugee and larger communities by building council members’ capacity to serve as leaders. In addition, ORR recognizes that its engagement with these groups will enhance its ability to gather information from individual members firsthand about their personal lived experiences integrating into the United States. This will help inform ORR and its award recipient network about how to best meet refugee needs through enhancing or changing ORR guidance, programming, and future councils.

Objectives

The NRLLEC's objective is to establish, develop, and maintain a program that will design, implement, evaluate, and promote five national-level councils of refugees with lived experience over three years. This includes:

- A National Young Adult Leadership Council comprised of members ages 18 to 24, every year for three years.
- Two additional councils with a thematic focus to be determined in consultation with ORR—for example, women; elderly people; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, or two-spirit (LGBTQIA2S+) people; or single heads of household.

The NRLLEC Program will foster inclusivity, with council members reflecting the diversity, demographics, needs, and viewpoints of [the populations eligible for ORR Refugee Resettlement Program benefits and services](#). The NRLLEC Program will include refugee members who reside in communities throughout the United States and will not seek consensus advice from the council members.

Providing equitable services

To ensure that the program is fully and equally accessible to all refugees described in the [eligible participants](#) section of this document, the recipient will:

- Implement activities that are culturally and linguistically appropriate and include input from individuals with lived experience.
- Provide flexible scheduling for participants, who may be working full-time or during nontraditional work hours.
- Serve refugees with varying levels of education and experience.
- Provide direct training and support, or connect participants with external training and support, that fit each participant's background and need for leadership training.
- Help refugees overcome potential barriers to participation, such as lack of transportation or child care responsibilities.

Program activities

The award recipient will be required to do the following to meet the NRLLEC Program's goals.

Design council program

The recipient must develop a plan for creating the NRLLEC Program that outlines how they will [develop and run the council program each year](#). The recipient will:

- Propose topics for leadership training sessions and meetings. The recipient will base these on their knowledge of strengths and challenges that [ORR-eligible populations](#) face. Topics should be rooted in integration best practices. They may include leadership, empowerment, civic engagement, well-being, and professional development, among others.
- Focus on best practices in refugee resettlement and integration and use research-based evidence to support their method of providing leadership training for council members.
- Identify the best way to cover costs for NRLLEC members to alleviate barriers that would prevent them from fully participating in the council. Barriers could include, but are not limited to, needing to take time off work, taking a break from seeking employment, or needing to secure child care.
- Include an annual three-day, in-person meeting for each council in Washington, DC, to meet with government officials and other relevant stakeholders. Council members will use their leadership and communications skills to share their lived experiences and explain the needs of their communities.
- Address [marketing and dissemination activities](#).

Launch and implement council program

The recipient must launch and implement a National Young Adult Leadership Council each year of this award, as well as two more councils within the three-year project period. To launch the councils, the recipient will need to:

- Develop eligibility criteria, an application, interview questions, and public guidance about the requirements.
 - Requirements include intermediate English-language skills, an eligible immigration classification, and having been in the United States for less than five years.
- Recruit, interview, and select 10 to 15 young adult members each year for three years, and 15 to 20 members each for the two additional councils.

- Ensure a wide array of lived experiences, which may include, but is not limited to, age, race, ethnicity, religious background, gender, country of origin, location within the United States, LGBTQIA2S+ identity, and time in the United States.
- Each year, conduct an orientation and training session to introduce members to the NRLLEC's purpose and expectations.
- Each year, incorporate council members' input on the guidelines for council meetings, agenda topics, meeting schedules, and expectations for their participation.
- Provide a laptop and portable Wi-Fi device to each NRLLEC member to make sure they can participate in NRLLEC tasks such as email communication, writing documents, and video conferencing.

To implement the council program, the recipient will need to:

- Develop content for the NRLLEC that is age-appropriate and sensitive to the demographics of its members. Such content could include, but is not limited to, handouts at meetings, information provided to NRLLEC members to foster continued community leadership, and NRLLEC promotional materials.
- Book guest speakers or facilitators to address planned session topics. The speakers or facilitators should be experts in their fields and have either of the following:
 - Lived experience as a forced migrant, refugee, or newcomer.
 - A strong understanding of cross-cultural communication techniques and how to identify and convey subject matter relevant to the participants.
- Facilitate 10 virtual NRLLEC sessions and three to five ad-hoc subgroup meetings with specific NRLLEC members for each council each year. Determine subgroup topics with ORR approval, drawing on major themes from larger sessions.
- Provide interpretation, as needed, for all virtual and in-person meetings, including the Washington, DC, meeting. Accommodate both special needs and different languages.
- Translate materials used to facilitate NRLLEC meetings into the primary language of council members, as needed.
- Translate materials used to market and promote the NRLLEC.
- Provide opportunities for mentorship, coaching, professional development, or leadership training for NRLLEC members during their time in the council.
- Use partnerships with national organizations to help members develop leadership skills.
- Plan an annual three-day, in-person meeting in Washington, DC, between NRLLEC members and government officials and other relevant stakeholders.

