Frequently Asked Questions

2023 Empowering Communities to Deliver and Sustain Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Programs

HHS-2023-ACL-AOA-FPSG-0005

Questions Related to Applicant Eligibility/Preference

1. **Question: Who may apply for this funding opportunity?**

   Answer: Domestic public or private non-profit entities, county governments, special district governments, Native American governments, city or township governments, public and state controlled institutions of higher education, private institutions of higher education, state governments, public housing authorities/Indian housing authorities, Native American tribal organizations, nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status, independent school districts, faith-based organizations, and community organizations.

2. **Question: Are for-profit companies or individuals eligible to apply?**

   Answer: No.

3. **Question: Are other federal agencies eligible to apply?**

   Answer: No, but any federal agencies interested in exploring partnership opportunities with ACL are encouraged to contact Donna Bethge at Donna.Bethge@acl.hhs.gov.

4. **Question: Are current or previous ACL Falls Prevention grantees eligible to apply?**

   Answer: Organizations that have been direct recipients of ACL PPHF fall prevention grant awards in FY2019, FY2020, FY 2021 and FY2022 are not eligible to apply for this FY2023 Notice of Funding Opportunity.

5. **Question: Where can I find lists of previous Falls Prevention grant recipients?**

   Answer: On ACL's website at **Falls Prevention**.

Questions Related to Letters of Intent

6. **Question: Are potential applicants required to submit a Letter of Intent?**

   Answer: Letters of Intent are not required but **highly recommended** to help us in planning for the independent review process.

7. **Question: Can you let us know who else from our state submits a Letter of Intent**

or application so we are better able to collaborate with other interested parties?

Answer: This information is considered "pre-decisional" and cannot be released publicly.

Questions Related to Proposal Format

8. **Question: Is there a maximum page limit for the Project Narrative?**

   Answer: Twenty (20) pages is the maximum length allowed. The Project Work Plans, Letters of Support/Commitment, Vitae of Key Personnel, Project Map, Organizational Chart, Budget Narrative/Justifications, and references ***are not counted*** toward the 20-page limit as long as they are clearly labeled as Appendices.

9. **Question: Should applicants submit one comprehensive work plan that includes goals for all four years, or should proposals include a separate work plan for each of the four years?**

   Answer: Applicants must provide a separate work plan for each year (year one, year two, year three, year four). The Work Plans for each year should match the separate budget plan for each year. The overall proposal should describe the goals or accomplishments that are expected over the four-year period. Applicants are encouraged to use the workplan guidelines in the *Project Work Plan – Sample Template* section found in the Appendix of the Funding Opportunity Announcement.

10. **Question: Do we need to create partner-specific work plans for our major contributing partners?**

    Answer: You do not need to provide any additional work plans for your partners. However, in the work plans, you should indicate any lead persons at the partnering agencies that are responsible for tasks included in the work plan. Applications are reviewed to determine the extent to which the application Narrative, Work Plans, and Letters of Support/Commitment reflect clear and adequate commitment from partners and a description of their activities and specific areas of responsibility.

11. **Question: Can we use a font size smaller than 11 for tables included in the narrative?**

    Answer: No. The entirety of the Projective Narrative, including tables, graphics, and headings must be double-spaced, and of a standard font size of not less than 11. You can use smaller font sizes to fill in the Standard Forms and Sample Formats outside of the Project Narrative sections, such as the Project Work Plans and Budget Narrative/Justification.

12. **Question: How should we list/cite references? Are references subject to the Project Narrative criteria regarding page limit and double-spacing?**

    Answer: There is not a particular citation style that you are required to use with respect to references. You may include your references as footnotes, endnotes, or a separate appendix (please be sure to clearly label). References may be single-spaced, and, if included as a separate appendix, are not subject to the 20-page limit for the Project Narrative.

13. **Question: Which elements of the application can we include as an appendix?**

    Answer: The Project Work Plans, Letters of Support/Commitment, Vitae of Key Project Personnel, Budget Narrative/Justification, Project Map, Organizational Chart, applicable references, and other supporting material can be uploaded as appendices. Please label them clearly.

Questions Related to Proposed Activities

14. **Question: Can we propose an intervention that is not listed in Appendix A?**

    Answer: No. Applicants may only propose programs listed in Appendix A.

15. **Question: The funding opportunity requires that applicants propose at least one program that is available in a remote format. Would an intervention that has some remote and some in-person components required meet the remote program requirement?**

    Answer: No. All applicants must propose to implement at least one program that can be delivered in a remote format, i.e., by video conference or some other format **that does not include an in-person component**. To meet the remote requirement, applicants must be able to deliver the entire intervention without in-person contact.

