U.S. Department of the Interior
OFFICE OF INSULAR AFFAIRS

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 15.875

FISCAL YEAR 2019 APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

I. Program Description

The Office of Insular Affairs is requesting proposals for its Technical Assistance Program (TAP) which provides grant funding for short-term projects intended to meet the immediate needs of the insular areas. Funding priorities include, but are not limited to, projects that foster the development of the insular areas in the following categories:

- *Accountability, financial management, economic development, education, energy production, management control initiatives, disaster assistance, natural and cultural resources, capacity building, public safety/emergencies, health initiatives, and invasive species management.*

Generally, TAP grants are not intended to supplant local funding of routine operating expenses of an insular government or organization or to be used for construction projects. "Routine operating expenses" include the purchase of office supplies and equipment upgrades, such as new computers, that are not necessitated as part of a broader project, such as the installation of new financial management software. TAP grants are not intended to fund the salaries of local, existing, employees (see Section D. Application Restrictions) though they may be utilized to provide temporary short term expertise if approved in the proposal budget. TAP funding is not intended for purchase of standard or routine vehicles though specialized vehicles, such as ambulance or fire trucks, may be considered. Finally, TAP funding is generally not provided for food, meals, or nonessential conference/training meeting materials.

** Costs associated with providing training should be limited to permanent career staff. OIA's limited grant funding should not, in general, be used to fund the training costs, including travel costs, of insular area political officials with limited terms or appointments.*

II. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are non-federal entities such as local government agencies (including local hospitals/health centers and local utilities) and institutions of higher education in Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau; and any non-profit organizations whose mission directly benefits the seven insular areas in accordance with regulations contained in 2 CFR 200.

III. Award Information

a. Review and Selection Process

The Technical Assistance Grant Program Review Committee will review and evaluate all eligible applications. The Review Committee will provide recommendations to the Assistant Secretary of Insular Affairs for final project selection. The Assistant Secretary of the Interior will select the successful proposals.

All applications for funding will be considered using the criteria outlined below. In order to comply with the new financial assistance regulations, 2 CFR 200 "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards," past performance information will be recognized during the selection process. Scores will be provided to the applicant if requested.

b. Evaluation Criteria and Merit Review

The Technical Assistance Review Panel will evaluate and score applications based upon the criteria listed below.

The Review Panel will score the criteria based on the point scale contained in the left column of each item. To assist in assigning an appropriate score, the following will be used as a guideline:

Criterion 1. –PROJECT NEED (Problem Statement and Desired Outcome):	
1a. A critical problem exists and needs to be addressed. Weight 15%	
15	The application clearly identifies a critical problem within one or more of the islands under OIA jurisdiction. Project is urgently needed to address the problem and fits within OIA's mission goal of empowering insular communities by improving the quality of life, creating economic opportunity, and/or promoting efficient and effective governance.
7	The problem is critical, but the problem does not need to be addressed within this grant period.
1	Although there is a problem, it is not critical.
1b. The desired outcome is identified and the project directly addresses the critical problem with an appropriate solution. Weight 15%	
15	The desired outcome is clearly identified and the proposed project directly addresses and significantly improves the critical problem identified in Ai. with an appropriate solution.

7	The desired outcome is identified and the proposed project adequately addresses the critical problem identified in Ai. with an appropriate solution.
1	The proposed project only minimally addresses the critical problem.
1c. The project aligns with one or more of the Office of Insular Affair's TAP priorities listed in the announcement and/or aligns with Congressional and/or Administration priorities. Weight 20%	
20	The proposed project aligns with one or more TAP priorities (listed below) or with OIA's highest priority this fiscal year and/or aligns with Congressional and/or Administration priorities. *Accountability, financial management, economic development, education, energy, management control initiatives, disaster assistance, natural and cultural resources, capacity building, public safety/emergencies, health initiatives, and invasive species management.*
10	The proposal project aligns with one of the TAP priorities, but not necessarily the highest priority.
1	The proposed project minimally aligns with one of the TAP priorities.