- Cover costs for NRLLEC members to alleviate barriers that would prevent them from fully participating in the council. Barriers could include, but are not limited to, needing to take time off work, taking a break from seeking employment, or needing to secure child care.
- Foster an alumni network for NRLLEC members during years 2 and 3 of this project. ORR may request the names, email addresses, and phone numbers of alumni who want to stay involved.

Evaluate council program

The recipient will conduct the following evaluation activities:

- Evaluate how well the NRLLEC positively impacts the lives of council members and their refugee and larger communities by building council members' capacity to serve as leaders.
- Develop an evaluation plan addressing the goals and each objective explained in the [program scope](#) section of this notice of funding opportunity (NOFO).
- Provide monthly insights to ORR on the fulfillment of program objectives, including qualitative and quantitative data, lessons learned, and best practices relevant to ORR. The presentations must focus on insights gathered from members as individuals, based on their lived experiences.
- Produce an annual report describing the most important outcomes of the NRLLEC Program, including outcomes affecting the NRLLEC members and, if possible, their communities.
- Regularly evaluate the NRLLEC's processes and structure by asking members and ORR for feedback.

Promote council program and disseminate results

The recipient will conduct the following activities to promote the council and disseminate the results of the council's activities:

- Create marketing tools such as a website and social media platforms to:
 - Recruit NRLLEC Program council members.
 - Highlight NRLLEC Program activities.
 - Share insights with ORR's recipient network.
 - Amplify the professional and civic profile of NRLLEC members to advance their leadership opportunities.
- Partner with national resettlement-focused entities to widely share NRLLEC lessons learned with ORR's recipient network and local, state, and national stakeholders.

- Prepare and facilitate at least two webinars per year for the broader ORR recipient network and local, state, and national stakeholders. The webinars should center the voices of NRLLEC members, providing them the opportunity to be presenters. They should highlight the most significant challenges related to integration and the most useful services and make recommendations for improved support from ORR and its network.

NRLLEC eligible participants

NRLLEC members must be eligible for ORR Refugee Resettlement Program benefits and services through their immigration status or category as one of the following:

- Refugee
- Asylee
- Cuban or Haitian entrant
- Iraqi or Afghan Special Immigrant
- Amerasian
- Victim of human trafficking
- Another individual made eligible by law, such as a humanitarian parolee from Afghanistan or Ukraine who arrived under specific circumstances during a defined period

Eligible people must also meet these criteria:

- They are not U.S. citizens.
- They have been eligible for ORR services for five years or less when they become a member of a council.

More information on eligibility for ORR-funded refugee resettlement program benefits and services can be found at [45 CFR § 400.43](#), and in [ORR Policy Letters](#) 16-01, 22-01, and 22-13.

ORR will issue a policy letter and inform recipients if other populations are made eligible by law and can be enrolled in program services.

It is the recipient's responsibility to verify the eligibility of each participant upon enrollment. If they are unsure whether a candidate is eligible, they should contact refugeeeligibility@acf.hhs.gov.

ORR will consider exceptions for otherwise eligible persons who have more than five years of ORR eligibility on a case-by-case basis. To request an exception, the recipient should contact their program officer with an explanation of why the individual should be considered a priority for inclusion. They should not include immigration documents or personal details in the message.

The recipient must comply with applicable civil rights laws to ensure that ORR-eligible populations receive fair treatment, access, and opportunity to participate in ORR-funded programs without discrimination on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, race, color, religion, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or political opinion. ORR notes that in implementing its nondiscrimination provisions for the Refugee Resettlement Program, it operates in compliance with the requirements of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and other applicable federal conscience protections, as well as other applicable federal civil rights laws and applicable HHS regulations. For additional detail, please see [45 CFR § 87.3](#).

For each participant, the recipient must keep a record of eligibility documentation that ORR staff can review on request. Options for keeping records include:

- Keeping a copy of eligibility documents in the participant's case file.
- Recording the following information:
 - Details of the exact document that the participant presented to confirm eligibility, along with any codes or markings that show eligibility.
 - The participant's date of arrival to the United States or initial date of ORR eligibility.
 - The name of the staff member who reviewed the documents.

Case file requirements

The recipient must make a case file for each participant and keep it updated. These files must include:

- Documentation of their eligibility for the program.
- Documentation of payments made on behalf of the participant (for example, receipts for laptop and Wi-Fi equipment).
- Invoices and receipts for these payments.
- Record of attendance in council meetings, community engagements, training, and other leadership opportunities.
- Case notes highlighting council members' active participation in council meetings, including success stories about how NRLLEC Program activities have positively impacted their personal or professional life.

Case notes should be documented within five business days of any formal NRLLEC Program activity.

The recipient must allow ORR staff to review case files upon request.

Programs must comply with [45 CFR § 75.303\(e\)](#) to take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information. When the recipient is not using the files, they must be secured so that only appropriate staff can access them. If

the recipient uses an electronic system, they must limit access to the data and use encryption to protect participants' information. If the recipient uses a paper system, they must keep files secure—ideally in a file cabinet that is kept locked and can only be accessed by authorized staff.