16. **Question: Who meets the definition of older adult?**

    Answer: For the purpose of this Notice of Funding Opportunity and consistent with the definition in the Older Americans Act (42 U.S.C. §3002(8)), we are defining an older adult as an individual who is 60 years of age or older. For tribes and tribal organizations, the age of older Indians is defined by the tribe and may vary.

17. **Question: Who meets the definition of an adult with a disability?**

    Answer: For the purpose of this Notice of Funding Opportunity and consistent with the definition of disability in the Older Americans Act (42 U.S.C. §3002(8)), we are defining an adult with a disability as one who has a developmental, physical, and/or mental impairment that results in substantial functional limitation in one or more major life activities including self-care, communication, learning, mobility, capacity for independent living, self-direction, economic self-sufficiency, cognitive functioning or emotional adjustment.

18. **Question: Are adults with disabilities an appropriate target population, or only older adults with disabilities?**

    Answer: Younger adults with disabilities can be served with the evidence-based programs, but the primary population targeted for this grant must be older adults (including older adults with disabilities).

19. **Question: Are we required to serve younger populations (under age 60) with disabilities as part of this grant program? Our organization only serves older adults.**

    Answer: No. All applicants are required to provide programs for older adults and may provide programs on an optional basis for younger persons with disabilities. Any programs proposed should have evidence for the target population the applicant identified.

20. **Question: Is there a minimum number of participants and workshops that must be offered each year?**

    Answer: There are no minimum targets regarding the number of participants and workshops, but you should include the number of participants you intend to reach (and target completers for group-based programs), as well as a rationale for how you determined your targets. Targets should be realistic and achievable. In developing your participant/completer targets, please reference Appendix D.

21. **Question: Will we be able to count participants who are already participating in our existing Falls Prevention programs?**

    Answer: Participants who attend workshops that begin before the start of the grant period can be counted if the workshop ends after the grant period begins.

22. **Question: Will the number of participants we propose need to be unique individuals or are we able to count individuals who complete multiple programs as multiple participants?**

    Answer: Grantees will be allowed to count individuals who participate in more than one program as a participant in each of those programs. The count is based on participation per program and not unique individuals.

23. **Question: Will we be able to count the participants of programs offered by agencies that we are not directly funding?**

    Answer: Yes, grantees will be allowed to count these program participants as long as the agencies are operating as part of the state/regional/tribal integrated falls prevention program network. At a minimum, that means that the grantee has an agreement with the agency(ies) offering the program(s) to collect the required data set from their programs and share it with the grantee.

24. **Question: In addition to the aging services network, can we collaborate with organizations such as YMCAs, health care organizations, faith-based organizations, etc.?**

    Answer: Yes. You are free to develop/propose formal or informal partnerships with a variety of organizations (eg. Parks and Recreation, hospitals, universities, first responders, etc.).

25. **Question: With respect to geographic coverage area, can we focus on particular regions of the state that are known to have a high level of need, even if the areas are not contiguous?**

    Answer: A contiguous geographic area is not required, though it is important to include data-driven rationale within your application to demonstrate why you have selected certain areas of focus within your state/region.

26. **Question: Are pre/post evaluations required as part of this funding opportunity?**

    Answer: Yes. All required data collection forms are referenced in Appendix C of the funding opportunity announcement.

27. **Question: Can an applicant propose to give fiscal or other types of incentives, such as small amounts of money or gifts, to recruit program participants?**

    Answer: We do not recommend this approach, but in limited circumstances to meet programmatic goals, an applicant may propose some kinds of incentives. Monetary incentives such as cash would not be allowable. Gift cards in very small denominations ($5-$10) signed for and properly accounted for can be an option. However, if an applicant proposes to do so, it must present a compelling reason and evidence as to why it is necessary to do so and describe how this practice can be maintained after the grant period. An applicant needs to weigh its programmatic resources and fiscal costs against its ability to meet its targeted number of program completers. From a fiduciary perspective, every cost in the grant must meet the Federal Cost Principles, which include being reasonable, allowable and allocable. Additionally, from a programmatic perspective, grant expenditures should be developed within the context of sustainability beyond the grant period.

