



**Administration for Children and Families**

Administration on Children, Youth and Families

Standing Announcement for Tribal Title IV-E Plan Development Grants

HHS-2016-ACF-ACYF-CS-1176

Application Due Date: 07/28/2016

**Due Date for Applications:**

For this standing FOA, the application due dates are as follows:

- FY 2016: 07/28/2016
- FY 2017: 04/28/2017
- FY 2018: 04/30/2018

Grants.gov will open and receive applications at least 90 days prior to the due dates for each fiscal year.

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**Department of Health & Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families**

**Program Office:** Administration on Children, Youth and Families -  
Children's Bureau

**Funding Opportunity Title:** Standing Announcement for Tribal Title IV-E Plan  
Development Grants

**Announcement Type:** Initial

**Funding Opportunity  
Number:** HHS-2016-ACF-ACYF-CS-1176

**Primary CFDA Number:** 93.658

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## Executive Summary

*Notices:*

- **Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the entire funding opportunity announcement (FOA) carefully and observe the application formatting requirements listed in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*. For more information on applying for grants, please visit "How to Apply for a Grant" on the ACF Grants Page at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto>.**

The purpose of this funding opportunity announcement (FOA) is to solicit proposals for one-time grants to tribes, tribal organizations, or tribal consortia that are seeking to develop and, within 24 months of grant receipt, to submit to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) a plan to implement a title IV-E foster care, adoption assistance, and, at tribal option, guardianship assistance program. Grant funds under this FOA may be used for the cost of developing a title IV-E plan under section 471 of the Social Security Act to carry out a program under section 479B of the Social Security Act. The grant may be used for costs relating to the development of data collection systems, a cost-allocation methodology, agency and tribal court procedures necessary to meet the case review system requirements under

section 475(5) of the Act, or any other costs attributable to meeting any other requirement necessary for approval of a title IV-E plan.

## **I. Program Description**

### **Statutory Authority**

The statutory authority is section 476(c)(2)(A)(iii) of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Pub. L. 110-351).

### **Description**

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Pub. L. 110-351) added a new section (479B) to the Social Security Act that enables Indian tribes to apply to the Secretary of HHS to receive federal funding to support the administration of their own foster care, adoption assistance, and guardianship assistance programs under title IV-E of the Social Security Act. The law also amended the Social Security Act at section 476(c)(2)(A)(iii) to allow Indian tribes to receive one-time development grants of up to \$300,000 to be used toward the cost of developing a title IV-E plan to carry out the requirements of the new section 479B of the Social Security Act.

The purpose of this grant is to enable tribes to complete an approvable title IV-E plan to operate a foster care, adoption assistance, and, at the tribe's option, guardianship assistance program. This funding opportunity is for a one-time development grant, to tribes, tribal organizations, or tribal consortia that are seeking to develop, and intend, not later than 24 months after receiving such a grant, to submit to the Secretary a plan to implement a title IV-E foster care program. To assist tribes in meeting the 24-month timeline, the Children's Bureau (CB) offers information, advice, educational materials, and technical assistance.

Development grants may be used by the Indian tribe for any costs attributable to meeting the requirements for approval of a tribally operated title IV-E plan. The law cites the following as examples of allowable costs under the development grant: development of a data collection system, development of a cost-allocation methodology, and establishment of tribal agency and court procedures necessary to meet the case review requirements in the law (section 476(c)(2)(A)(iii)).

## **BACKGROUND AND CONSIDERATIONS**

The following lessons learned may be helpful to grantees under this announcement.

### **1. Scope of the Title IV-E Program**

The title IV-E program represents a component of a comprehensive child welfare system. The title IV-E plan, developed with the support of this grant program, addresses requirements needed for administration of the title IV-E foster care, adoption assistance, and optional guardianship assistance programs only. It is not a plan for a comprehensive child welfare program and, therefore, does not address, regulate, or provide reimbursement for other aspects of a comprehensive child welfare program, such as child protective service investigations, in-home services, or therapeutic treatments for children in foster care. Therefore, development of a title IV-E program may be most appropriate for tribes that already have other components

of a comprehensive child welfare program in place. Grantees will be best prepared to undertake the work of the grant if, prior to application, they have reviewed their current capacity and infrastructure for child welfare services, including existing Tribal Code, policies, programs, systems, and services, to have a better understanding of their current capacity and how a title IV-E program would enhance the tribe's child welfare program.

