



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation

Secondary Analyses of Child Care and Early Education Data

HHS-2022-ACF-OPRE-YE-0057

Application Due Date: 05/04/2022

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Funding Opportunity Title:

Secondary Analyses of Child Care and Early Education Data

Announcement Type:

Initial

Funding Opportunity Number:

HHS-2022-ACF-OPRE-YE-0057

Primary CFDA Number:

93.575

Due Date for Applications:

05/04/2022

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 grants, please visit "How to Apply for a Grant" on the ACF Grants & Funding Page at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/how-apply-grant>.**

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) is soliciting applications for Secondary Analyses of Data on Child Care and Early Education grants. Analyzing existing data sets may provide researchers an efficient and cost-effective method for answering critical research questions. This funding opportunity aims to support researchers conducting secondary analyses of data to address the goals and outcomes of programs administered by ACF, in particular the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). Findings are intended to inform policy, program administration, and future research. Researchers may conduct secondary analyses of survey, program evaluation, or administrative data. Data sets from primary research and evaluation may also be candidates for secondary analyses. A data set may be used by itself or linked with other data sets to best address the research questions proposed.

For further information about OPRE, see <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre>. For information about the Office of Child Care (OCC) and the CCDF, see <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/about> and <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/data-0>

I. Program Description**Statutory Authority**

Section 658O(a)(5) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9858m(a)(5)).

Description

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) is a block grant of more than \$9 billion that provides funding to states, territories, and tribes to provide access to child care and early education services for low-income families with children under the age of 13.

ACF supports the social and economic well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities through the delivery of human services programs. This includes child care and early education programs such as those funded with CCDF that aim to promote economic security, health and safety, and positive developmental trajectories for vulnerable young children and their families.

CCDF is the primary federal funding source for child care subsidies and aims to help eligible low-income working families access child care and early education and to improve the quality of child care for all children. CCDF is administered as a block grant to state, territory, and tribal governments. CCDF also aims to improve the quality of care and promote children's healthy development and learning by supporting child care licensing, quality improvement systems to help programs meet higher standards, and training and education for child care and early education workers.

These grants will provide funding to address key questions of relevance to child care and early education programs funded by CCDF. Findings are intended to inform policy, program administration, and future research.

ACF makes substantial investments to deliver these high-quality child care and early education programs to young children and their families, and there is a robust and growing body of research to inform those investments. However, many critical questions remain about how to most effectively and efficiently support the well-being of young children and their families, particularly those with low incomes and at-risk for economic insecurity.

The specific goals of the grants are as follows:

- Produce new evidence of relevance to the goals and outcomes of CCDF;
- Encourage active communication, networking, and collaboration among prominent child care and early education researchers and policymakers; and
- Build the capacity of child care and early education researchers to rigorously analyze existing data sets and disseminate their findings to multiple audiences.

Topics of particular interest to ACF include, but are not limited to the following:

- Recruiting and retaining a qualified child care and early education workforce;
- Structural or systemic factors that shape access, utilization, services, and outcomes related to child care and early education, particularly for communities that have been historically underserved or marginalized;
- Promoting equity and improvements in approaches to reach, recruit, enroll, and sustain families, particularly those most in need of child care and early education services (which include, but are not limited to the following: children in underserved areas; infants and toddlers; children with disabilities; and children who receive care during nontraditional hours);
- Consumer education efforts and parental choice regarding children's enrollment in child care and early education programs;
- COVID-19 pandemic impact, response, and recovery in the child care and early education market;
- Building the supply of high-quality child care and early education;

- Improving child care and early education staff/provider competencies through professional development;
- Facilitators and barriers to the implementation of new or expansion of existing child care and early education programs;
- Coordination and collaboration between child care and early education programs and state or territory early care and education or social service systems;
- Supporting the well-being of the child care workforce;
- Approaches to engage, support, and meet the health, mental health, economic self-sufficiency, and other needs of families who utilize child care and early education programs.

ACF is also interested in bringing an equity focus to the examination of many of these topics. Specifically, there is interest in understanding the experiences of providers and families of color and other historically underserved or marginalized communities within these broad topics.

Data sets that are well suited for secondary analyses on the above topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- National Survey of Early Care and Education 2019
- ACF-801 Monthly Child Care data;
- ACF-218 Annual Quality Progress Report data; and
- State or territory-level workforce registry, subsidy, Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), licensing, monitoring, child care resource and referral, or Preschool Development Grants Birth-5 data.

Many of the data sets listed above, as well as other potentially relevant data sets, are available through the [Child and Family Data Archive](#). Data sets may be used by themselves or linked. Primary research and evaluation data sets may also be appropriate candidates for secondary analysis.

Project Requirements

Grant recipients must conduct analyses to address key questions of relevance to the goals and outcomes of child care and early education (CCEE) programs that are funded, at least in part, by CCDF, and disseminate findings from those analyses. For the purpose of this grant, CCEE includes center-based and home-based child care programs serving children birth through 12-years where all or part of the revenue is generated through sources such as CCDF subsidies and may also include other federal programs such as Head Start and public prekindergarten. When issuing statements, press releases, publications, requests for proposal, bid solicitations, and other documents--such as tool-kits, resource guides, websites, and presentations (hereafter “statements”) -- describing the projects or programs funded in whole or in part with HHS federal funds, the recipient must clearly state:

1. the percentage and dollar amount of the total costs of the program or project funded with federal money; and,

2. the percentage and dollar amount of the total costs of the project or program funded by non-governmental sources.