Criterion 2. –PROJECT FEASIBILITY (The applicant has the ability to successfully complete the project)	
2a. The Project budget is reasonable. Weight 10%	
10	The Grant application budget is comprehensive and well detailed. All budget items are allowable reasonable, and directly relevant to the project. The budget reflects competitive sourcing and reasonable cost comparisons.
5	The grant application budget presents basic information, although there are some questions and possible inadequacies in terms of appropriateness, technical soundness, and application.
1	The grant application budget minimally presents basic information. Some budget items may not be appropriate and there are major questions regarding technical soundness and applicability.
2b. The project timeline in reasonable. Weight 10%	
10	The grant application timeline is reasonable, comprehensive and well detailed. It maintains the three year or less grant period for TAP grants.
5	The grant application presents a timeline with general appropriateness, although it is less detailed and there are some questions or concerns regarding the proposed project length.
1	The grant application presents a timeline that minimally presents basic information.

2c. If the applicant is a previous OIA grantee, their prior performance was acceptable. If not a previous OIA grantee, then the responses to the financial questions for new grantees in Section IV(B)(9) of this application document were acceptable. **Weight 10%**	
10	For New Grantee: Answers to financial questions are all affirmative. For Existing Grantee: Prior performance and submission of financial and narrative reports was excellent, always on time and accurate and/or reports were submitted in accordance with OIA approved extension schedule.
5	For New Grantee: Answers to more than half of the financial questions are affirmative. For Existing Grantee: Prior performance and submission of financial and narrative reports was moderate, sometimes late.
1	For New Grantee: Less than half of the financial questions are affirmative. For Existing Grantee: Prior performance and submission of financial and narrative reports was problematic. Reports were not timely and/or adequate.

Criterion 3. –PROJECT SUPPORT	
3a. The project has support and/or participation from major stakeholders and local government officials. **Weight 10%**	
10	The project has very strong support from stakeholders, the public, Congress, and local government. The proposal includes numerous letters of support from key partners and supporters and/or has known Congressional or Administration support (including such things as historical support by Congress and/or Administration and/or signature on grant documents by the Governor and/or President of the insular area).
5	At least one letters of support have been submitted, and the proposal demonstrates that there will be local government involvement in the project.
1	The project will have little, if any, support.

Criterion 4. –PROJECT IMPACT	
4a. 48 USC 1469d – the grant program's authorizing legislation: "The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to extend to the governments of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and their agencies and instrumentalities, with or without reimbursement, technical assistance on subjects within the responsibility of the respective territorial governments. Such assistance may be provided by the Secretary of the Interior through members of his staff, reimbursements to other departments or agencies of the Federal Government under sections1535 and 1536 of title 31, grants to or cooperative agreements with such governments, agreements with Federal agencies or agencies of State or local governments, or the employment of private individuals, partnerships, or corporations. Technical assistance may include research, planning assistance, studies, and demonstration projects." The project meets the purpose of the grant program's authorizing legislation. **Weight 10%**	
10	The project clearly addresses subjects of **vital** concern and importance within the responsibility of the seven insular governments and of vital concern and importance to the Office of Insular Affairs.

5	The project addresses subjects of concern and importance within the responsibility of the seven insular areas and of concern and importance to the Office of Insular Affairs.
1	The project addresses subjects of minor concern and importance within the responsibility of the seven insular areas and of minor concern and importance to the Office of Insular Affairs.

The Assistant Secretary and/or designated official should consider the merit review, as well as the amount of funds available and the following program policy factors when making recommendations for funding:

1. Geographic distribution of funding
2. Emergency Situations

c. Discussions and Award

The Government may enter into discussions with a selected applicant for any reason deemed necessary, including, but not limited to: (1) only a portion of the application is selected for award; (2) OIA needs additional information to determine that the recipient is capable of complying with the requirements of DOI Financial Assistance Regulations and/or (3) special terms and conditions are required. Failure to resolve satisfactorily the issues identified by OIA will preclude award to the applicant.

IV. Application Information

TAP Applications must be submitted via Grants.Gov (www.grants.gov). Please note that an applicant must first be registered with Grants.Gov to use the system and must have a Data Universal Numbers System (DUNS) number as well as an active Central Contractor Registration (CCR).