## **2. Realistic Expectations for Amount of Federal Reimbursement Under a Title IV-E Program**

Title IV-E provides reimbursement for a percentage of the maintenance costs (i.e., room and board) of eligible children who are in out-of-home placement in a licensed foster care placement and for assistance payments to help support children who have achieved permanency via adoption or guardianship. It also provides funding for training eligible staff, court personnel, and foster parents and for administrative costs to manage the program expenses.

## **3. Collaboration, Partnerships, and Buy-in**

Collaboration, partnerships, and buy-in are critical as grantees develop an approvable plan and will continue to be important as grantees implement the program. Grantees that have engaged all relevant tribal partners and tribal leadership in assessing existing capacity and discussing the advantages of implementing a title IV-E program prior to application will be in a strong position to begin the work of developing a title IV-E plan. Successful grantees will continue that engagement throughout the plan implementation. Some of the partners needed to achieve a successful title IV-E plan include social services, the courts, agency finance staff, and other entities with which a tribe may want to have an agreement, such as the state social services agency. Successful grantees have also found the oversight and support of Tribal Council critical to success.

## **4. Staffing**

Grantees may find it helpful to designate a full-time project director to oversee the day-to-day work and coordinate the title IV-E plan development grant. That approach may allow the social services director to attend to demanding regular duties and limit involvement to an oversight role.

## **5. Data Collection and Information Technology (IT) Systems**

Title IV-E requires submission of data to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). While it is important for title IV-E plan development grantees to learn about AFCARS and begin planning how they will approach data reporting, actual submission of data will not be required until after approval of the title IV-E plan and implementation of the program. At that time, title IV-E funding may be available to support allowable costs associated with development and implementation of the tribe's approved approach to data collection and IT development. Some tribes are interested in developing IT capabilities to support case management as well as required data collection. While development of a case management system is not a requirement of title IV-E, tribes interested in developing such a system are encouraged to first develop the business process involving input from both program and IT staff to ensure that all program needs are met and to identify policy gaps. Useful Information Memoranda (IMs) and Program Instructions (PIs) are listed in

the following section titled Project Requirements.

## 6. Technical Assistance

CB developed a useful document titled *Considerations for Indian Tribes, Indian Tribal Organizations or Tribal Consortia Seeking to Operate a Tribal Title IV-E Program*. The document is a simplified walk-through of key areas of title IV-E requirements with suggested questions for discussion that may be helpful in deciding when or whether to operate a title IV-E program. It may be useful in determining whether or not implementing a title IV-E plan is right for a tribe. It may also assist tribes in identifying areas they may need to address through a title IV-E development grant. The document can be found at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/tribal-considerations>.

## PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

In implementing their grants, tribes must use the funds to address areas in which they need to build capacity in order to submit an approvable plan within 24 months to successfully operate a title IV-E foster care, adoption assistance, and, at tribal option, guardianship assistance program. Grantees should be familiar with all the requirements of the title IV-E program.

**Note:** If the Indian tribe does not submit a title IV-E plan within that timeframe, it must repay the total grant amount. Given the statutory requirement to repay the grant if a title IV-E plan is not submitted within 24 months of grant receipt, it is important that a tribe apply for this grant opportunity only if it has already made the decision to implement a title IV-E program. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is authorized to waive the requirement to repay the grant if it is determined that failure to submit a title IV-E plan during the 24-month period was beyond the control of the Indian tribe (section 476(c)(2)(B)).

CB recently issued ACYF-CB-PI-15-07, which includes a comprehensive listing of all the title IV-E requirements (referred to as a pre-print) a grantee will need to address when developing a title IV-E plan. This issuance can be found at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/pi1507>. ACF strongly encourages applicants to review the document and to use it as a reference as they develop their applications in response to this FOA.

