

Questions and Answers – 10/3/2014

Funding Opportunity Announcement CDC-RFA-GH15-1574

South African University-based Technical Assistance Aimed at Improving the quality of HIV/AIDS and related services in the Republic of South Africa under the United States Presidents Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)

Questions and Answers from the Pre-Application Workshop on September 26th 2014

Q:

Applicants must work on 3 or more activities, but how many objectives should an applicant apply to?

R:

It is recommended that applicants focus their applications solely on Year 1 prioritized activities. All these activities fall under the overall objectives.

Q:

Please state where applicants can find all this information.

R:

Everything that is presented during this workshop is also stated on www.grants.gov under the specific Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA).

Q:

Regarding Letters of Support, if this is a University FOA, can guidance be provided as to where the second letter of support should come from? Can it be from the University or must it be from an external entity?

R:

The FOA has details regarding the letters of support criteria. There is no specific requirement for the second letter of support; it can be from the Department of Health, another entity working on health, or the university itself.

Q:

Can there be inter-institutional collaboration?

R:

Yes, sub-awards are permitted. The prime applicant is responsible for all application requirements and the prime should be the one that has the Principal Investigator, the Business Official and the Authorized Organization's Representative.

Q:

Is the \$1,250,000 available per grantee?

R:

This is the Approximate Average Award. The award may be higher or lower, depending on the merit of the proposal. As stated on page 16 Applicants must only apply for the first budget period funding, taking into consideration the floor of the individual award range and the ceiling of the individual award range. The

proposed budget for the first budget period must not exceed the ceiling of the individual award range. The individual award will not exceed the Ceiling of Individual Award Range of \$5,000,000 listed on page 15.

Q:

Is there a geographic scope specified or a number of provinces that this must be implemented or must it be a national rollout?

R:

The FOA has a broad geographic scope and should align with the South African government (SAG) and United States government principles of “South African leadership, programmatic alignment, sustainability, innovation and responsiveness to the epidemics, mutual accountability, multi-sectoral engagement and participation, gender sensitivity, financial transparency, and fostering partnerships”. The applicant should align their scope to the South African government priorities such as the National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS. The targeted area that the applicant proposes should be justified as background information in the application to cover the awarded project period and associated budget year.

Q:

How can a Non-Government Organization (NGO) align itself with a University?

R:

It is recommended that an interested NGO applicant approach an eligible University to gauge whether a working relationship can be established to meet the goals of the FOA.

Q:

What if there is an overlap of activities most are not selected? How will funds be awarded?

R:

As stated in the FOA, only 1 applicant will be funded to support each prioritized activity.

Q:

Will the project be employment-generating?

R:

It is foreseen that all awardees will have to hire staff to fully and successfully implement the program.

Q:

What if one activity is not awarded per application? How will funding operate?

R:

In the event an activity is not awarded, that activity would not be funded at that time. CDC may choose to include that activity in a future FOA and fund at a later date.

Q:

Are applicants supposed to submit a 1-year or 5-year budget?

R:

The budget should only be submitted for one year as per page 17 in the FOA.

Q:

Does the workplan need to include activities for Years 2-5?

R:

Yes, applicants are required to submit a work plan that covers the entire project period. The work plan for year 1 should be detailed and for years 2-5 it should be at a high level as stated on page 13.

Q:

Please elaborate on the Development of Standards. Should they be in cooperation with the National Department of Health (NDoH)?

R:

If national standards have been developed, then the CDC strives to ensure all funded activities are in line with those standards.

Q:

Should the first letter of support from NDoH come from Assistant Director or Director General level?

R:

No, there is no requirement for the letter of support to come from Director or Assistant Director level within NDOH. The letter can come from any official DOH representative from any level.

Q:

What about if an applicant is currently a USAID grantee? Are those grantees eligible?

R:

USAID and other USG-funded grantees are eligible. However, the scope of work should be different and activities should not be duplicative.

Q:

Does the award amount decrease each year? If so, by what percentage?