When issuing statements resulting from activities supported by HHS financial assistance, the recipient entity must include an acknowledgement of federal assistance using one of the following or a similar statement.

If the HHS Grant or Cooperative Agreement is **NOT** funded with other non-governmental sources:

"This [project/publication/program/website, etc.] [is/was] supported by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$XX with 100 percent funded by ACF/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, ACF/HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit the ACF website, [Administrative and National Policy Requirements](#)."

Attendance at Meetings

The Project Director or Principal Investigator must attend quarterly virtual calls with other Secondary Analyses of Child Care and Early Education Data grant recipients.

The Project Director or Principal Investigator must attend and present a poster at the 2023 and 2024 Annual Meetings of the Child Care and Early Education Policy Research Consortium (CCEEPRC). CCEEPRC is typically held in the early spring of each year in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area and lasts approximately two days. The Project Director or Principal Investigator must also attend two meetings of all Secondary Analyses of Child Care and Early Education Data grant recipients. These meetings will be held in conjunction with CCEEPRC and will last approximately 1 day each.

COVID-19 Response

If, during the project period, OPRE and/or recipients are required to adjust program and/or grant requirements due to COVID-19 or other emergency, OPRE will exercise maximum flexibilities as needed. Requirements may be conducted virtually or timelines may be modified in consultation with OPRE.

The proposed budget should reflect travel funds to attend the two annual meetings of CCEEPRC and the two grantee meetings.

Subawards

Recipients under this grant 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 Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number, or after government-wide implementation, a Unique Entity Identifier assigned by the System for Award Management (SAM), if they do not already have one. Prime recipients are required to check the 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:

\$1,500,000

Expected Number of Awards:

15

Award Ceiling:

\$ 100,000

Per Project Period

Award Floor:

\$90,000

Per Project Period

Average Projected Award Amount:

\$100,000

Per Project Period

Anticipated Project Start Date:

09/30/2022

Length of Project Periods:

18-month project period and budget period

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 competitive review and from 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. Please see *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Note: For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. **A recipient's failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.** For more information on these requirements, see *Section III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching*.

Budget Period: The period of time for which funds are made available to a particular grantee will be only one budget period for the entire project period, which is 18 months in length starting on September 30, 2022, and ending March 29, 2024.

Project Period: The total length of the proposed project, which is 18 months in length starting on September 30, 2022, and ending March 29, 2024.

Continuation awards will not be offered. Applicants must provide a budget for the entire project period.

III. Eligibility Information

III.1. Eligible Applicants

Eligibility is open to organizations/entities that apply on behalf of researchers who hold doctorate or equivalent degrees in their respective fields, conduct research as a primary professional responsibility, and have been first or second author on publications in peer-reviewed research journals.

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from 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

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 will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment

exceeds the amount required by the statutory match. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute, where "cost sharing" refers to any situation in which the recipient voluntarily shares in the costs of a project other than as statutorily required matching, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards. These include situations in which contributions are voluntarily proposed by a recipient or subrecipient and are accepted by ACF. Non-federal cost sharing will be included in the approved project budget so that the recipient will be held accountable for proposed non-federal cost sharing funds as shown in the Notice of Award (NoA). **A recipient's failure to provide voluntary cost sharing of non-federal resources that have been accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that have been shown as part of the approved project budget in the NoA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

III.3. Other

Applicant organizations/entities may submit more than one application, on behalf of more than one researcher, subject to the qualifications listed in this section.

Application Disqualification Factors

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from 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 ("per project period" refers only to fully funded awards), as stated in *Section II. Federal Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and from 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 www.Grants.gov. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not been approved for an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this funding opportunity.**

Applicants that do not have an internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents to the internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow the applicant to submit applications 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 www.Grants.gov after 11:59 pm ET on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from www.Grants.gov, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this funding opportunity. That is, applications submitted to www.Grants.gov, on or after 12:00 am ET on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this funding opportunity.

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the www.Grants.gov validation check, will not be received at, or acknowledged by ACF.

Each time an application is submitted via www.Grants.gov, the submission will generate a new date and time-stamp email notification. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF will be acknowledged.

The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 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 competitive review and from funding under this funding opportunity. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not received approval of an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from 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

OPRE Review Team
Secondary Analyses of CCEE Data
c/o ICF International
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax
VA
22031
(877) 350-5913
(703) 934-3470

Application Packages

Electronic Application Submission:

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

Applications in Paper Format:

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the "Select Grant Opportunity Package" available in the NOFO's Grants.gov Synopsis under the Package tab at www.Grants.gov. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to www.Grants.gov.

Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) for assistance at www.gsa.gov/fedrelay.

IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission**FORMATTING APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS**

Each applicant applying electronically via www.Grants.gov is required to upload only two electronic files, excluding Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

FOR ALL APPLICATIONS:**Authorized Organization Representative (AOR)**

AOR is the designated representative of the applicant/recipient organization with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the award and administration of grants. In signing a grant application, this individual agrees that the organization will assume the obligations imposed by applicable Federal statutes and regulations and other terms and conditions of the award, including any assurances, if a grant is awarded.

Point of Contact

In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to answer any questions pertaining to the application.

Application Checklist

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials.

Accepted Font Style

Applications must be in Times New Roman (TNR), 12-point font, except for footnotes, which may be TNR 10-point font. Pages that contain blurred text, or text that is too small to read

comfortably, will be removed.

English Language

Applications must be submitted in the English language and must be in the terms of United States (U.S.) dollars. If applications are submitted using another currency, ACF will convert the foreign currency to U.S. currency using the date of receipt of the application to determine the rate of exchange.

Page Limitations

Applicants must observe the page limitation(s) listed under "PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:". 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 in the Project Description file or the Appendices file 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: the table of contents, the one-page Project Summary, required Assurances and Certifications, required SFs, required OMB-approved forms, resumes, logic models, proof of legal status/non-profit status, third-party agreements, letters of support, footnotes, tables, the 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 objective review. The removed page(s) will not be made available to reviewers.

Applications that have more than one scanned page of a document on a single page will have the page(s) removed from the review.

For applicants that submit paper applications, double-sided pages will be counted as two pages. When the maximum allowed number of pages is reached, excess pages will be removed 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 make revisions to a previously submitted application, ACF will accept only the last on-time application for pre-review under the Application Disqualification Factors. The

Application Disqualification Factors determine the application's acceptance for competitive review. 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 submitting electronic applications need not provide additional copies of their application package.

Applicants submitting applications in paper format must submit one original and two copies of the complete application, including all Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. The original copy must have original signatures.

Signatures

Applicants submitting electronic applications must follow the registration and application submission instructions provided at www.Grants.gov.

The original of a paper format application must include original signatures of the authorized representatives.

Accepted Application Format

With the exception of the required Standard Forms (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.

ACF generally does not encourage submission of scanned documents as they tend to have reduced clarity and readability. If documents must be scanned, the font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable. Documents must be scanned page-for-page, meaning that applicants may not scan more than one page of a document onto a single page. Pages with blurred text will be removed from the application.

PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:

With the exception of Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, the application submission is limited to 75 pages in its entirety.

Applicants must number the pages of their application beginning with the Table of Contents.

Applicants must include the following materials according to the format for their application package, and in the order presented below:

1. **Project Description. (File 1)**
 - **Table of Contents.**
 - **Project Summary.**

- **Project Narrative** (*Approach, Expected Outcomes, Timeline and Milestones*).
The project narrative should be carefully developed in accordance with the research goals as described in *Section I. Program Description* of this opportunity and should describe the background, significance, and objectives of the work as well as the proposed research design and methodology. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the detailed *Evaluation Criteria* found in *Section V.1.* to inform the development of their project description.
- **Staffing and Management Plan.**
- **Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information.**
- **Dissemination Plan.**
- **Budget and Budget Justification.**

2. Appendices. (File 2)

- **Legal Status of Applicant Entity.**
- **Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds and Activities.**
- **Third-Party Agreements.**
- **Resumes/Curricula Vitae/Biographical Sketches and other evidence of Organizational Capacity.**
- **Letters of Support**

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically unless they have requested and 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 www.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.

Adherence to the Two-File Requirement

No more than two files will be accepted for the review. Applications with additional files will be amended and files will be removed from the review. SFs and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

Application Upload Requirements

ACF strongly recommends that electronic applications be uploaded as Portable Document Files

(PDFs). One file must contain the entire Project Description and Budget Justification; the other file must contain all documents required in the Appendices. Details on the content of each of the two files, as well as page limitations, are listed earlier in this section.

To adhere to the two-file requirement, applicants may need to convert and/or merge documents together using a PDF converter software. Many recent versions of Microsoft Office include the ability to save documents to the PDF format without need of additional software. Applicants using the 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, as scanned documents may have reduced clarity and readability.

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”, which is listed under “Applicant Resources.” The Adobe verification process allows applicants to test their version of the software by opening a test Workspace PDF form. Grants.gov also includes guidance on how to download a supported version of Adobe, as well as troubleshooting instructions for use, if an applicant is unable to open the test form.

The Adobe Software Compatibility page located on Grants.gov also provides guidance for applicants on filling out a Workspace PDF form. In addition, it addresses local network and/or computer security settings and the impact this has on use of Adobe software.

Required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved Forms

Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, such as the SF-424 application and budget forms and the SF-P/PSL (Project/Performance Site Location), are uploaded separately at Grants.gov. These forms are submitted separately from the Project Description and Appendices files. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for the listing of required Standard Forms, OMB-approved forms, and required assurances and certifications.

Naming Application Submission Files

Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by www.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

It is critical that applicants submit applications using only the supported file formats listed here. While ACF supports all of the following file formats, **we strongly recommend that the two application submission files (Project Description and Appendices) are uploaded as PDF documents in order to comply with the two-file upload limitation.** Documents in file formats that are not supported by ACF will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete, and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

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)

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 be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. This removal may make the application incomplete, and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.