Applicants from Palau: All applicants from Palau are exempt from using grants.gov due to technical limitations. They may email any proposals to Technical Assistance Division Director Charlene Leizear with a cc to Hailey McCoy. OIA contact information is at the end of this announcement.

Submission Deadline: Applications will be accepted via Grants.Gov until March 1, 2019. Applications received later than March 1st may not receive consideration.

Review Timeframe: Application reviews will be conducted once OIA receives full year TAP appropriations. OIA will act on applications in as timely a manner as possible, however, outside factors such as the Congressional appropriations cycle, may delay the review process. Generally, OIA TAP reviews and awards take place during the spring and summer.

Decision: OIA anticipates that grant recipients and projects will be selected in the spring and summer of 2019. Applicants will be notified of the final determination on their applications, generally via email, once a decision is reached.

Application Preparation: Applications should be prepared and submitted by the entity who would receive the grant award. Applications submitted and prepared by a third party, such as an existing contractor or a potential contractor who may benefit from the grant, are not considered allowable. Please note that grant recipients must follow the applicable procurement procedures contained in 2 CFR 200 when procuring services and goods under OIA grants.

Application Format: OIA does not require a standard narrative format; however, your proposal should include all of the following elements in order to receive full consideration:

A. Signed and Dated Cover Letter: The cover letter should briefly summarize the application and be signed by an Authorized Representative of the applicant organization. Cover letters should be addressed to the Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas:

Mr. Douglas W. Domenech
Assistant Secretary Insular and International Affairs
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Mail-Stop 3119
Washington, D.C. 20240

B. Project Narrative: The project narrative must include the following elements:

1. Detailed Project Description(s): Describe the project(s) and activities being proposed, in detail.

2. Detailed Project Budget(s): Provide detailed budget information for the proposed project(s) and activities. A budget breakout chart, by category, is suggested. Please make sure to explain categories that are not self-explanatory, such as "OTHER", in full. If your project exceeds $500,000, please provide tier options with detailed descriptions, to make selection of individual tiers possible when TAP funds are limited. If charging indirect cost, please include or attach a copy of the negotiated indirect cost rate document. Please note that all activities and costs to be charged to the grant must be in full compliance with the applicable cost principles:

Entity incurring costs	Applicable directive
State, local, or Federally recognized Indian Tribe	2 CFR 200 Subpart E - Cost Principles; 200.416-200.417 - Special Considerations for States, Local Government, and Indian Tribes
Non-profit organization	2 CFR 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles
Institution of Higher Education	2 CFR 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles; 200.418 - 200.419 – Special Considerations for Institutes of Higher Education

3. Detailed Project Timeline(s): Provide a detailed project timeline for the completion of the projects or activities proposed.

4. Statement of Need: Describe, in detail, why this project is necessary and include supporting information. Summarize previous or ongoing efforts (of your organization as well as outside organizations) relevant to the proposed work. For example, if the proposed project assists with resolving a government's audit findings; detailed information about the audit, the resulting finding, and how this project will assist in resolving that finding, should be included in the project narrative.

5. Project Goals and Objectives: State the long-term goals of what you want to achieve. Objectives are the specific steps you will take to reach your stated goals. State your objectives, which must be specific, measurable, and realistic (attainable within the project's period of performance).

6. Priority Listing for Multiple Projects: If multiple projects are being proposed, please provide a listing of the proposed projects in order of priority. An example is provided below:

SUMMARY PRIORITY PROJECTS

Priority Project (list in priority order)		*Requested Amount*
1.	*Priority 1 - Project [Name]*	*$*
2.	*Priority 2 - Project [Name]*	*$*
3.	*Priority 3 - Project [Name]*	*$*
Total Technical Assistance Request for Fiscal Year 2018		*$*

7. Grant Recipient: Please provide the name, title, and address of person to who the grant award, if made, should be addressed. This is normally, the head of the local government or organization.

8. Recipient Grant Manager: Please provide the name, title, and contact information for the person who will be the day-to-day grant manager if the proposal is funded. Contact information should include the mailing address, phone number, fax number and email address (as applicable).

