

Questions and Answers – 10/3/2014

Funding Opportunity Announcement CDC-RFA-GH15-1615

Namibia Mechanism for Public Health Assistance, Capacity, and Technical Support (NAM-PHACTS) under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)

Questions and Answers by email

Q:

Please clarify whether we can submit a budget beyond the approximate total fiscal year funding indicated within the FOA, page 24, by program area

R:

Applicants proposed budget must not exceed the ceiling of the individual award range for the program area. Please refer to Page 24 of the FOA under Budget Period Length.

Q:

There appears to be an incomplete sentence on page 12 of the RFA: "Insert the following..." after the instructions on using the correct version of SF424 and block 15. What is the sentence supposed to say?

R:

That is an error. There is no second sentence. The Funding Strategy section should end with the statement "Failure to indicate the area of work in block 15 will make the application non-responsive." Please disregard the text that follows in the FOA that states "Insert the following"

Q:

Work plan: there are two descriptions of what the work plan should look like, on pages 21 and 32. Which description should we follow to submit with the application, or what is the minimum level of information required?

R:

The instructions in the FOA on the Work Plan on pages 21 and 32 should be followed. As stated on page 32 of the FOA "Applicants must prepare a work plan consistent with the CDC Project Description Work Plan section. The work plan integrates and delineates more specifically how the awardee plans to carry out achieving the project period outcomes, strategies, and activities, evaluation and performance measurement, including key milestones." The CDC Project Description Work Plan underlined for reference above from page 32, references the Work Plan on page 21 of the FOA which is in Part II Full Text. 2. CDC Project Description d. Work Plan.

Q:

Page 27: RFA states that proposed budget must not exceed the ceiling amount. However, a ceiling amount is not given in Section B: Award information. Should we assume that the average award amount (\$1,250,000) to be the same as the ceiling amount in order to prepare budgets

R:

Please reference Amendment I of the FOA. Funding has been clarified. Applicants must not exceed the ceiling of the individual award range for the program area to which they are applying:

Program Area A. Pre-Service Health Sciences Education: \$600,000;

Program Area B. Support for Clinical Services: \$3,200,000;

Program Area C. Strategic Information/Health Systems Strengthening: \$1,000,000;

Program Area D. Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement: \$200,000

Q:

Letters of support: Are there any specific requirements or suggestions for what information each letter of support should include?

R:

As stated on page 31 of the FOA "Applicants must file a maximum of 5 letters of support from the Government of Namibia (e.g., MOHSS, UNAM) or other local institutions and should relate to the quality of the applicant's work in Namibia supported by the Department of Health and Human Services, particularly with regard to the objectives of this FOA to which they are applying, name the file "Letters of Support," and upload it as a PDF file at www.grants.gov." In regards to length, applicants should consider the page limit of the appendix. All other characteristics of the letters of support are at the discretion of the applicant.

Q:

Page 21, d. Work Plan asks for 'a detailed work plan for the first year of the project and a high level plan for the subsequent years.' And page 32, 11. Work Plan notes that the work plan must be 'consistent with the CDC Project Description Work Plan section.'

Would it be acceptable to submit one unified work plan that details both first year and years 2-5 as it appears in the CDC Project Description? Or must these be two separate tables?

R:

The instructions in the FOA on the Work Plan on pages 21 and 32 should be followed. Applicants must submit a detailed work plan for the first year of the project and a high level plan for the subsequent years. Formatting outside of the instructions is at the applicants discretion.

Q:

The Funding information on the synopsis page lists \$0 for all amounts. Please clarify.

R:

Please refer to the funding information within Amendment I of the full announcement. The ceiling of the individual award range by program area is:

- A. Program Area A. Pre-Service Health Sciences Education: \$600,000;
- B. Program Area B. Support for Clinical Services: \$3,200,000;
- C. Program Area C. Strategic Information/Health Systems Strengthening: \$1,000,000;
- D. Program Area D. Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement: \$200,000.

