

## Questions and Answers – 10/3/2014

### Funding Opportunity Announcement CDC-RFA-GH15-1535

#### ***Building Effective Health Information Systems under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)***

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##### Questions and Answers by email

Q:

In the award information the approximate average award is stated as \$530,000 and the ceiling of individual award range is \$1,600,000. Do these refer to the total costs or direct costs? Our organization has an indirect cost rate approved by the US gov. We will be including that into the budget request.

R:

These amounts refer to the total year 1 award. As stated on Page 15 in the Budget Period Length section "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." Please also refer to the Indirect Cost section on page 15. Domestic organizations may claim their NICRA rate for domestic activities only.

Q:

In the Organizational Capacity of Awardees section, PIs and technical staff are required to provide CVs/Resumes. Will NIH biosketch format be acceptable for this purpose?

R:

The format of the CVs/Resumes is at the discretion of the applicant.

Q:

How will beneficiary host countries be selected? How many host countries over what time period?

R:

The host countries will be selected through a internal identification process, based on resources available, in-country support, need, and etc. The number of host countries will depend on need and available funding. We would like to impact as many PEPFAR countries as possible, but recognize the limitations of resources.

Q:

Will each awardee be expected to work across each of the three strategies – HIS Human Capacity Development, HIS Interoperability and Standards Promotion, and Evaluation and Cost Analysis of HIS Activities? Alternatively, will each of the three awardees work on activities in one of the three strategies? If the latter, will the awardees be expected to collaborate?

R:

The expectation is that an awardee can work across each of the strategies or within one or two strategies, depending on their strengths and resources. CDC seek the most knowledgeable and skilled staff for the activities. If there is more than one awardee, awardees will be expected to collaborate on the activities to reduce duplication of effort, strengthen the overall activity and meet the goals of the FOA.

Q:

Does CDC seek to explore integration with non-PEPFAR data systems that may exist in the host countries?

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R:

Depending on the activity, CDC seeks to integrate with appropriate MOH and non-PEPFAR data systems that may exist in the host countries.

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Q:

We note that on page 15 of the RFA, the following language limits reimbursement of indirect costs: "Indirect costs will not be reimbursed under grants to foreign organizations, international organizations, and foreign components of grants to domestic organizations (does not affect indirect cost reimbursement to the domestic entity for domestic activities). The CDC will not reimburse indirect costs unless the recipient has an indirect cost rate covering the applicable activities and period." We have two questions concerning the application of this language:

1. Domestic organizations that have a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) will generally incur some level of indirect cost, consistent with their respective NICRA, on grants with foreign components. For domestic organizations that are subject to the cost principles at FAR Part 31, those organizations shall accumulate indirect costs so as to permit use of an allocation base that is common to all cost objectives. We believe the new, consolidated OMB circulars found at 2 CFR 200 would apply to any awards made under this RFA. The new consolidated OMB circulars require Federal agencies to accept an approved NICRA, which could, and normally does, include the application of indirect cost rates to the foreign components of grants. Therefore, the instruction in the RFA limiting indirect costs would seem to be at odds with the cost principles at FAR Part 31 and 2 CFR 200, one or the other of which would apply to domestic organizations. Please advise.
2. The new, consolidated OMB circulars found at 2 CFR 200 that we believe would apply to any awards made under this RFA also allow for negotiated indirect rates or the election for a 10% Modified Total Cost F&A rate for organizations, foreign or domestic, that have not received a NICRA. The instruction in the RFA disallowing indirect costs for foreign organizations would seem to be at odds with the CFR. Please advise.

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R:

1. NICRA would be allowed for domestic organizations that carry out domestic activities. The NICRA rate limitation is based on the current NICRA rate agreement. Grants Policy Directive 3.01, HHS Transmittal 98.01c ascertains that Indirect Costs will not be provided on HHS grants/cooperative agreement to international or foreign organization. This is to include domestic organization with foreign components per FOA guidance. This guidance is for both For-Profit and Non-Profit organizations
  2. The 10% is based on overhead cost for any organization that does not have a negotiated NICRA rate agreement with the U.S. government within the U.S. This rule of thumb does not apply to foreign organizations. Furthermore, the Grants Management Officer is the approving authority on matters of such pertaining rather the costs are reasonable.)
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