R:

Throughout the project period, CDC will continue the award based on the availability of funds, the evidence of satisfactory progress by the awardee (as documented in required reports), and the determination that continued funding is in the best interest of the federal government. The total number of years for which federal support has been approved (project period) will be shown in the "Notice of Award." This information does not constitute a commitment by the federal government to fund the entire period. The total project period comprises the initial competitive segment and any subsequent non-competitive continuation award(s).

Q:

Please clarify how many pages the Project Narrative should be?

R:

Maximum of 18 pages, single spaced, Calibri 12 point, 1-inch margins, number all pages, content beyond 18 pages will not be reviewed. Please refer to page 21 of the FOA.

Q:

Does an applicant have to apply for activities within each outcome? Can an applicant apply to work in more than 3 activity areas?

R:

An application must cover a minimum of 3 of the prioritized activities for Year 1. However, applicants are allowed to propose work in all 9 activity areas. The evaluation criteria which will be used to rank applications will focus on the Year 1 priorities discussed in the FOA.

Q:

Are accredited private higher education institutions regarded as universities for this FOA?

R:

This is a fully competitive FOA. Colleges and Universities are among eligible applicants listed on pages 16-17. There is a funding preference for local and indigenous universities as stated on pages 37-38. Applicants must provide Documentation from the Higher Education South Africa (HESA) that the applying organization is one of the public universities operating in South Africa to demonstrate eligibility for the funding preference.

Q:

Does the CDC award to non-profit organizations that focus on disadvantaged communities, including children and people with disabilities; unemployed people; or homeless people with HIV/AIDS?

R:

This is a fully competitive FOA. Please refer to the eligibility section on pages 16-17. Organizations interested in funding opportunities at CDC can check HHS Grants Forecast <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/hhsgrantsforecast/> for information on planned grant opportunities and Grants.Gov at www.grants.gov when CDC is ready to accept applications and has posted a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA),

Q:

If we apply for an amount of \$4million, are we eligible for all of it or just a percentage?

R:

The Ceiling of Individual Award Range of \$5,000,000 is listed on page 15. As stated on page 16 Applicants must only apply for the first budget period funding, taking into consideration the floor of the individual award range and the ceiling of the individual award range. The proposed budget for the first budget period must not exceed the ceiling of the individual award range.

Q:

Please provide further clarity on the ceiling?

R:

The Ceiling of Individual Award Range of \$5,000,000 is listed on page 15. This is the Year 1 ceiling. The amount requested should be justified and itemized in the applicant's application. While an applicant can request up to the ceiling, the proposed budget for the first budget period must not exceed the ceiling of the individual award range. CDC reserves the right to award based on the funding available and the number of applications funded.

Q:

Will the awardees be announced in the local newspapers and other local publications?

R:

While awards will not be locally announced, they will be privately notified. The awards will also be posted/published on the National Institute of Health's website that lists all current awards.

Q:

Will the funds cover stipends for care workers?

R:

Grants do fund stipends, but it is contingent on the proposal. Stipends for care worker mobilizations are an allowable cost.

Q:

Where can I access information regarding monitoring and implementation of the site? Does CDC provide these tools?

R:

The CDC does monitor various cooperative agreements using various tools. The successful applicant(s) will be provided with more detailed information after award.

Q:

Please provide further information regarding registration.

R:

Links regarding registration can be found in the FOA on page 19. If an applicant wishes to call Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS), they will immediately be provided a DUNS number. The other option is register via online. The latter can take up to 1-2 days. Once the DUNS is provided, the applicant can register with the System for Award Management (SAM). This can take up 10 working days. Registration for www.grants.gov can take 3-5 days. It is imperative the applicants begin the registration process now, if they are not already registered on these systems.

Please note that the United States will fall back an hour starting November 2, 2014. This means that Eastern Standard Time (EST) will now be 7 hours behind Pretoria time. Submissions will be due November 3rd at 11:59pm (EST) and 6:59am (Pretoria).