9. First Time Applicants: Please ensure that the following questions are answered on your application if you are a first time applicant for OIA grant funding:

a) Does your organization have independent financial capabilities that can comply with the financial management and accounting requirements detailed in 2 CFR 200 (see below)?
b) Does your organization have a financial unit? If so, please describe the staffing and structure (such as the number of CPAs, utilization of accounting software etc.)

c) Has your organization received and managed federal grant funding before?
d) Does your organization undergo an annual financial audit?
e) Has your organization ever completed a single audit?
f) Is your organization a 501(c)(3) nonprofit? If so, please submit supporting documentation of your 501(c)(3) status.

All applicants, but especially first time applicants, are strongly encouraged to review Code of Federal Regulations Title 2, Part 200 (2 CFR 200) in order to familiarize themselves with the Department of the Interior's administrative requirements, particularly the financial management requirements, associated with managing federal grant funding. 2 CFR 200 can be viewed using the following link:

http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl

10. Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) Identification Number: Organizations already enrolled in ASAP under Agency Location Code 14010001 should list their ASAP identification number on their application. Please see *Section VI. Fund Disbursement* below for additional information.

11. Registration Process Requirements
There are several actions you must complete in order to submit an application with the Federal Government. Each applicant must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). You are required to have a DUNS number (Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System) in order to register with SAM. Utilize the following links to guide you through this process:

Registration process for DUNS can be found at: http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform
Registration process for SAM can be found at https://www.sam.gov

This process can take several weeks – START EARLY, DON'T DELAY

C. Required SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance Forms

Applicants must complete and submit the appropriate SF-424 forms when applying for OIA grants. In addition to the core SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance, applicants must complete two additional forms: 1. either the SF-424A Budget Information – Non Construction Programs **or** the SF-424C Budget Information – Construction Program, as appropriate to the proposed project(s); and 2. either the SF-424B Assurances – Non-Construction Programs **or** the SF-424D Assurances – Construction Programs, as appropriate to the proposed project(s).

In total, three SF-424 forms must be submitted as part of the application (see checklist below). The forms can be found on the Grants.Gov website.

D. Application Restrictions

Applications should not include requests to fund force accounts:

Force Accounts: A force account refers to a grantee's own (existing) personnel being charged to the grant. In general, OIA is opposed to funding force accounts with its grants, however, outside expertise and consultant services will be considered if detailed in the project narrative and budget.

E. Application Package Checklist

A complete **application package** must include:

- ✓ Core SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance form
- ✓ SF-424A Budget Information – Non Construction Programs (Or SF-424C)
- ✓ SF-424B Assurances – Non-Construction Programs (Or SF-424D)
- ✓ Signed and Dated Cover Letter
- ✓ Complete Project Narrative: detailed project description, detailed budget, detailed timeline, statement of need, project goals and objectives, priority listing (if applicable), grant recipient, grant manager, first time applicant responses & ASAP Identification.
- ✓ Negotiated indirect cost rate document (if applicable)
- ✓ Letters of Support if applicable

V. Award Administration Information

A. Award Instrument Information

- Projects will be funded, subject to availability of funds, by issuance of a grant agreement.
- Agreements will include a cover letter signed by an Office of Insular Affairs Official and a grant award document issued by the grant manager.
- The recipient shall obtain prior approval for any budget or program revisions.

B. Term of the Agreement

- Agreement terms are typically from 18 months to 3 years.
- Prior to the expiration of the grant agreement, modifications may be proposed by either party and will become effective upon written approval.

C. Funding Restrictions

- All funding is contingent upon the availability and appropriation of funds by the United States Congress.
- Costs must be allowable in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles referenced in 2 CFR 200, Subpart E – Cost Principles.

D. Submission from Successful Applicants

- If selected for possible award, the Office of Insular Affairs reserves the right the request additional or clarifying information for any reason deemed necessary.

E. Award Notices

- After an applicant's proposal is selected for award, the applicant will receive a letter from the Office of Insular Affairs. This letter will detail the next steps in the awarding process.
- The Office of Insular Affairs anticipates that the grant recipients and projects will be chosen during the spring and summer 2018 once full year appropriations are received by the Office of Insular Affairs.