FORMATTING FOR PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS:

The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format. Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order for a paper format application to be accepted for review. For more information on the exemption, see "*ACF Policy on Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*" at www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6

Format Requirements for Paper Applications

All copies of mailed or hand-delivered 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 application submission must be packaged separately. The package(s) must be clearly labeled with the NOFO title and Funding Opportunity Number (FON).

Applicants using paper format should download the application forms package associated with the NOFO's Synopsis on www.Grants.gov under the Package tab.

Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, 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.**

Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications

See *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper format application submissions.

Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications

Applicants seeking grant or cooperative agreement awards under this funding opportunity must submit the listed Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications with the application. All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package posted for this NOFO at www.Grants.gov.

Forms/Assurances/Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes/Description
Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification / IRB Certification / Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)	Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> . If the information is not available at the time of application, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Form is available at http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html . General information about the HHS Protection of Human Subjects regulations can be obtained at http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/ . Applicants may also contact OHRP by email (OHRP@HHS.gov) or by phone (240-453-6900).
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	Required of all applicants. To obtain a DUNS number, go to http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform . Active registration at the Systems Award Management (SAM) website must be maintained throughout the application and project award period. SAM registration is available at http://www.sam.gov .	See <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> for more information.
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	Submission of the certification is required for all applicants.

Forms/Assurances/Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes/Description
	the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	
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. Standard Forms must be used. Forms must be submitted by the application due date. 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.
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application. If it is not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the

Forms/Assurances/Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes/Description
		United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.

Additional Required Assurances and Certifications

Mandatory Grant Disclosure

All applicants and recipients are required to submit, in writing, to the awarding agency and to the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG), 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: MandatoryGranteeDisclosures@oig.hhs.gov

SF-424 Key Contact Form

The contact form should include information for the Principal Investigator or Project Director and the organization's authorized fiscal representative.

Non-Federal Reviewers

Since ACF will be using non-federal reviewers in the review process, applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget as well as Social Security Numbers, if otherwise required for individuals. The copies may include summary salary information. If applications are submitted electronically, ACF will omit the same specific salary rate information from copies made for use during the review process.

The Project Description

The Project Description Overview

General Expectations and Instructions

The Project Description provides the majority of 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 funding opportunity. 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.

Letter of intent information will be used to determine the number of expert reviewers needed to evaluate applications. **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 application from competitive review.

Letters of intent should be submitted via e-mail to CCDataAnalysis@icfi.com or mailed to the following address:

OPRE Review Team: Secondary Analyses of CCEE Data
c/o ICF International
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031

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 application project description. It must be clear, accurate, concise, and without cross-references to other parts of the application. The summary must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

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.

Legal Status of Applicant Entity

Applicants must provide the following documentation:

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).

Expected Outcomes

Identify the outcomes to be achieved from the project. Outcomes should relate to the overall program as described in *Section I. Program Description*. If research is part of the proposed work, outcomes must include hypothesized results and implications of the proposed research.

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.

Applicants must state concisely the objectives of the proposed project, articulate clear links to CCEE programs and/or policies, and summarize the expected outcome(s), including the impact that the results of the proposed research will exert on the child care and early education field. Applicants must explain how the proposed project is innovative and identify any novel approaches or methods employed to rigorously address the research questions. Applicants must demonstrate familiarity with the proposed data set and an adequate understanding of the methodology used to construct the data set.

The following information must be included:

A. Background, Significance, and Objectives. Applicants must demonstrate their understanding of the relevant literature on critical issues and existing knowledge, and describe their objective and the overall significance of their proposal. Applicants must demonstrate how their proposal will address issues of relevance to child care and early education, how it is related to the goals of the CCDF grant program (articulated in *Section I, Project Description*), and how it addresses key gaps in the literature.

Applicants must incorporate the following information:

- Literature review. A thorough and rigorous literature review, drawing on the most recent literature available. The applicants are required to briefly discuss previous studies related to the proposed study and to identify gaps in the literature. The literature review should provide a sound justification for the proposed research project and the outcomes of interest.
- Theoretical or conceptual framework. The applicants must discuss the underlying theoretical or conceptual framework of the research project and how this relates to the project goals and research questions.

B. Research Design and Methodology. The applicant must demonstrate that they have a strong research design and clear methodology. Applicants are expected to make a clear connection between the research questions proposed and the research methodology that will be used, illustrating that the methodology is appropriate to address the research questions of interest.

Applicants must incorporate the following information:

1. Specific research questions of interest. The applicants must list the research questions, as well as discuss how they relate to child care and early education programs and critical issues in the field.
2. Hypothesized results. Hypothesized results must be discussed. Findings from the current literature should be used to justify the hypothesized results.
3. Data sources. Identify and describe the data sets that will be used. Provide evidence of access to the selected data sets to the extent that such documentation can be generated at the time of application submission, by, for example, including copies of written agreements between the applicant and the individuals/entities authorized to provide access to specific administrative data sets or copies of licenses or approvals for restricted-

use data sets. If data sets are not yet accessible at the time of application, describe the expected timeline and activities necessary to obtain data set access prior to grant award. Describe, if applicable, how communications with data owners or archivers have informed the expected timeline and activities. Describe the nature and scope, including the sample or population of each data set. Describe the original research or other purpose of the data; describe the original sample and explain how the data set is appropriate for the proposed project. If applicable, describe the procedures that will be used to link data sets. Describe the procedures that will be used to clean and process data. Note if any prior secondary analyses have been conducted using the proposed data set. Provide results of any preliminary analyses for the proposed project, including tables of descriptive statistics.