Data reporting requirements

Recipients are required to report semiannually on the following data points to ORR:

- Number of participants enrolled in the program, by council type.
- Number of participants who attended virtual meetings or other formal NRLLEC activities.
- Number and type of guest speakers (subject-matter experts) who presented at virtual meetings or other formal NRLLEC activities.
- Number of participants who attended the three-day Washington, DC, meeting.
- Detailed schedule for Washington, DC, meeting.
- Number of participants engaging in the program alumni network.
- Number and type of topic areas planned for the upcoming year.
- Number of training hours the program provided to participants in orientation sessions to introduce the NRLLEC's purpose and expectations.
- Number of training hours the program provided to participants in developing leadership skills.
- Major lived experience trends and themes shared by NRLLEC members in virtual meetings or other formal NRLLEC activities, including successes and challenges related to resettlement and integration.
- Description of major activities and accomplishments during the reporting period related to the project goals and objectives.
- Description of project problems, such as deviations or departures from the original project plan.
- Description of equity-related activities conducted during the reporting period.

Other reporting requirements will be determined in consultation with ORR after the launch of the program during year 1.

Cooperative agreement—description of ACF's involvement

A cooperative agreement is a method of awarding federal assistance in which substantial federal involvement is anticipated. The agreement clearly defines the responsibilities of ORR and the expected recipient prior to the award. ORR anticipates that its involvement will benefit the recipient in their ability to carry out the project. ORR's substantial involvement with the project will include:

- Reviewing and approving the resumes of all key positions prior to their beginning to work on the program.
- Consulting with the recipient and reviewing the NRLLEC implementation plan; suggesting revisions and updates, as necessary; and approving the plan.
- Consulting on the recipient's evaluation plan and reporting measures, as necessary.
- Providing substantial and regular input on the plan's implementation and activities after it is approved.
- Reviewing and approving the resources the recipient develops, including, but not limited to, NRLLEC application materials, outreach, training materials, and website content.
- Collaborating with the recipient in creating a network of experts.
- Facilitating collaboration and coordination with national entities, ORR recipients, and other refugee-serving agencies, when needed.

Funding policies and limitations

We do not allow the following costs under this NOFO:

- Construction
- Purchase of real property
- Major renovation
- Pre-award costs

See 45 CFR [75.420 – 75.475](#) for information on costs that are always unallowable or have restrictions.

Indirect costs

Indirect costs are those for a common or joint purpose across more than one project and that cannot be easily separated by project.

To charge indirect costs you can select one of the two following methods:

Method 1—Approved rate. You currently have an indirect cost rate approved by your cognizant federal agency.

Method 2—*De minimis* rate. Per [45 CFR 75.414\(f\)](#), if you have never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, you may elect to charge a *de minimis* rate. If you are awaiting approval of an indirect cost proposal, you may also use the *de minimis* rate. If you choose this method, costs included in the indirect cost pool must not be charged as direct costs.

This rate is 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). See [45 CFR 75.2](#) for the definition of MTDC. You can use this rate indefinitely.

Learn more at [45 CFR 75.414](#), Indirect Costs.

Subawards

The prime recipient must maintain a substantive role in the project. We define a substantive role as conducting funded activities and providing services that are necessary and integral to completing the project. Monitoring the subrecipient's activities is not a substantive role. See [45 CFR 75.352](#) for information on subrecipient monitoring.

We do 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.

Subrecipients must meet the [eligibility requirements](#) of this NOFO.

Statutory authority

[8 U.S.C. 1522\(c\)\(1\)\(A\)](#), section 412(c)(1)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act



Step 2:

Get Ready to Apply

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Get registered

SAM.gov

You must have an active account with SAM.gov. This includes having a Unique Entity Identifier. SAM.gov registration can take several weeks. Begin that process today.

To register, go to [SAM.gov Entity Registration](#) and click Get Started. From the same page, you can also click on the Entity Registration Checklist for the information you will need to register.

Grants.gov

You must also have an active account with [Grants.gov](#). You can see step-by step instructions at the Grants.gov [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#).

Need help? See [Contacts and Support](#).

Find the application package

The application package has all the forms you need to apply. You can find it online. Go to [Search Grants](#) at Grants.gov and search for opportunity number HHS-2024-ACF-ORR-RB-0060. Then select the Package tab.

If you can't use Grants.gov to download application materials, you may request them from the [grants management contact](#).

If you are also unable to apply through Grants.gov, see information on [exemptions for paper submissions](#).

Learn more

Visit [Applying for an ACF Grant Award](#) on the ACF grants page.



Step 3:

Prepare Your Application

In this step

Application contents and format

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Application contents and format

Application components

You will submit two files plus the standard forms in the application package.

File one: Project Narrative Attachment form

Includes:

- Table of contents
- Project summary, one page
- Project narrative
- Line-item budget and budget narrative

File two: Other Attachments form

Includes all [attachments](#).

