

Questions and Answers – 10/03/2014

Funding Opportunity Announcement CDC-RFA-GH15-1578

Technical Assistance and Support for the Development and Implementation of Key Aspects of HIV/AIDS Care and Support Services in South Africa under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)

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

Q:

Will GDC (indirect costs) be allowed or covered as part of the funding?

R:

No indirect costs will be covered for non-US-based awardees. US-based awardees will need to submit a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) as part of their final package for indirect costs to be covered. For South Africa-based awardees, costs can be covered under "other direct costs" cost category. However, this cannot be a blanket coverage as per budget guidelines.

Q:

Is there a limit to the amount of sub-partners that a prime can have?

R:

This should be proportional and reasonable to the program and its budget. The FOA stipulates that you can work with sub-grantees; applications should justify sub-grantee capability and expertise in implementing the program and ensure that the prime applicant performs a substantial role in carrying out the project activities and not merely serve as a conduit for an award to another party or provider who is ineligible to apply.

Q:

Which provinces is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) prioritizing?

R:

CDC expects applicants to determine whether their proposed activities will be on a national level, provincial support or a more localized level.

Q:

For each program area, must an application cover all sub-objectives/objectives or a subset?

R:

The applicant should take into account all objectives that are aligned with the specific program area(s) the applicant is applying to.

Q:

Who qualifies to apply?

R:

Potential applicants should review the eligibility criteria in the FOA, specifically pages 29 and 31.

Q:

Will Program Area A cover all provinces?

R:

An applicant can propose to implement program A on a national level or limited to select provinces. This is to be determined by the applicant during the design of the proposal.

Q:

Will the latest draft of "Guide for Strengthening Linkage to Care, Retention..." become available for alignment with applications.

R:

The National Department of Health's (NDoH) guidelines are still being developed. Applicants should request the latest draft from the government bearing in mind that it is not a final product.

Q:

How does the CDC ensure that all nine provinces equally benefit from the grants?

R:

Awards are also in line with the National Department of Health's priorities and needs, both geographically and programmatically.

Q:

Briefly elaborate on registration as a partner.

R:

Links regarding registration can be found in the FOA on page 32. 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 3-5 business 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.

Q:

Previously, I applied and received a DUNS number. Please clarify why emails are still sent requesting an update.

R:

SAM requires annual renewal or else an applicant/partner will lose their DUNS. SAM renewal takes up to 5 days; the DUNS number will remain the same. If you were already registered previously, please confirm your registrations are still valid, as that will affect the entire application process.

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.

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).

Questions and Answers by email

Q:

We wish to know if and when a pre-application workshop or informational conference call is planned for FOA No. CDC-RFA-GH15-1578: Technical Assistance and Support for the Development and Implementation of Key Aspects of HIV/AIDS Care and Support Services in South Africa under PEPFAR?

R:

A pre-application workshop for this FOA was held at CDC in Pretoria on Friday 26 September 2014. The workshop was widely publicized through PEPFAR-SA-wide mailings, announcements in the local newspapers, and an announcement was posted on www.grants.gov.

Q:

Has the FOA been taken down from the grants.gov website?

R:

Yes, the program removed the FOA from grants.gov. It was republished on September 15, 2014

Q:

Would you be so kind as to clarify whether a South African private university is eligible to apply?

R:

As stated on pages 29-31 of CDC-RFA-GH15-1578 universities are eligible to apply.

Q:

We have been asked by two different organizations to be a sub-awardee in a specific program area. Are we allowed to be a sub-awardee on applications of more than one prime applicant?

R:

Yes, organizations are allowed to be a sub-award on applications of more than one prime applicant as long as the percent effort under salaries for one individual does not exceed 100%.

Q:

Can you please clarify whether the "Application Evaluation and Performance Measurement Plan" should be included as a part of the technical narrative or as an appendix?

R:

As stated on pages 34 through 36 of the FOA, the Applicant Evaluation and Performance Measurement Plan should be submitted as part of the project narrative.

Q:

What are the submission requirements for named consultants and sub awardees?

R:

There are no particular submission requirements for named consultants and sub awardees. The submittal requirements are the responsibility of the prime applicant.

Q:

If we wish to subcontract to a foreign or South Africa based organization, are Indirect Costs allowable on sub awardee budget proposal?

R:

It is contingent on the awardee's own organization's policies.

Q:

For "Objective 2: Support the nationwide roll-out of the Integrated Access to Care and Treatment (I ACT) program" do you anticipate any overlap between USAID funded activities and CDC funded activities?

R:

The CDC and USAID strive to always coordinate their efforts and will avoid any unnecessary duplication of CDC and USAID funded activities at all times.

Q:

Can we attached the applicant's Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement as a standalone file attachment or must it be included in the 90 page Appendix file?