4. **Sample.** Describe the proposed study sample, how it will be constructed, and how it relates to the population of interest. Describe how the proposed project will provide for adequate protection of human subjects and describe the process by which Human Subjects Certification/Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval has or will be obtained prior to award or, if applicable, exemption has already been obtained. The plan should demonstrate that the analytic sample size will be sufficient to detect effects using the proposed analytic strategy.
5. **Measures.** The applicant is required to specify the specific measures that will be used, how they will be constructed (if applicable), and the psychometric properties of each measure. The applicant must demonstrate that the measures are appropriate to answer the proposed research questions.
6. **Analytic Strategy.** Provide a detailed, state-of-the-art plan describing the analytic approach, statistical techniques, and methods of inference that will be used to analyze and interpret the data. The plan should clearly detail how missing data will be handled and how weights (if applicable) will be used.

C. Dissemination Plan. Applicants must provide an extensive dissemination plan in which the applicant describes how findings will be disseminated to a range of stakeholders, including, but not limited to, researchers, policymakers, and child care and early education staff. Applicants must describe multiple dissemination vehicles that will be used to reach the widest audience possible, including the intended distribution channels that will be used to reach the intended audiences (see Dissemination Plan later in this section for more instructions). Applicants must clearly state how their dissemination plan encompasses both research and policy/program-oriented products (e.g., briefs targeted to policymakers or practitioners, journal articles highlighting methodological or empirical findings for research audiences, etc.). Applicants must also describe an approach to disseminate their work to national audiences (e.g., presentations at professional meetings with diverse and relevant audiences). Applicants must describe a plan to archive final dissemination products, including the study data (if appropriate). Applicants must also describe a rigorous approach to pre-register their project with an appropriate public registry. The approach must highlight what will be included in the pre-registration (e.g., a detailed description of the data set, the project's research questions, hypotheses, variables, exploratory and confirmatory analyses, and primary and secondary outcomes of interest) as well as a plan to update the pre-registration over the course of the project, as needed.

D. Staffing and Management Plan. The applicant must provide a clear description of the overall staffing that will oversee the proposed project, including who the proposed staff are and the

number of hours staff will devote to the current research project. The applicant must clearly illustrate how the proposed staff have the necessary expertise (e.g., skills, training, analytic experience/education, and expertise) to execute their proposed approach, as well as how there will be proper management oversight to ensure the final products are of high quality. A clear description of the Project Director's previous experience managing research grants or projects of equal scope and size is strongly recommended. A strong management plan will also include a clear plan for achieving the objectives of the project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing the project. The applicant must also provide evidence that they have experience gaining Human Subjects Certification/IRB approval with an established, reputable IRB/research institution. Organizations should demonstrate a history of research and budget oversight.

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:

- Resumes;
- Curricula Vitae (CV);
- Biographical Sketches (short narrative description);
- 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.
- Job descriptions for each vacant key position.

Applicants must submit a list of their current and pending funded support for ongoing projects and proposals from all sources, including federal, state, and local governments; public or private foundations; for-profit organizations; etc. Applicants must include all projects and proposals requiring a committed portion of time for the Project Director, Principal Investigator, or key personnel. Indicate the total award amount, awarding entity, and amount of time staff will devote to each project.

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 (if applicable by program legislation)
- Procurement
- Performance and Financial Monitoring and Reporting
- Subrecipient Monitoring and Management
- Record Retention and Access
- Remedies for Noncompliance

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).

Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information

Provide a description of how protected personally identifiable information 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.

Dissemination Plan

Applicants must propose a plan to disseminate reports, products, and/or grant project outputs so that project 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 Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Letters of Commitment. Letters of Commitment and MOUs must both 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. The Letters of Commitment and MOUs 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 to be third-party agreements.

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

Collaboration/consortia applicants must provide Letters of Commitment or MOUs 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 Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C. Applicants are encouraged to review the form instructions in addition to the guidance in this section. The budget justification consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. 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: *The Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2021 and Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, (Division H, Title II, Sec. 202), 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 Executive Level II salary reflects an individual's base salary exclusive of fringe benefits 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 using the SF-424A and/or the SF-424C, as applicable, for the entire project period that is being fully funded (the budget period and the project period are the same).

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

The budget must include funds for the Project Director or Principal Investigator to participate in two annual meetings of the CCEEPRC and two grantee meetings in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area (see *Travel* later in this section for more information).

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; grant 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.

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 (FICA) 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 an article of nonexpendable, 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: Costs of all tangible personal property, other than included under the Equipment category. This includes office and other consumable supplies with a per-unit cost of less than \$5,000. See 45 CFR § 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 for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contract or subawards with secondary recipient organizations (with budget detail), including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. Costs related to individual consultants should be listed on the Other line. 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.

