

EIS-HHS-AOA-REG2
Moderator: SHANNON SKOWRONSKI
May 15, 2023
12:00 pm CT

Coordinator: Welcome everyone to today's conference call. At this time, your lines have been placed on listen only for today's conference until the question and answer portion of our call at which time you will be prompted to press Star 1 on your touch-tone phone.

Please ensure that your line is unmuted, and please record your name when prompted so that I may introduce you to ask your question. Our conference is also being recorded and if you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time.

I will now turn conference over to our host, Miss Shannon Skowronski.
Ma'am, you may proceed.

Shannon Skowronski: Thank you so much. Hello, everyone. My name is Shannon Skowronski, and on behalf of the Administration for Community Living I would like to thank you for joining the informational call today.

Today we'll be discussing a new Notice of Funding Opportunity, HHS 2023 ACLAOAACIL0061, which will create the first ever ACL Innovation Lab. I

will be the primary point of contact for this grant competition, and my contact email is listed on Page 16 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

During the informational call today we will be reviewing ACL's vision related to this funding opportunity, the award information, including who is eligible to apply, some items of note from the funding opportunity, and finally we'll wrap up with some questions and answers.

I'm also joined today by Dr. Amanda Cash, Director of ACL's Office of Performance Evaluation. And both she and I will be available during the Q&A portion of the call.

Throughout the review of this funding opportunity I will be referencing the PDF with instructions for applying, which is posted on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). To find the PDF you go to the funding opportunity on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) to the Package tab, click on Preview Link, and then click on Download Instructions. And if you've not already downloaded the PDF I would highly suggest that you do that now so that you can follow along during this presentation.

So let's start with ACL's overall vision for the funding opportunity. This funding opportunity reflects ACL's commitment to generating knowledge to help older adults live healthy and independent lives in the communities of their choice for as long as possible.

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to create an ACL innovation Lab, to conduct research, demonstrations, and evaluations pertaining to falls prevention amongst older adults and older adults with disabilities. This funding opportunity takes a step-wise approach to improving our understanding of how to prevent falls as well as to further developing evidence base for falls prevention and falls risk factors using three primary

approaches that include core components, structured data collection efforts and community driven and community-based participatory approaches to conducting research. For more information about these approaches see Pages 4 through 9 of the funding opportunity.

Applicants must demonstrate capacity, expertise, and the ability to facilitate collaboration and research with the aging network and other stakeholders. For more information about what we mean by aging network please see Page 3 of the funding opportunity.

So let's move on to an overview of key award information. Four point seven nine million in federal funding is available for this funding opportunity to award one cooperative agreement.

The award will be a three-year fully funded cooperative agreement. Fully funded means that the grant funds for the three-year project, and budget period, will be available at the time of the award.

Eligible applicants for this funding opportunity are listed on Page 14 of the PDF. And those include domestic, public, or private nonprofit entities, including state and local governments, Indian tribal governments and organizations, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, hospitals and institutions of higher education. Individuals, for profit companies and foreign entities are not eligible applicants.

Please also note that this Notice of Funding Opportunity does not require any cost sharing or match. And we discourage applicants from including match in particular because it is not required.

The funds will be awarded under the terms of a cooperative agreement, which means that ACL will have substantial involvement and collaboration with the recipient organization. And please see Pages 12 through 13 for a list of the grantees and ACL responsibilities to be executed.

All applicants must specify a project director in their application. The project director -- sometimes referred to as the principal investigator -- is the primary point of contact on matters involving the application.

This should be the individual that would actually oversee the work of the proposed project and does not have to be a senior leader or executive at the applicant organization. The project director should be actively involved in the writing of the proposal and be able to answer any ACL questions that we may have about the application.

Please ensure that you list the name and contact information for the project director on Page 1 of the SF-424 when you submit your application. It's very important that you include that direct email and that that email not be a general mailbox.

So now for some key dates, Letters of Intent are due Monday, May 22. Letters of Intent are not required, but they do help ACL for planning purposes. The letter does not need to be anything formal even an email indicating the Notice of Funding Opportunity, title and number in the subject line, and you're indicating that you're intending to apply is certainly sufficient.

The deadline for submission of applications is 11:59 pm Eastern Time on July 5, 2023. However, we strongly encourage you to submit your application to grants.gov at least seven days prior to the application closing date in case any technical issues arise.

The anticipated notice of grant award and project period start date is September 1, 2023. This funding opportunity has both responsiveness and screening criteria, and applications that fail to meet the responsiveness and/or screening criteria will not be reviewed and will receive no further consideration.

The responsiveness criteria is listed on Page 14 of the funding opportunity. And is that applicants must demonstrate sufficient experience in developing taxonomy for population-based programs, evidence of working with structured data for research purposes, and capacity for working with community-based organizations and conducting community-based participatory research.

The screening criteria are listed on Pages 14 and 15. All applications must be submitted by the deadline, 11:59 pm Eastern Time, on July 5, 2023.

The Project Narrative section of the application must be double-spaced on 8.5 x 11 white plain paper with 1-inch margins on all sides and in a standard font size of no less than 11. If you single-space something in your narrative, your application may be screened out.