28. **Question: Can grant funds be used to pay for the direct provision of the proposed program(s), e.g., to pay the salaries of the workshop leaders or to provide a small stipend to leaders or master trainers?**

    Answer: It is allowable to pay direct service costs including salary and expenses as part of start-up costs. However, the intent of this announcement is to embed the program into the ongoing operations of delivery system partners. Part of the sustainability planning efforts should be to develop strategies that will cover personnel costs. We do not encourage the use of stipends as that has a different meaning for certain grant programs and are usually reserved for payments to students as part of an internship, etc.

29. **Question: Can sites offering the programs charge participants a fee for participation?**

    Answer: Yes, charging participants a reasonable fee is an acceptable part of a sustainability plan to offset costs. We consider any fees received to be program income and grantees would have to use those funds as they are earned to cover or further expand grant related activities. Grantees are expected to expend program income funds before drawing down additional Federal dollars. Any program income remaining after the grant expires will require the grantee to contact the Federal agency for disposition instructions, which is generally to return the remaining balance.

Questions Related to Grant Administration

30. Question: What is the difference between a grant and a "Cooperative Agreement"?

Answer: In the United States, Federal grants are financial assistance issued by the U.S. Government. A Cooperative Agreement is a variation of a grant, which is awarded when a grant provider anticipates having substantial involvement with the grantee during the performance of a funded project. These grants will be issued as Cooperative Agreements because they are significant and multifaceted endeavors in which AoA anticipates having substantial involvement with the recipients during performance of funded activities. Therefore, throughout the project period of the grant award, AoA will furnish technical assistance, oversight, and support to each grantee to help ensure program success. The Cooperative Agreement structure will allow AoA to provide a higher level of technical assistance, oversight and support than a grant relationship offers. For more information, see the HHS Grants Policy Statement at https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/grants/grants/policies-regulations/hhsgps107.pdf.

31. Question: What are fully funded cooperative agreements?

Answer: These Cooperative Agreements are fully funded upfront for their four-year project and budget period. Grantees will not have to compete for subsequent years of funding during the project award period.

32. Question: Can we subcontract some or all grant activities?

Answer: Yes. Grantees, not the Federal government, must decide whether it is in their best interest to subcontract grant activities. However, it is very important that grantees realize that the administrative responsibility and oversight of all grant activities remains with the grantee. Grantees must serve as the central, core, and active partner in the grant and not simply be a conduit for pass-through funding to sub-contractors. When subcontracting, the grantee should retain sufficient funding to adequately fulfill its administrative and oversight responsibilities. Applicants who propose to subcontract out a significant portion of their grant activities should provide a rationale in their proposal that justifies any additional overhead costs that affect the funding for programmatic activities.

33. Question: How are grantees able to access grant funds? Is payment based on cost reimbursement?

Answer: Grantees will draw down funds using the Payment Management System (PMS). Costs are not reimbursed, but rather requests are made through PMS for the release of funds.

34. What are the reporting requirements associated with this cooperative agreement?

Answer: Awardees are responsible for collecting and reporting workshop and participant data (see Appendix C), as well as submitting programmatic progress reports and financial reports. Applicant Notice of Awards will provide more detailed information.

Questions Related to Letters of Support/Commitment

35. **Question: To whom should letters of support/commitment be addressed?**

    Answer: Letters of support/commitment should be addressed to the applicant.

36. **Question: If proposing a statewide intervention, do we need to provide a letter from all Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) within our state?**

    Answer: Yes, you should include letters of support from all applicable AAAs that cover your proposed project area. A letter from the state AAA association is not allowable. The AAA letter is not required from tribal/tribal entities applying.

37. **Question: Can a state unit on aging provide multiple letters of support if there is more than one applicant from the same state?**

    Answer: Yes. State agencies can make their own decisions regarding which/how many organizations they provide a letter of support for. The SUA letter is not required from tribal/tribal entities applying.

38. **Question: If our state unit on aging (SUA) director provides a letter noting that we are going to be partnering with particular AAAs, do we still need letters of support from the AAAs?**

    Answer: Yes, you must still get letters of support from the AAAs that are within your services area. The SUA cannot provide a letter of support on behalf of the participating AAAs.

39. **Question: If we are a SUA or AAA that is applying for the grant, what is the expectation regarding the required SUA and AAA letters of support?**

    Answer: ACL suggests that SUA and AAA applicants include a letter of support from their Director, CEO, or equivalent leadership indicating their commitment to executing the project, should it be funded. This will help reviewers identify that the SUA and/or AAA letter requirements have been met.

40. **Question: For tribal applicants, can a letter from the Tribal Chief (or equivalent) substitute for the Tribal Resolution?**

    Answer: Yes, if an applicant is unable to get a tribal resolution, it is permissible to substitute a letter from the Tribal Chief (or equivalent). However, the applicant should clearly indicate the substitution within the application, ideally in the Table of Contents for their Letters of Support/Commitment.