F. Administration and National Policy Requirements

- Code of Federal Regulations – By accepting financial assistance, your organization agrees to abide by the applicable Federal regulations in the expenditure of Federal funds and performance under this program: 2 CFR Part 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

VI. Grant Reporting

The standard grant reporting requirements are listed below:

- A SF-425 Federal Financial Report and a narrative project status report will be due semi-annually for the periods beginning January 1 and ending June 30, and beginning July 1 and ending December 31.

- Reports are due within 30 days of the end of the period. Final reports are due 90 days after the expiration or termination of the award.

These standard reporting requirements will apply to all awards unless otherwise indicated in the Terms and Conditions section of the award. Additional requirements are assigned on a case-by-case basis and may also be found in the Terms and Conditions section of the award.

VII. Fund Disbursement

Grant recipients located in the U.S. Territories or in the United States will be required to enroll with, and utilize, the U.S. Treasury's Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) system to request payments under a grant. Recipients located in the Freely Associated States or a foreign country may enroll with, and utilize, ASAP to request payments if using a U.S. Bank to receive payments.

All payments are made via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) or Automatic Clearing House (ACH).

Please note that a grantee must be enrolled in ASAP under Agency Location Code 14010001 to have access to OIA grant funds. A grantee may already be enrolled in ASAP for another grant program, such as through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, but if the grantee is not specifically enrolled under ALC 14010001 it will not have access to the OIA grant.

Organizations already enrolled in ASAP under ALC 14010001 should list their ASAP ID on their applications as noted above in *Section IV(B)(10).*

The ASAP enrollment forms can be found on the OIA website: http://www.doi.gov/oia/grants.cfm

VIII. Other Information

A. Modification or Changes to the Announcement

Notices of any modifications to this announcement will be posted on Grants.gov. When you download the application materials at Grants.gov, you can also register to receive notifications by email of any changes or modifications to this announcement.

B. Government Right to Reject or Negotiate

The Office of Insular Affairs reserves the right, without qualification, to reject any or all applications received in response to this announcement and to select any application, in whole or in part, as a basis for negotiation and/or award.

C. Notice of Right to Conduct a Review of Financial Capability

The Office of Insular Affairs reserves the right to conduct an independent third party review of financial capability for applicants that are selected for negotiation of award.

D. Notice of Potential Disclosure under Freedom of Information Act

Applicants should be advised that identifying information regarding all applicants, including applicant names and/or points of contact, may be subject to public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, whether or not such applicants are selected for negotiation of award.

E. Personally Identifiable Information

In responding to this Announcement, applicants must ensure that Protected Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is not included in the Application Package. These documents will be used by the Technical Assistance Grant Program Review Panel in the review process to evaluate each application. PII is defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as:
Any information about an individual maintained by an agency, including but not limited to, education, financial transactions, medical history, and criminal or employment history and information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as their name, social security number, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, biometric records, etc., including any other personal information that is linked or linkable to an individual. This definition of PII can be further defined as: (1) Public PII and (2) Protected PII.

Public PII:

PII found in public sources such as telephone books, public websites, business cards, university listing, etc. Public PII includes first and last name, address, work telephone number, email address, home telephone number, and general education credentials.

Protected PII:

PII that requires enhanced protection. This information includes data that if compromised could cause harm to an individual, such as identity theft.

IX. Agency Contacts

Charlene Leizear, Technical Assistance Division Director
charlene_leizear@ios.doi.gov
(202) 208-3239

Merriam Porter, Grant Manager ~ *Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Reimbursable Support Agreements*
merriam_porter@ios.doi.gov
(202) 219-0413

Hailey McCoy, Grant Manager ~ *American Samoa, Guam, Palau, Brown Tree Snake*
hailey_mccoy@ios.doi.gov
(202) 513-7746

Jennifer Feng, Grant Manager ~*Republic of the Marshall Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands, General*
Jennifer_Feng@ios.doi.gov
(202) 208-6974

Technical Assistance Division
DOI - Office of Insular Affairs
1849 C St., N.W.
MS-3119
Washington, D.C. 20240
General Line: (202) 208-4707
Fax: (202) 208-7585

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