The Total Project Period Length is 5 Years. 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:

On page 32 it states: Applicants must submit CVs/Resumes of any key technical or professional positions to be supported by this project. This includes any teaching, finance, or administrative staff (except for drivers) as well as detailed job descriptions of key positions to be created for any technical or professional positions to be supported by this project. This includes any teaching, finance, or administrative staff (except for drivers) necessary for program development and implementation. This could take up several pages of the 90 page

appendices limit. Given that on page 56 its states that applicants must submit “resumes/CVs of current key staff” we understand this to mean that CVs are only needed for key senior positions and JDs would be used to describe any other positions, is this correct?

R:

As stated on page 57 of the FOA, applicants must submit include the following documents in the application appendices: “Resumes/CVs of current key staff who will work on the activity, including, but not limited to: Principal Investigator, Business Official, Project Manager. Applicants are also referred to Section D, #10, part d, “Organizational Capacity of Awardees to Execute the Approach” for specific job descriptions required in this FOA. That section states Applicants must submit CVs/Resumes of any key technical or professional positions to be supported by this project. This includes any teaching, finance, or administrative staff (except for drivers) as well as detailed job descriptions of key positions to be created for any technical or professional positions to be supported by this project. This includes any teaching, finance, or administrative staff (except for drivers) necessary for program development and implementation.

The CVs/Resumes and Job Descriptions submitted by applicants will be assessed during the Phase II Review. It is at the applicant’s discretion to determine staffing.

Q:

On page 56 it states the application must submit “Resumes/CVs of current key staff who will work on the activity, including, but not limited to: Principal Investigator, Business Official, Project Manager” can CDC kindly clarify how they would define the Business Official – would this be someone in charge of managing the financials of the project?

R:

HHS grant awards generally are made to organizations. The organization is legally accountable for the performance of the award and the expenditure of funds. The roles and responsibilities of designated individuals at recipient organizations, who serve as agents of the recipient, are as follows:

Authorized Organizational Representative/Business Official. The authorized organizational representative 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. These responsibilities include accountability both for the appropriate use of funds awarded and the performance of the grant-supported project or activities as specified in the approved application. Although HHS requires that the recipient organization designate such an individual, HHS does not specify the organizational location or full set of responsibilities for this individual.

Q:

On Page 5 Under Program Area 2: Support for Clinical Services the 1st Activity listed it states that the applicant should “provide technical assistance to the MOHSS to plan and implement a national clinical mentoring program”. We understand that a mentoring program does not exist for current health care providers or for mentors of students conducting their practicum in health facilities. Given that Program Area 1 is focused on pre-service, could CDC kindly clarify if the mentorship program envisioned should be for current providers only or for mentors of students or both?

R:

The successful applicant will support the MOHSS to plan and implement a national clinical mentoring program for current practitioners.

Q:

On page 12 under iv. Funding Strategy, the instructions points to block 15 on the SF424, and block 15 on the form is for the descriptive title, whereas block 14 relates to the affected areas by the project. Can you please clarify what is supposed to be entered in box 14 and what is supposed to be entered in box 15?

R:

Applicants are required to follow the instructions in the Funding Strategy section of the FOA. "On form SF 424, block 15, "Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project," the applicant must state the program area they are applying for work" Applicant should also identify the title of the FOA. In Block 14 applicants should identify the geographic "Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.)" Applicants should list the names of the cities and/or countries for which the activities are expected to be carried out.

Q:

On page one, it states that an "approximate number of awards: 4-8" will be given and then on page 12, "more than one applicant will not be funded for the same program area under this award". Would CDC please specify the correct number of awards?

R:

The approximate number of awards is 4. The FOA will be amended to make that correction

Q:

Section D.10.d. outlines that CVs of any key technical or professional positions must be submitted, including teaching, finance, or administrative staff, as well as job descriptions, but section H outlines three key staff positions (Principal Investigator, Business Official, and Project Manager). Can you please clarify what key positions are required for the proposal?

R:

Applicants should provide the CV's resumes of the three positions outlined in section H and the key technical and professional staff listed in section D.10.d. Applicants are also required to provide the job descriptions of the positions.