Other required forms

Includes [other required forms](#).

Required format

Page limit for file one and file two combined: 85 pages

File format: Portable Document File (PDF) is recommended, but not required. ACF supports the following file formats when you attach files to the Project Narrative Attachment form and the Other Attachments form:

- Adobe PDF (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Image formats (.jpg, .gif, .tiff, or .bmp only)

Paper size: 8 ½ inches x 11 inches

Margins: 1 inch all around

Language: English

If possible, include page numbers.

Do not include external links to information you want reviewers to assess.

Fonts

Font: Times New Roman

Size: 12-point font

Footnotes and text in tables and graphics may be 10-point.

Spacing

Table of contents: Must be single-spaced

Project summary: Must be single-spaced

Project narrative: Must be double-spaced

Line-item budget and budget narrative: Can be single-spaced

Attachments: As needed

Tables and footnotes throughout: Can be single-spaced

Table of contents

At the beginning of file one, insert a table of contents that guides a reader through the contents of both files in your application. If possible, include links to the relevant content in file one.

Project summary

Provide a one-page summary of the project description. Do not cross-reference to other parts of the application. The summary must include:

- At the top, the project title, applicant name, address, phone numbers, email addresses, and any website URL.
- A brief description of the project, including the needs and population you will address and your proposed services.

Project narrative

The project narrative is where you address all your proposed activities. It is a critical section of your application that we evaluate and rank against other applications using the [merit review criteria](#). Remember that substance and measurable outcomes are more important than length. We are particularly interested in project narratives that convey strategies for achieving intended performance.

In it, you must:

- Explain how the project will meet the purpose of the NOFO, as described in the [program description](#).
- Make sure your narrative is clear, concise, and complete.
- Use cross-referencing rather than repetition.
- Include any required supporting documents noted. You generally provide these in your [attachments](#).
- Use the headings and order of the sections that follow.

Objectives

State your main objectives and any sub-objectives. Address how the objectives stated relate to the [overall purpose of this program](#) and describe how you will achieve the objectives.

Expected outcomes

Identify the outcomes you plan to achieve from the project. Outcomes should relate to the overall program as described in the [program description section](#).

Approach

Outline your action plan. Describe the scope and detail of how you will accomplish your proposed project. Explain potential obstacles and challenges to accomplishing your project goals. Explain the strategies you will use to address them.

At the beginning of the approach section, demonstrate your organization's thorough and specialized understanding of refugee resettlement challenges and working with people with lived experience.

Make sure to address all required activities mentioned in the [section on providing equitable services](#) and the [program activities section](#) in the program description.

Note: Your response to the [program description section on evaluating the program](#) should appear in the application section on [project performance and activities evaluation](#).

Your response to the [program description section on promoting and disseminating the program](#) should appear in the application section on [promotion and dissemination](#).

Project timeline and milestones

Provide a timeline for your project that includes milestones. To do so:

- Organize the information by task and subtask, showing related milestones.
- Provide monthly or quarterly quantitative projections for what you plan to accomplish and by when. For example, provide the number of people you plan to serve or the number of a certain activity you plan to complete.
- If you can't quantify some of your accomplishments, provide their target dates.
- Cover the full period of performance in your timeline.

Organizational capacity

Provide the following information for your full project team, including the applicant organization and any cooperating partners, contractors, and subrecipients:

- Provide evidence that your team has the relevant experience and expertise needed to carry out your project.
- Describe your team's experience with administering, developing, implementing, managing, and evaluating similar projects.
- Provide evidence that your team has the organizational capability to fulfill their roles and functions effectively.
- Include an organizational chart and management plan that describes how all staff will manage and coordinate activities.
- Include a description of roles, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed staff position, including any subrecipients and consultants (through resumes and job descriptions).
- Include information on existing partnerships with national organizations that you will use during the program.
- Include information on any plans to enter subaward agreements and describe the work the subrecipient will perform.
- You will provide some supporting information in the [attachments](#) section.

Plan for oversight of federal award funds and activities

You must ensure proper award oversight. The regulation that governs this oversight is [45 CFR Part 75 Subpart D](#). It includes standards for:

- 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 your framework to ensure proper oversight of federal funds and activities.

Include:

- A description of the governance, policies and procedures, and systems you use for record keeping and financial management.
- A description of the procedures to identify and mitigate risks and issues. These might include audit findings, continuous performance assessment findings, and monitoring.
- The key staff who will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities staff and any partners or subrecipients.

Project performance and activities evaluation plan

Describe a plan for how you will evaluate your project's performance and how it will contribute to continuous quality improvement. Refer and respond to all items mentioned in the [evaluation section of the program description](#). This plan must describe:

- How you will monitor ongoing activities and the progress toward the project's goals and objectives.
- The inputs, key activities, and expected outcomes of the funded activities. Inputs might include your collaborative partners, key staff, budget, service processes, or other resources.
- How you will measure the inputs, activities, and outcomes.
- How you will use the resulting information to inform improvement of funded activities.
- Any processes that support the overall data quality.
- The organizational systems and processes that will track performance outcomes.
- How your organization will collect and manage data in a way that allows for accurate and timely reporting of performance outcomes. This might include assigned skilled staff, data management software, and data integrity.
- Any potential obstacles to implementing the project performance evaluation and how you will address them.
- A timeline for how you will review information from the performance evaluation and apply it to your ongoing project.

