

Section III. The Project Description, Program Proposal Elements and Review Criteria

A. Purpose

The project description provides the major means by which an application is evaluated and ranked to compete with other applications for available assistance. The project description should be concise, complete and should address the activity for which Federal funds are being requested. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. Applicants are encouraged to provide information on their organizational structure, staff, related experience and other information. Awarding offices use this and other information to determine whether the applicant has the capability and resources necessary to carry out the proposed project.

It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application. However, in the narrative the applicant must distinguish resources directly related to the proposed project and those that will not be used in support of the specific project for which funds are requested.

B. Project Summary/Abstract

Provide a summary of the project description (one page or less) with reference to the funding request.

C. Objectives and Need for Assistance

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, instructional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance must be demonstrated and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly stated; supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as needed. In developing the project description, the applicant may volunteer or be requested to provide information on the total range of projects currently being conducted and supported (or to be initiated), some of which may be outside the scope of the program announcement.

D. Results or Benefits Expected

Identify the results and benefits to be derived. For example, describe the population to be served by the program, including how many low-income people are projected to be served. Explain the ways in which the project will be used to reach your client base and will benefit participants, including whether it may aid some participants in moving towards self-sufficiency.

E. Approach

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work and state the

reasons for taking the proposed approach rather than others. Describe any unusual features of the project such as design or technical innovations, reductions in cost or time or extraordinary social and community involvement.

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function or activity in such terms as the number of people served. When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

Indicate whether data will be collected, maintained, and/or disseminated. Note that clearance may be required from the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in order to conduct such activities. This requirement pertains to any "collection of information that is conducted or sponsored by ACF.

List organizations, cooperating entities, consultants or other key individuals who will work on the project along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

F. Organization Profiles

Provide information on the applicant organization(s) and cooperating partners such as organizational charts, financial statements, audit reports or statements from CPAs/Licensed Public Accountants, Employer Identification Numbers, names of bond carriers, contact persons and telephone numbers, child care licenses and other documentation of professional accreditation, information on compliance with Federal/State/local government standards, documentation of experience in the program area and other pertinent information. Any non-profit organization submitting an application must submit proof of its non-profit status in its application at the time of

submission. The non-profit agency can accomplish this by providing a copy of either the applicant's listing in the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) most recent list of tax-exempt organizations, or the currently valid IRS tax exemption certificate, or, the articles of incorporation bearing the seal of the State in which the corporation or association is domiciled.

G. Budget and Budget Justification

Provide a line item detail and detailed calculations for each budget object class identified on the Budget Information form. Detailed calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. The detailed budget must also include a breakout by the funding sources identified in Block 15 of the SF-4242.

Provide a narrative budget justification that describes how categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness and allocability of the proposed costs.

The following guidelines are for preparing the budget and budget justification. Both Federal and non-Federal resources shall be detailed and justified in the budget and narrative justification. For purposes of preparing the budget and budget justification, "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant for which you are applying. Non-Federal resources are all other Federal and non-Federal resources. It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, Federal budget; next column(s), non-Federal budget(s) and last column, total budget.

Personnel

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known. For each staff person, provide the title, time commitment to the project (in months), time commitment to the project (as a percentage of full-time equivalents), and annual salary, grant salary, wage rates, etc. Do not include the costs of consultants or personnel costs of delegate agencies or of specific project(s) or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

Fringe Benefits

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits, unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefits costs such as health insurance, FICA, retirement insurance, taxes, etc.

Travel

Description: Costs of project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization (does not include costs of consultant travel).

Justification: For each trip, show the total number of traveler(s), travel destination, duration of trip, per diem, mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used, and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances.

Equipment

Description: "Equipment" means an article of non-expendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000.

(Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight and installation shall be included in, or excluded from, acquisition cost in accordance with the organization's regular written accounting practices).

Justification: For each type of equipment requested, provide a description of the equipment, the cost per unit, the number of units, the total cost and a plan for use on the project, as well as use or disposal of the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization whose definition of equipment differs from ACF's definition of equipment as described above should provide a copy of its policy or section of its policy that includes the equipment definition.

Supplies

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under Equipment.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

Contractual

Description: Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Third-party evaluation contracts (if applicable) and contracts with secondary recipient organizations, including delegate agencies and specific project(s) or businesses to be financed by the applicant, should be included under this category.

Justification: All procurement transactions shall be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition. Recipients and sub-recipients, other than States that are required to use Part 92 procedures, must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceed the simplified acquisition threshold fixed at 41 USC 403(11) (currently set at \$100,000.) Recipients might be required to make available to ACF pre-award review and procurement documents, such as request for applications or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc.

Note: Whenever the applicant intends to delegate part of the project to another agency, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each delegate agency, by agency title, along with the required supporting information referred to in these instructions.

Other

Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to insurance, food, medical and dental costs (non-contractual), professional services costs, space and equipment rentals, printing and

publication, computer use, training costs such as tuition and stipends, staff development costs and administrative costs.

Justification: Provide computations, a narrative description and a justification for each cost under this category.

H. Non-Federal Resources

Amounts of non-Federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 15 of the SF-424.

Justification: The firm commitment of these resources must be documented and submitted with the application in order to be given credit in the review process. A detailed budget must be prepared for each funding source.