Justification: Demonstrate that all 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.

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.

Other

Description: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include, but are not limited to: consultant costs, local travel, insurance, food (when allowable), medical and dental costs (non-personnel), professional service costs (including audit charges), space and equipment rentals, printing and publications, computer use, training costs (such as tuition and stipends), staff development costs, and administrative costs. 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.

Indirect Charges

Description: 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 the Department of Health and Human Services (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 objective 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 (MTDC) 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 grant.

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 or cost sharing by statute, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources (at or above the statutory requirement) in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching or cost sharing amount (and any voluntary committed amount in excess) may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute, recipients are not expected to provide cost sharing or matching. However, recipients are allowed to voluntarily propose a commitment of non-federal resources. If an applicant decides to voluntarily contribute non-federal resources towards project costs and the costs are accepted by ACF, the non-federal resources will be included in the approved project budget. The applicant will be held accountable for all proposed non-federal resources as shown in the Notice of Award (NoA). **A recipient's failure to meet the voluntary amount of non-federal resources that was accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that was identified in the approved budget in the NoA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

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 competitive 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 02/28/2022. 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

Electronic Submission via Grants.gov

This section provides the application submission and receipt instructions for ACF program applications. Please read the following instructions carefully and completely.

Electronic Delivery

ACF is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. ACF applicants are required to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

How to Register and Apply through Grants.gov

Read the following instructions about registering to apply for ACF funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Organization applicants can find complete instructions here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

Obtain a DUNS Number: All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Applicants must enter the DUNS number in the data entry field labeled "Organizations DUNS" on the SF-424 form.

For more detailed instructions for obtaining a DUNS number, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtainsduns-number.html>

Register with SAM: In addition to having a DUNS number, organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). All organizations must register with SAM in order to apply online. Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov.

For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer

to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

Create a Grants.gov Account: The next step in the registration process is to create an account with Grants.gov. Applicants must know their organization's DUNS number to complete this process. Completing this process automatically triggers an email request for applicant roles to the organization's E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) for review. The EBiz POC is a representative from your organization who is the contact listed for SAM. To apply for grants on behalf of your organization, you will need the AOR role.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>

Authorize Grants.gov Roles: After creating an account on Grants.gov, the EBiz POC receives an email notifying them of your registration and request for roles. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of your organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been approved as an AOR.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>

Track Role Status: To track your role request, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>

When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization's AOR that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC must authorize individuals who are able to make legally binding commitment on behalf of the organization as an AOR; this step is often missed, and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.

How to Submit an Application to ACF via Grants.gov

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each NOFO, you can create individual instances of a workspace.

The following is an overview of applying via Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>

Create a Workspace: Creating a workspace allows you to complete an application online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

Complete a Workspace: Add participants to the workspace, complete all the required forms, and check for errors before submission.

Adobe Reader: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace so that they will appear similar to other Standard or ACF forms. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drive(s), then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

Mandatory Fields in Forms: In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.

Complete SF-424 Fields First: The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and DUNS number. To trigger this feature, an applicant must complete the SF-424 information first. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

Submit a Workspace: An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application **at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date** to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

Track a Workspace: After successfully submitting a workspace package, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the package. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.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 the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

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 your issue 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. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received 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. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application.

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

Applicants with slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

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](#)" document 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](#)" document for complete guidance.

Paper Format Application Submission

An exemption is required for the submission of paper applications. See the preceding section on "*Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission.*"

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements* of this funding opportunity for address information for paper format application submissions. Applications submitted in paper format must be received by 4:30 pm ET on the due date.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times* in this funding opportunity.

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

All applicants must have a DUNS Number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) and an active registration with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov/SAM, <https://www.sam.gov>).

Obtaining a DUNS Number may take 1 to 2 days.

All applicants are required to maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If a grant is awarded, registration at SAM must be active throughout the life of the award.

Plan ahead. Allow at least 10 business days after you submit your registration for it to become active in SAM and at least an additional 24 hours before that registration information is available in other government systems, i.e. Grants.gov.

This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application through Grants.gov or prevent the award of a grant. Applicants should maintain documentation (with dates) of their efforts to register for, or renew a registration, at SAM. User Guides are available under the "Help" tab at <https://www.sam.gov>.

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal grant funds from any HHS Agency, or receive subawards directly from recipients of those grant funds to:

- Be registered in the SAM prior to submitting an application or plan;

- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV; and
- Provide its active DUNS number in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV.

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

03/27/2022

Due Dates for Applications

Due Date for Applications 05/04/2022

05/04/2022

Explanation of Due Dates

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Electronic Applications

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via www.Grants.gov is 11:59 pm ET on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 am ET on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this funding opportunity.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via www.Grants.gov unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.

Instructions for electronic submission via www.Grants.gov are available at: www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html.

Applications submitted to www.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 Format Applications

The deadline for receipt of mailed, paper applications is 4:30 pm ET on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this funding opportunity.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from*

Required Electronic Application Submission.

Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications

Hand-delivered applications must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview* and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 am ET and 4:30 pm ET Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays).

Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this funding opportunity.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

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

- Applications submitted electronically via www.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 format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 pm ET on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format 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**. Applicants should 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**, after which a third email is sent with the information that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, the series of checks and validations.

Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged by ACF.

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](https://www.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 format application:

ACF will not provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

IV.5. Intergovernmental Review

This program is not subject to Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," or 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." No action is required of applicants under this funding opportunity with regard to E.O. 12372.

IV.6. Funding Restrictions

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions are unallowable. Fund raising costs for the purposes of meeting the Federal program objectives are allowable with prior written approval from the Federal awarding agency. (45 CFR § 75.442)

Proposal costs are the costs of preparing bids, proposals, or applications on potential Federal and non-Federal awards or projects, including the development of data necessary to support the non-Federal entity's bids or proposals. Proposal costs of the current accounting period of both successful and unsuccessful bids and proposals normally should be treated as indirect (F&A) costs and allocated currently to all activities of the non-Federal entity. No proposal costs of past accounting periods will be allocable to the current period. (45 CFR § 75.460)

Pre-award costs are not allowable.

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 grant program.

IV.7. Other Submission Requirements

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. Also see *ACF Policy on Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* at www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6.

Submission by Mail

OPRE Review Team
Secondary Analyses of CCEE Data
c/o ICF International
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax
VA
22031

Hand Delivery

Same as Above

Electronic Submission

See *Section IV.2.* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via www.Grants.gov.

For all submissions, see *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.*

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. Though an application may include web links, or embedded hyperlinks, reviewers must not review this information as it is not considered to be part of the application documents. Nor will the information on websites be taken into consideration in scoring of evaluation criteria presented in this section. 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 objective review.

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in this section. The corresponding point values indicate the relative importance placed on each review criterion. 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 objective 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.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Maximum Points: 10

The extent to which the applicant:

- proposes project costs that are reasonable, appropriately allocated, and sufficient to accomplish the proposed objectives, carry out the proposed research design and methodology, and carry out the other activities articulated in the approach.
- proposes project costs that include funds for the Project Director or Principal Investigator to participate in two annual meetings of the CCEEPRC and two grantee meetings in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area.
- proposes project costs appropriate to carry out the activities articulated in the staff, management, and organizational capacity plan.

- proposes project costs appropriate to carry out the activities articulated in the dissemination plan.

RELEVANCE

Maximum Points: 10

The extent to which the applicant:

- addresses a topic area of relevance to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of child care and early education programs as articulated in *Section I. Program Description*.
- demonstrates a solid understanding of the operational and policy context relevant to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of CCDF as articulated in *Section I. Program Description*.

APPROACH

Maximum Points: 40

The extent to which the applicant:

- presents a literature review that is current, concise, and supports the project rationale.
- proposes research questions and hypotheses that are clearly defined and appropriately linked.
- proposes the use of a data set that is appropriate to address the project's research questions and produce findings that are of current relevance
- articulates a clear and feasible approach and associated timeline to access the proposed data source(s).
- identifies potential challenges related to accessing and/or analyzing data and proposes clear and feasible strategies to mitigate those challenges and continue the proposed work, even if there are delays with accessing the proposed data.
- proposes a design and data analytic plan that lists the key measures intended for use in analyses.
- proposes a research design and data analytic plan that is clearly described and is appropriate to address the goals, objectives, hypotheses, and/or questions addressed in the project.
- proposes a research design and data analytic plan that appropriately and rigorously links research issues, questions, measures, data sources, and analyses.
- proposes analyses that reflect knowledge and expertise in use of state-of-the-art analytic techniques and are appropriate for the questions under consideration.
- proposes a sample size sufficient for the analyses, including the size of any subgroups of interest.
- demonstrates an understanding of confidentiality issues involved in using the proposed data and proposes a design and data analytic plan that provides for adequate protection of human subjects, confidentiality of data, and consent issues related to the use of datasets.
- proposes a design and data analytic plan that addresses technical, logistical, and ethical issues that may arise.

STAFF, MANAGEMENT, AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Maximum Points: 20

The extent to which the applicant:

- provides information on the skills, experience, and capabilities of the Project Director, Principal Investigator, and other key project staff.
- demonstrates that the research team and other noted staff, including partners (if any), possess the research expertise, experience, and commitment necessary to conduct the project, including relevant background, experience, and training on related research or similar projects.
- demonstrates the knowledge, experience, and expertise necessary to conduct the proposed analyses.
- demonstrates knowledge, experience, and expertise to successfully execute the dissemination plan.
- demonstrates that the research team has an understanding of child care and early education programs and the diverse populations they serve.
- demonstrates evidence of effective organizational structure and collaborative relationships, if appropriate.
- demonstrates familiarity with the data set proposed for the analysis and demonstrates how access to the necessary data set for the project was gained (or will be gained prior to award).
- demonstrates that the proposed staff have an understanding of, and sensitivity to, the issues of working with data sets that include confidential information and identifiers.
- demonstrates that the proposed staff have access to appropriate facilities to execute the proposed approach and ensure data security and confidentiality.
- describes an adequate management plan for achieving the objectives of the project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality.
- provides sufficient protection of human subjects and confidentiality of data as evidenced by the Protection of Human Subjects: Assurance Identification/IRB Certification/Declaration of Exemption form or, if applicable, evidence that exemption has already been obtained.