- How you will collect the specific metrics discussed in the [data reporting requirements](#) section of the program description.

Promotion of council and dissemination of results

Propose a plan to promote the program and disseminate reports, products, and project outputs to key target audiences. The plan should cover the activities discussed in the [program description section on promoting the council program and disseminating results](#).

Include:

- Dissemination goals.
- Strategies to identify and engage with target audiences.
- How you will allocate sufficient staff time and budget for dissemination.
- A preliminary plan to evaluate the extent to which target audiences receive project information and use it as intended.
- The dissemination timeline.
- A description of your experience writing and publicizing formal reports on integration best practices, as well as plans to produce similar products to publicly provide project information to target audiences.

Engagement and collaboration (bonus section)

You may receive [bonus points](#) if your application shows one or more of the following:

- Your experience carrying out a national-level refugee advisory board, ethnic community-based group, or similar initiative aimed at developing leaders and leveraging members' lived experience to facilitate integration and increase support for newcomer populations in the United States.
- How your organization's leadership or staff has personal experience with refugee resettlement or experience of themselves or their family being forcibly displaced from their home country.
- How your organization's leadership or staff demonstrates a commitment to centering the voices of those with lived experience in their organizational culture.
- How you will use existing partnerships with U.S. universities and refugee-related international organizations, like the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), to help NRLLEC members in their personal and professional development.
- Experience writing and publicizing formal reports on integration best practices in the United States.

Protection of sensitive or confidential information

Describe how you will collect and safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other information that is considered sensitive. Make sure your approach is consistent with applicable federal, state, local, and tribal laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality.

Provide:

- The methods and systems you and any subrecipients or contractors will use to ensure that you properly handle confidential and sensitive information.
- A plan for the disposition of such information at the end of the period of performance.

See [45 CFR 75.303\(e\)](#) for more information.

Line-item budget and budget narrative

The line-item budget and budget justification support the information you provide in the Budget Information Standard Form SF-424-A. See the [other required forms](#). It justifies the costs you ask for and includes added detail, including detailed calculations for the “object class categories” in the Budget Information Standard Form. You will provide this information for the initial budget period only. See information on [funding periods](#).

As you develop your budget, consider:

- If the costs are necessary, reasonable, allocable, and consistent with your project’s purpose and activities.
- How you calculate your costs in ways that are clear and repeatable.
- The restrictions on spending funds. See the [funding policies and limitations](#).
- The requirement to include funds to provide each NRLLEC member a laptop and a portable Wi-Fi device to participate in NRLLEC activities.
- The requirement for key staff and each NRLLEC member to travel to the annual program meeting in Washington, DC.
- The requirement to cover costs for NRLLEC members to alleviate barriers that would prevent them from fully participating in the council. Barriers could include, but are not limited to, needing to take time off work, taking a break from seeking employment, or needing to secure child care.
- Payments for presenters at meetings.

We encourage you to also review the Standard Form instructions.

To create your line-item budget and justification, see [detailed budget instructions on our website](#).

In general, you must:

- Indicate the method you will use for your indirect cost rate. See the section on [indirect costs](#) for further information.
- Include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated.
- For any cost-sharing, include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance.

Proprietary or personally identifiable information

In your application, you may identify salary or other proprietary information or personally identifiable information. We will remove this information from applications before they go to reviewers.

If you have an [exemption for paper submission](#), you can protect salary information and any proprietary information by placing that information only in the original application. You can remove the information from the copies, keeping summary information.

Attachments

You will upload attachments in Grants.gov using the Other Attachments form. These attachments are included in the overall application page limit, unless it says otherwise in this section.

Indirect cost agreement

If you include indirect costs in your budget using an approved rate, include a copy of your current agreement approved by your [cognizant agency for indirect costs](#). If you use the *de minimis* rate, you do not need to submit this attachment.

See the [indirect costs](#) section for more information.

Legal proof of nonprofit status

If your organization is a nonprofit, you need to attach proof. We will accept any of the following as proof:

- A reference to your listing in the IRS's most recent list of tax-exempt organizations.
- A copy of a current tax exemption certificate from the IRS.
- A letter from your state's tax department, attorney general, or another appropriate state official saying that your group is a nonprofit and that none of your net earnings go to private shareholders or others.
- A certified copy of your certificate of incorporation or similar document. This document must show that your group is a nonprofit.

- Any of these documents for a parent organization. Also include a statement signed by an official of the parent group that your organization is a nonprofit affiliate.