R:

As stated on page 61 the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement should be submitted in the appendix in a PDF file format, and should be clearly labeled NICRA. The page limits of the appendix apply to all documents submitted for the appendix.

Q:

Is there a cap on the maximum number of letters of support that we can submit?

R:

Applicants must provide the two letters of support as described on page 35 of the FOA. Additional letters of support may be submitted at the applicants discretion. Letters of support should be submitted in the appendix in a PDF file format, and should be clearly labeled letters of support. The page limits of the appendix apply to all documents submitted for the appendix.

Q:

Please confirm if more than one applicant may be funded for the same program area under this FOA award?

R:

Only one applicant will be funded per program area. There are 3 program areas under this FOA as described on page 17 of the FOA in the Funding Strategy section. There will be 1-3 awards as stated on page 2.

Q:

FOA instructions on the bottom of page 17 state: Applicants must use this version of the SF424 to specify their proposed program area in block 15 http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SF424_2_1-V2.1.pdf; please confirm if this version replaces the 15 page SF424 application package associated with this FOA or is it submitted in addition to the application package?

R:

Please use the form in the SF424 application package associated with this FOA.

Q:

Can you clarify the MOU requirement – is there a particular governmental body with whom the required MOU/MOA should be with?

R:
There is no MOU requirement for this FOA.

Q:
On pg. 36, the FOA instructions specify 5 key positions: Principal Investigator, Business Official, Country Office Director, Project Director, Project Manager and Project Administrator. However, on pg. 61, the FOA instructions indicate to submit Resumes/CVs of 3 key staff: Principal Investigator, Business Official, and Project Manager. Please clarify should we submit CVS for 5 or 3 key positions.

R:
The information on page 36 and 61 is in agreement. Please refer to the instructions on page 36 of the FOA, which lists 5 positions. The listing on page 61 states "including, but not limited to" and lists 3 positions that are also listed on page 36. The instructions on page 61 also refer to the instructions on page 36.

Q:
In reference to the PEPFAR funding requirement (on pg. 46), since FY 2105 hasn't ended yet, should the applicant instead report on FY 2014 total PEPFAR funds received?

R:
The applicant should report on known FY2015 PEPFAR funds received at the time of proposal submittal. Additional discussions will occur with the successful applicant during budget negotiations.

Q:
The RFA does not refer to substance use as a component of mental illness, however, traditionally it is included under the MH umbrella. In the SA National Strategic Plan, under sub-objective 1.2, addressing substance use is referred to as a means to address one of the drivers of HIV. How does substance use play a role in this RFA (if any)?

R:
It is at the discretion of the applicant to include aspects of substance use/abuse programming in a proposal to address Program Area C

Q:
On page 24, what is the "logical model" referring to?

R:
On page 24, logical model refers to the program logic model in the Approach section of the CDC Project Description beginning on page 5 of the FOA.

Q:
There are six key personnel proposed and it is not clear a proposed project design will need all of these positions to fulfill the requirements of the RFA and/or can accommodate these positions within the budget. Can applicants propose a justified change in a number of the key personnel positions? (Pg 36)

R:
Applicants are requested to respond to the requirements of the FOA. The content of the proposal is at the discretion of the applicant.

Q:
Can we be provided with basic roles and responsibilities for the positions named? I.e. (Specifically, what would the roles and responsibilities of a "business official" be?)

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.

Principal Investigator/Program or Project Director. The PI/PD is the individual, designated by the recipient, responsible for the scientific, technical, or programmatic aspects of the grant and for day-to-day management of the project or program. The PI/PD generally is an employee of the recipient. However, because the grant, if awarded, is made to the recipient organization, if the PI/PD is not an employee of that organization, the organization must have a formal written agreement with the PI/PD that specifies an official relationship between the parties even if the relationship

Q:

The Environmental Impact statement listed on page 45 of the RFA states that the applicant is required to create and follow an environmental mitigation plan and report (EMPR) for each thematic area covered by this agreement. We have the following related questions:

- a) Is the EMPR required with the proposal submission or after award?
- b) If it is required with the proposal, can it be included in the appendices?
- c) If required, could you please provide offerors with a sample and/or list of what needs to be included?

R:

Applicants are not required to submit the Environmental Impact statement or environmental mitigation plan and report at the time of application submittal. This requirement will apply to the successful applicant.

Q:

In the Grants.gov application (HHS Checklist Form), is the Public Health Impact Statement applicable to this application?

- a) If it is required, should it be submitted with the proposal submission or after award?
- b) If required, is there any guidance on what this statement needs to include?
- c) If required, can it be included with the appendices?

R:

The HHS Checklist PHS-5161 is a required form in the application package. It should be submitted with the proposal. This form must be completed and submitted with the original of your application. Be sure to complete both sides of this form. Check the appropriate boxes and provide the information requested. This form should be attached as the last page of the signed original of the application. This page is reserved for PHS staff use only.