DISSEMINATION

Maximum Points: 20

The extent to which the applicant:

- includes a detailed approach to pre-register the secondary analysis in an appropriate study registry and update the pre-registration as appropriate.
- describes an approach to maximize the applicability of findings through dissemination to diverse and relevant audiences.
- identifies appropriate distribution channels to reach the intended audience(s).
- includes an effective plan for the dissemination and utilization of information by researchers, policymakers, and practitioners in the field.
- proposes a dissemination plan that encompasses multiple research-, policymaker-, and practitioner-oriented products, as well as other dissemination approaches.
- articulates an approach to disseminate findings to national audiences (e.g., presentations at professional meetings targeting diverse and relevant audiences).

- describes a plan to archive final dissemination products, including the study data (if appropriate).

V.2. Review and Selection Process

No grant award will be made under this funding opportunity on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant that does not have a DUNS number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) and an active registration at SAM (www.sam.gov). See *Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)*.

Initial ACF Screening

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets any of the disqualification factors described in *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Disqualified applications are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive 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.

Objective Review and Results

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective 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 competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. Scores and rankings are only one element used in the award decision-making process. If identified in *Section I. Program Description*, 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.

OPRE will conduct an administrative review of the applications and results of the competitive review panels and will make recommendations for funding to the Director of OPRE, taking into account the goals of the Secondary Analyses of CCEE grants as listed in *Section I. Program Description*. The Assistant Secretary for ACF is responsible for the final selection.

Applications may be funded in whole or in part depending on: (1) the ranked order of applicants resulting from the competitive review; (2) staff review and consultations; (3) the availability of funding; and (4) the best interests of the federal government.

Applications similar in scope to those funded under HHS-2022-ACF-OPRE-YE-0058, Secondary Analyses of Head Start/Early Head Start Data, will not be funded.

Post-Award Requests Involving Real Property

All real property costs, including supporting documentation, are subject to ACF administrative review. Recipients, and if applicable, subrecipient(s), will be required to provide detailed listings of all real property addresses and their associated costs (45 CFR §75.436, §75.439, §75.462, and §75.465) used and claimed under this federal award. This includes all real property owned or leased by the recipient, and if applicable, subrecipients. Information on facilities, administrative buildings, and offices must be provided. Information for any and all real property costs claimed under the award must be provided. For more information, see [ACF Property Guidance](#) pages, including, Rent/Lease Arrangement Guidance, Real Property Documentation, and Unallowable Property Costs.

After the initial award, if there are any modifications, budget revisions, and/or additional requests for funding, and they impact any of the original approved real property or real property-related costs, the real property listing and related costs documentation requested must be updated.

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), www.fapiis.gov/, 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](#).

Non-Federal Reviewers Reference

Please refer to *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* of this funding opportunity for information on non-federal reviewers in the review process.

Approved but Unfunded Applications

Applications recommended for approval in the objective 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 Notice of Award (NoA) that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, 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.

Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.6. Funding Restrictions*, if applicable. Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk.

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 grants are available at: www.acf.hhs.gov/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements.

An application funded with the release of federal funds through a grant 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.

Please review all HHS regulatory provisions for Termination at 45 CFR § 75.372.

HHS Grants Policy Statement

The HHS Grants Policy Statement (HHS GPS) is the Department of Health and Human Services' single policy guide for discretionary grants and cooperative agreements. ACF grant awards are subject to the requirements of the HHS GPS, which covers basic grants processes, standard terms and conditions, and points of contact, as well as important agency-specific requirements. The general terms and conditions in the HHS GPS will apply as indicated unless there are statutory,

regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary that are specified in the NoA. The HHS GPS is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-awardrequirements#chapter-1>.

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 under this funding opportunity 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 www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-2.

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

Bonnie

Mackintosh

Administration for Children and Families

c/o ICF International

9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax
VA
22031
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Office of Grants Management Contact

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Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) at www.gsa.gov/fedrelay.

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 "How To Apply For A Grant" <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](http://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/>.

Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/about>

Office of Child Care (OCC) <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/about>

Application Checklist

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

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification / IRB Certification / Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . See http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html for additional information. This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at www.Grants.gov	Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> . If the information is not available at the time of application, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . 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 <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	Referenced in <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> in the funding opportunity. To obtain a DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier), go to http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform . To register at SAM, go to http://www.sam.gov .	A DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier) and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants. Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.
SF-424 Key Contact Form	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . 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 <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> .	Submission is due with the application package or prior to the award of a grant.

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
	This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at www.Grants.gov .	
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . These forms are available in the NOFO's forms package at www.Grants.gov in the Mandatory section. They are required for applications that include only non-construction activities.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . 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 <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at www.Grants.gov .	If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application. If not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
Letter of Intent	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the Letter of Intent due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4</i> .
Table of Contents	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submit with the application by the due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Project Summary	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> . The Project Summary is limited to one single-spaced page.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
The Project Budget and Budget Justification	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification.</i>	Submission is required in addition to submission of SF-424A and / or SF-424C. Submission is required with the application package by the due date in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i>
The Project Description	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description.</i>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i>