Organizational capacity supporting information

You must attach the following information to support the information in your [organizational capacity](#) section:

- Organizational charts, including all partners.
- Resumes or curricula vitae (CV) for all key personnel.
- Biographical sketches for all key personnel.
- A job description for each vacant key position.
- List of your Board of Directors.
- Audit summary report including auditor's opinion, if applicable.
- Copy or description of the applicant organization's fiscal control and accountability procedures.
- Copy or description of the applicant organization's personnel policies.
- Information on compliance with federal, state, and local government standards.

Third-party agreements

You must submit agreements with all third parties involved in the project. Third parties include subrecipients, contractors, and other cooperating entities. Third-party agreements include letters of commitment, memoranda of understanding, and memoranda of agreement. We do not consider general letters of support to be third-party agreements.

Any such agreement must:

- Describe the roles and responsibilities in project activities.
- Describe the support and resources that the third party is committing to the proposed project.
- Be signed by the person in the third-party organization with the authority to make such commitments.
- Detail work schedules and estimated compensation, with an understanding that the parties will negotiate a final agreement after award.
- Identify the primary applicant and all collaborators responsible for project activities, if for a collaboration or consortia application.

Other required forms

You will need to complete some other forms. Upload the following forms at Grants.gov. You can find them in the NOFO [application package](#) or review them and their instructions at [Grants.gov Forms](#).

Forms	Submission requirement
Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	With the application.
Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)	With the application.
Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)	With the application.
Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)	If applicable, with the application or before award.
Key Contacts	With the application.
Grants.gov Lobbying Form	With the application or before award.
Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	With the application. Cite your primary location and up to 29 additional performance sites.



Step 4:

Learn About Review and Award

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Application review

Initial review

We review each application to make sure it meets basic requirements. We won't consider an application that:

- Requests funding above the [award ceiling](#).
- Is submitted after the [deadline](#).
- Is from an individual, including a sole proprietorship, or a foreign entity.
- Is received in paper format that didn't have a previously approved exemption from ACF.

We will let you know within 30 days of the application deadline if your application is disqualified. You won't receive notice from ACF if your application fails Grants.gov validation checks.

If you submit more than two files in addition to your forms, we will remove the extra files. We will let you know if this happens.

We will also remove blurred or illegible pages and any file formats that are not supported.

We will not review pages that exceed the page limit.

If your application fails to adhere to ACF's NOFO formatting, font, and page limitation requirements, we will adjust your application by removing page(s) from the application. We will remove the pages before the merit review and will not send them to reviewers.

If we do so, we will send you a letter after we make awards to notify you that we amended your application.

Merit review

A panel reviews all applications that pass the initial review. The members use the criteria in this section.

Additionally, our reviewers typically are not federal employees. See information on [proprietary and personally identifiable information](#).

Criteria

During the review, your application will be judged on the following criteria. The points indicate the importance of each criterion. Points will be given based on how well your application—particularly the project narrative and budget justification—addresses the criteria.

Criterion	Total number of points = 100 + 15 possible bonus points
1. Objectives, outcomes, approach, and timeline	40 points
2. Organizational capacity and oversight	20 points
4. Budget and budget justification	20 points
5. Dissemination plan	20 points
6. Engagement and collaboration	15 bonus points

Objectives, outcomes, approach, and timeline (Maximum points: 40)

Reviewers will consider the extent to which you:

- [Demonstrate thorough and specialized understanding](#) of refugee resettlement challenges and working with those with lived experience. **(0 to 8 points)**
- Propose a clear and feasible approach to addressing and achieving the [goal](#) and [objectives](#) of the program. **(0 to 8 points)**
- Describe how you will carry out the NRLLEC Program, addressing the first three required activities described in the [program activities section](#) **(0 to 8 points)**:
 - [Design council program](#).
 - [Launch and implement council program](#).
 - [Evaluate council program](#) (also see section on [project performance and activities evaluation plan](#)).
- Identify a reasonable and realistic [timeline and milestones](#) for implementing project activities that cover the full period of performance. **(0 to 8 points)**
- Provide clearly defined [outcomes](#) for each project year and for the total project. **(0 to 8 points)**

Organizational capacity and plan for oversight (Maximum points: 20)

Reviewers will consider the extent to which you:

- Provide an [organizational chart and management plan](#) that clearly describes the management and coordination of activities carried out by the applicant, key partners, subrecipients, and consultants, if applicable, to ensure that project goals are achieved. **(0 to 3 points)**
- Demonstrate and describe your experience administering, developing, implementing, managing, and evaluating successful refugee-related leadership development programs and services. **(0 to 4 points)**
- Describe how you will use your partnerships with national organizations to help NRLLEC members become leaders within the refugee community and broader community. **(0 to 6 points)**
- Describe the roles, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed staff position, including any subrecipients and consultants, in resumes and job descriptions. **(0 to 4 points)**
- If applicable, describe how you will provide a subaward to a national or community-based organization with expertise in conducting a national-level NRLLEC or similar initiatives. Also describe the work the subrecipient will do. (This **does not have a point value** but will help reviewers consider your application thoroughly.)
- Describe a thorough plan for [financial and programmatic oversight](#) of the project. **(0 to 3 points)**