The project narrative must not exceed 20 pages double-spaced. Note that project work plans, letters of support, project map, organizational chart, budget, and CVs or resumes of key personnel are not included as a part of the 20-page limit, but make sure that you're very clear that each of those items that I listed are appendices and are indeed not a part of the narrative.

Specific instructions for formatting the project narrative begin on Page 17 of the funding opportunity. And please heed the instructions carefully.

To make it as easy as possible for reviewers scoring your application, applicants should use the five headings listed starting on Page 17 to organize their narrative. And also provide a table of contents for any appendices to the application like the budget or work plan.

I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to use the five headings for the narrative. Applicants should not put the burden on the reviewers to go fishing through the narrative for the required information. The easier that you can make it, as applicants for the reviewers, the better.

Applicants must include a proposed budget narrative and justification for years one, two, and three along with a combined budget narrative and justification for the proposed three-year project. The proposed combined budget narrative and justification must request \$4.79 million in federal funds. Please see Page 4 of the funding opportunity that provides more detail about budget expectations per year.

The successful applicant can retain up to 40% of the federal funds for administrative costs. This may include costs for developing the taxonomy, maintaining or developing a system for the data collection, providing technical assistance, and indirect costs.

The administrative costs for this award may be considered high, and that's because we're anticipating the need for a greater degree of technical assistance than may be typical. The remainder of the funds awarded will be allocated to subawards in year two.

And again, please see Page 4 of the funding opportunity for budget expectations for each year, years one, two, and three. And please follow those guidelines.

Applicants must include a project work plan for years one, two, and three. And project work plans must be consistent with the project narrative and the budget narrative and justification. Please carefully review the requirements for the work plan and budget narrative and justification.

There are sample templates provided to guide you in the appendices to the funding announcement. And we recommend that you reference those and use those if possible.

Now I'd like to highlight a few substantive areas within the Notice of Funding Opportunity. There are four required activities for the Innovation Lab.

The first is to develop a taxonomy for falls prevention research. The second, to develop or build upon an existing system to house research data from sub-awardees. The third requirement is to develop and implement subawards to the aging network. And the fourth required activity is analysis, sustainability and technical assistance.

Applicants should use their narrative to address their capacity and plans for addressing each of the required activities described in detail on Pages 9 through 11 of the funding opportunity. Applicants may also note that these four required activities are not necessarily innovative taken individually, the innovation is requiring the use of all of these approaches to ensure a more flexible, adaptable, and rigorous approach to developing culturally competent interventions for falls prevention.

ACL would like to note that per the results of the taxonomy should be used to identify core components for falls prevention research. Using the approaches of core components, structured data collection, and community driven and community-based participatory research should allow for more flexible and adaptable approaches to developing and using evidence for falls prevention. These approaches should also allow for more culturally competent approaches for conducting research.

ACL does not expect that one single organization would have the internal capacity to achieve all of these activities. Formal partnerships and collaborations with relevant and skilled organizations and stakeholders will be absolutely essential.

Detailed letters of support are required from all organizations and partners that will have a key role in the project. ACL noted in the funding opportunity that the quality is more important than the quantity of these letters, so applicants should really note this when asking for letters of support.

An independent review panel, of at least three individuals, will evaluate applications that pass the responsiveness and screening criteria. These reviewers will be experts in their field and drawn from academic institutions, nonprofit organizations, state and local governments, and federal government agencies.

The application review information begins on Page 24 of the funding announcement and details the criteria by which applications will be scored. You will notice that the criteria mirror the details requested in the project narrative, so I encourage you to closely review the criteria and ensure that you are addressing them clearly and comprehensively in your narrative and

application materials. So now I'll turn the call over to Dr. Amanda Cash, the Director of the ACL's Office of Performance and Evaluation.

Dr. Amanda Cash: Thank you, Shannon, and thank you everyone on the call for your interest in the ACL Innovation Lab funding opportunity. I would like to reiterate, and just add a bit, to what Shannon has just communicated by saying that the overall vision for the Lab is that we for the Lab will take these approaches and use them collectively to have a more flexible, adaptable, equitable, and culturally competent means to develop evidence on falls prevention and other conditions.

Again, while these approaches listed in the funding opportunity are not necessarily innovated by themselves, used collectively, we believe they will have the power to allow for and measured adaptations that lead to more practice driven evidence that will ultimately lead to improved outcomes for older - or for falls prevention and older adults. Thank you again. And I will now open it up for questions and answers.

Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) Period

See posted FAQs on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) for questions/answers

Shannon Skowronski: Okay. So I think that we can wrap up. A recording of this call will be available approximately an hour after it concludes at the number that's listed in the funding opportunity on Page 4.

We'll also be posting a transcript and recording of the call on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) within the next week or so as well as the frequently asked questions documents. To locate the FAQ, the transcript, and the recording you'll go to [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), locate the funding opportunity, and go to the related documents tab.

So on behalf of myself, and all of my other colleagues at ACL, I'd like to say thank you for joining the call today. We hope you have a good rest of the day.

Coordinator: This does conclude today's conference call. We thank you all for participating. You may now disconnect and have a great rest of your day.

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