Questions Related to the Budget Narrative/Justification

41. Question: How much federal funding can we request for our project?

Answer: Applicants must request a total budget between $400,000 -$600,000 in federal funds for the four-year project. All awards are subject to the availability of federal funds.

42. Question: Should the budget include funds for traveling to meetings?

Answer: Yes. Applicants should plan and budget to send two representatives, once a year for the duration of the grant award, to the annual Falls Prevention-relevant professional development conference hosted by the National Falls Prevention Resource Center. Applicants should assume a Washington, DC per diem amount. Further meeting details will be communicated upon grant award.

43. Question: Is there a match requirement?

Answer: No, there is no match requirement. Applicants that do provide match will not be viewed differently or given more points during the independent review process. We encourage applicants to not provide match because if they choose to do so, then the match amount will become a part of their award notice and the awardee will be held to that match.

44. Question: Does the budget range for each funding option include indirect costs? What indirect rate can we use?

Answer: Any indirect costs charged by the applicant would be included in the amount of the federal award.

Indirect costs must be supported by an approved indirect cost rate agreement, which also defines the direct charges against which the rate applies. Indirect charges may only be requested if: (1) the applicant has a current indirect cost rate agreement approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) or another Federal agency; or (2) the applicant is a state or local government agency. State governments should enter the amount of indirect costs determined in accordance with DHHS requirements. If indirect costs are to be included in the application, a copy of the approved indirect cost agreement must be included with the application. Further, if any sub-contractors or sub-grantees are requesting indirect costs, a copy of the latest approved indirect cost agreements must also be included with the application, or reference to an approved cost allocation plan.

You should consult your organization's financial representative to see if you should be charging indirect costs and if so, what the approved rate is. In the event you are looking to make an initial request, please contact the Project Officer and Grants Management Specialist associated with this funding opportunity announcement.

45. **Question: Is there a cap on the indirect costs that will be permitted? Would an indirect cost rate of 45% be permitted?**

    Answer: There is no set limit on the indirect costs. Indirect costs can only be charged if the organization has an approved allocation plan or an approved federal indirect cost agreement. Applicants should check with their fiscal staff for the amount that can be charged on the grant, as it is different for each organization. Also, see the HHS Grants Policy Statement at https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/grants/grants/policies-regulations/hhsgps107.pdf.

46. **Question: If our organization does not have a negotiated indirect cost rate, are we able to include these costs in the proposed budget?**

    Answer: Yes, 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 charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC)."

47. **Question: Regarding the budget template, can you clarify the difference between non-Federal cash versus non-Federal in kind?**

    Answer: These are both forms of match, and match is **not** required for this program. Non-Federal cash is any cash from you or your partners; it does not include funds from the Federal government. In kind includes any third party non-cash items that are program-related such as meeting room space that can be used as match for this program (please note, there is no match requirement in this funding opportunity). Applicants who voluntarily decide to add a match to their application will be held to that match and the match dollar amounts will be in their Notice of Award.

48. **Question: Do funds need to be evenly allocated across the four-year project period?**

    Answer: No. Funds do not need to be evenly allocated across the project period. Please be sure that your budget is aligned with your work plans with respect to project activities, outcomes, and outputs.

Miscellaneous Questions

49. **Question: What is the make-up of the application review panels?**

    Answer: We recruit a variety of reviewers to participate in the review. We convene multiple panels comprised of individuals who may be former or current grantees (who are not applying for the current grant), representatives of various partnering agencies, academics, and other people with expertise in falls prevention and evidence-based, community programming.

50. **Question: Does the disclaimer noted in Section II. Award Information (Cooperative Agreement Terms) impact grantee intellectual property rights?**

    Answer: No. The disclaimer noted in Section II. Award Information of the Notice of

Funding Opportunity does not relinquish intellectual property of the grantee. This disclaimer specifically emphasizes that the points of view or opinions of the grantee do not necessarily represent official Administration for Community Living (ACL) policy.

51. Question: Where can I find a list of organizations that are offering the interventions listed in Appendix A?

Answer: Appendix A includes the website for each intervention, many of which list licensed organizations.

52. Question: Are we required to have an external evaluator for this grant?

Answer: No, you are not required to engage an external evaluator.

53. Question: How many applicants were there for ACL's Falls Prevention grant competition in federal fiscal year 2022?

Answer: ACL received 42 applications and awarded 7 grants (~17% of applicants were funded).