Promotion of council and dissemination of results (Maximum points: 20)

Reviewers will consider the extent to which you:

- Describe [your dissemination goals](#). **(0 to 2 points)**
- Describe how you will allocate sufficient staff time and budget for dissemination. **(0 to 2 points)**
- Describe how you will evaluate the extent to which target audiences receive project information and use it as intended. **(0 to 2 points)**
- Describe how you will use marketing materials, share lessons learned with ORR's network, and develop webinars, following the [promotion and dissemination section in the program description](#). Specifically, describe how you will:
 - Create marketing tools. **(0 to 3 points)**

- Partner with existing national resettlement-focused entities. **(0 to 8 points)**
- Put on at least two webinars per year for the ORR recipient network.
(0 to 3 points)

Engagement and collaboration (Maximum bonus points: 15)

If you include the [engagement and collaboration section in your project narrative](#), you may receive bonus points and priority consideration. Reviewers will consider the extent to which you:

- Demonstrate experience implementing a national-level NRLLEC or similar initiative. **(0 to 5 bonus points)**
- Show that your organization's leadership or staff have personal experience with refugee resettlement and are committed to centering the voices of those with lived expertise in their organizational culture. **(0 to 4 bonus points)**
- Describe a plan to use existing partnerships with U.S. universities and refugee-related international organizations, like the UNHCR, to help NRLLEC members in their personal and professional development. **(0 to 3 bonus points)**
- Demonstrate experience writing and publicizing formal reports on integration best practices in the United States. **(0 to 3 bonus points)**

Budget and budget justification (Maximum points: 20)

Reviewers will consider the extent to which you:

- Propose a [budget](#) that **(0 to 10 points)**:
 - Aligns with the proposed program activities.
 - Justifies the amount requested, describing how categorical costs are derived.
 - Demonstrates that costs are reasonable and critical to carrying out your project.
- Include the program-specific details mentioned in the [line-item budget section](#). These include **(0 to 10 points)**:
 - Costs for all personnel, including the main recipient and any subrecipients.
 - Equipment for NRLLEC members.
 - Travel costs for key staff and all NRLLEC members to attend the 3-day Washington, DC, meeting.
 - Coverage of costs for NRLLEC members.
 - Payment for presenters and subject matter experts.
 - Other relevant allowable costs.

Risk review

Before making an award, we review the risk that you will not prudently manage federal funds. If you had a past federal award, we need to make sure you've handled those awards well and demonstrated sound business practices. We use SAM.gov [Responsibility / Qualification](#) to check this history for all awards likely to be over \$250,000.

If we find a significant risk, we may choose not to fund your application or to place specific conditions on the award.

For more details, see [45 CFR 75.205](#).

Selection process

When making funding decisions, we consider:

- Merit review results, which are key in making decisions but are not the only factor.
- Organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations.
- The larger portfolio of agency-funded projects by considering geographic distribution.
- The past performance of the applicant.

We may:

- Fund applications in whole or in part.
- Fund applications at a lower amount than requested.
- Decide not to allow a prime recipient to subaward if they may not be able to monitor and manage subrecipients properly.
- Decide not to fund a project with high start-up costs or unreasonably high operating costs.
- Choose not to fund applicants with management or financial problems.
- Designate your application as “approved but unfunded” if it was successful, but there was not sufficient funding to make an award. You may receive funding if additional funds become available within the fiscal year.
- Choose to fund no applications under this NOFO.

We will not fund:

- An incomplete application.
- A disqualified application.

Award notices

How we make awards

If you are successful, we will email or transmit through our grant systems a Notice of Award (NoA) to your authorized official.

We will email you if your application is disqualified or unsuccessful.

The NoA is the only official award document. The NoA tells you about the amount of the award, important dates, and the terms and conditions you need to follow. Until you receive the NoA, you have not received an award. Project costs that you incur before you receive a NoA are at your risk.

If you want to know more about NoA contents, go to [Notice of Award at ACF's website](#).



Step 5:

Submit Your Application

In this step

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Application submission and deadlines

Deadlines

Application

Due on July 9, 2024.

- For electronic submissions, the due time is 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET).
- If you receive an exemption from electronic submission, the due time is 4:30 p.m. ET. See information on [exemptions for paper submissions](#).

Grants.gov creates a date and time record when it receives the application. If you submit the same application more than once, we will accept only the last on-time submission.

The grants management officer may extend an application due date based on emergency situations such as documented natural disasters or a verifiable widespread disruption of electric or mail service.

Submission methods

Grants.gov

You must submit your application through Grants.gov unless we give you an exemption for a paper submission. See information on [getting registered](#).

For instructions on how to submit in Grants.gov, see the [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#). Make sure that your application passes the Grants.gov validation checks. Do not encrypt, zip, or password protect any files.

See [Contacts and Support](#) if you need help.

Issues with federal systems

If you experience a systems issue with Grants.gov or SAM.gov, please refer to ACF's [Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues \[PDF\]](#).

Exemptions for paper submissions

We need to give you an exemption before you can apply on paper. See the [ACF Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission \[PDF\]](#).

Once we have approved your exemption, download your forms package under the Package tab in Grants.gov.

To submit your application, mail it to:

Bridget Shea Westfall

Administration for Children and Families

Office of Grants Management

Division of Discretionary Grants

Mary E. Switzer Building

330 C Street, SW

Washington, DC 20201

The requirements include:

- Print your application and all copies one-sided.
- Applicants must submit one original and two copies of the complete application, including all standard forms and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved forms.
- You must submit the original and both copies in a single package. If you plan to submit more than one application under this NOFO or others, you must submit them separately. Clearly label each package with the NOFO title and funding opportunity number.
- Your authorized organization official must sign the application. One application copy must include an original signature.

Other submissions

Intergovernmental review

This NOFO is not subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. No action is needed.

Mandatory disclosure

You must submit any information related to violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award. See Mandatory Disclosures, [45 CFR 75.113](#).

Send written disclosures to us at bridget.sheawestfall@acf.hhs.gov **and** to the Office of Inspector General at grantdisclosures@oig.hhs.gov.

Application checklist

Make sure that you have everything you need to apply:

Component	How to upload	Included in page limit?
File one: Narratives ☐ Table of contents ☐ Project summary ☐ Project narrative ☐ Line-item budget and budget narrative	Use the Project Narrative Attachment form.	Yes Yes Yes Yes
File two: Attachments ☐ Indirect cost agreement ☐ Legal proof of nonprofit status ☐ Organizational capacity supporting information ☐ Third-party agreements	Insert each in a single Other Attachments form.	Yes Yes Yes Yes
Other required forms ☐ Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) ☐ Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A) ☐ Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B) ☐ Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) ☐ Key Contacts ☐ Grants.gov Lobbying Form ☐ Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	Upload using each required form.	No No No No No No No



Step 6:

Learn What Happens After Award

In this step

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Post-award requirements and administration

Administrative and national policy requirements

There are important rules you'll need to follow if you get an award. You must follow:

- All terms and conditions in the NoA.
- The rules listed at [45 CFR part 75](#), Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for HHS Awards in effect at the time of award and any updates.
- The HHS [Grants Policy Statement \[PDF\]](#) (GPS). This document has terms and conditions tied to your award. If there are any exceptions to the GPS, they'll be listed in your NoA.
- All federal statutes and regulations relevant to federal financial assistance, including those highlighted in the [HHS Administrative and National Policy Requirements \[PDF\]](#). See also [ACF Administrative and National Policy Requirements](#).
- [45 CFR Part 87 Appendix A, Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations](#).

Reporting

If you are successful, you will have to submit financial and performance reports. To learn more about reporting, see [Reporting at the ACF website](#).

- Performance report forms: [Program Performance Report \[PDF\]](#)
 - Performance report frequency: Semiannual
- Financial report forms: [SF-425 Federal Financial Reporting](#)
 - Financial report frequency: Semiannual

NOTE: Consistent with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3521), ORR will not conduct or sponsor—and a person is not required to respond to—a collection of information covered by such Act, unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Nondiscrimination and assurance

If you receive an award, you must follow all applicable nondiscrimination laws. You agree to this when you register in SAM.gov. You must also submit an [Assurance of Compliance \[PDF\]](#) (HHS-690). To learn more, see the [Laws and Regulations Enforced by the HHS Office for Civil Rights](#).

NRLLEC program evaluation

If ACF identifies additional resources to fund a federal study of the funded NRLLEC Program activities, then the recipient will be required to participate. The study would utilize an outside nonrecipient evaluation team and would focus on the processes, implementation, progress indicators, and quality improvement of funded activities.



Contacts and Support

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Agency contacts

Program

Jessi Poré

Muhammad.Najjar@acf.hhs.gov

301-875-1613

Grants management

Bridget Shea Westfall

Bridget.Sheawestfall@acf.hhs.gov

202-401-5542

Grants.gov

Grants.gov provides 24/7 support. You can call 1-800-518-4726 or email support@grants.gov. Hold on to your ticket number.

SAM.gov

If you need help, you can call 866-606-8220 or live chat with the [Federal Service Desk](#).

Reference websites

- [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services \(HHS\)](#)
- [Administration for Children and Families \(ACF\)](#)
- [ACF Funding Opportunities Forecasts and NOFOs](#)
- [ACF How to Apply for a Grant](#)
- [ACF Property Guidance](#)
- [Grants.gov Accessibility Information](#)
- [Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\)](#)
- [United States Code \(U.S.C.\)](#)
- [Office of Refugee Resettlement \(ORR\)](#)

Paperwork Reduction Act disclaimer

As required by the PRA, 44 U.S.C. 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the project description (project narrative, line-item budget, and justification) is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection 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.

Endnotes

Select the endnote number to jump to the related section in the document.

[1] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, [Engaging People with Lived Experience to Improve Federal Research, Policy, and Practice](#).