The following CB policy issuances may also be useful to funded projects:

- IMs:
  - ACYF-CB-IM-08-03; and
  - ACYF-CB-IM-14-03
- PIs:
  - ACYF-CB-PI-08-05;
  - ACYF-CB-PI-10-11;
  - ACYF-CB-PI-13-05; and
  - ACYF-CB-PI-14-06.

These policy issuances can be found at [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/laws\\_policies/index.htm#policy](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/laws_policies/index.htm#policy).

In addition to IMs and PIs, CB maintains an online Child Welfare Policy Manual (CWPM) that contains questions and answers on a range of policy issues and is arranged by topic. The CWPM can be found at [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/cwpm/programs/cb/laws\\_policies/laws/](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/cwpm/programs/cb/laws_policies/laws/)

[cwpm/index.jsp](http://cwpm/index.jsp).

Applicants may find it particularly useful to review two sections of the CWPM relevant to tribes planning to implement a title IV-E program:

- Section 8 addresses policies applicable to all title IV-E agencies; and
- Section 9 addresses policies applicable specifically to tribes on procedural requirements, tribal title IV-E agencies, and tribal IV-E agreements.

Based on an assessment of current child welfare service programs, tribal code, and policies, funded projects will develop plans for operating a title IV-E program. For example, tribes may need to revise tribal code, develop new policy guidance, or expand the types of services they currently offer in order to meet title IV-E requirements. Some tribes have previous experience with the title IV-E program through participation in a state-tribe title IV-E agreement. As they develop their title IV-E plans, tribes will consider current provisions of any such agreements, the roles of the state and tribe under such agreements, how those roles are anticipated to change if the tribe begins operation of its own title IV-E program, and how the experience of participating in that agreement has informed its planned use of the development grant.

As they develop their title IV-E plans, tribes will consider current capacity in key areas of agency infrastructure or interagency coordination needed to operate a title IV-E program and whether changes or improvements will be needed before an approvable title IV-E plan can be submitted. For a list of potential areas grantees can address, refer to *Section IV.2. The Project Description, Approach*.

Funded projects are free to address additional areas through the development grant on the condition that such use of grant funds would contribute to the tribe's ability to develop and submit an approvable title IV-E plan. Projects will follow a timeline for addressing each area identified for use of development grant funds.

Overall, funded projects' success will be enhanced if, prior to application, they have assessed their own current child welfare program and capacities; have gained a clear understanding of the title IV-E program and the steps that will need to be taken to prepare to operate directly a title IV-E program; and have developed a well-thought-out plan for using development grant funds to address identified areas needing to be strengthened. Successful completion of these activities will prepare a tribe to submit an approvable title IV-E plan within 24 months of grant receipt.

Should there be any conflict between what is proposed in the grant application and the requirements of the Social Security Act at section 471 for an approvable title IV-E plan, the requirements in the Social Security Act must be met.

**Successful applicants will be required to review their proposed work plan and update it with timelines, tasks, and persons responsible.** In addition, it is to include timelines for submissions of drafts include, policies, procedures, Code, forms and templates, foster home licensing standards, etc. This will be due no later than 90 days after the grant award date.

### **Grantee Meetings**

A minimum of three staff, but not more than five, will be required to attend two grantees

meetings over the course of the budget period. These 2-day meetings may be held in Washington, DC. Grantees and other tribal leaders are expected to participate in peer-to-peer sharing of implementation activities. (See *Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification* for more information.)

## II. Federal Award Information

|                                 |                              |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Funding Instrument Type:        | Grant                        |
| Estimated Total Funding:        | \$1,500,000                  |
| Expected Number of Awards:      | 5                            |
| Award Ceiling:                  | \$300,000 Per Project Period |
| Award Floor:                    | \$150,000 Per Project Period |
| Average Projected Award Amount: | \$300,000 Per Project Period |
| Anticipated Project Start Date: | 09/30/2016                   |

### Length of Project Periods:

Length of Project Period: Other

One 24-month project period with one 24-month budget period.

### Additional Information on Awards:

**Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds.**

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period. Please see *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

**Note:** For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. **A recipient's failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.** See *Section III.2.* of this announcement for information on cost-sharing or matching requirements.

## III. Eligibility Information

### III.1. Eligible Applicants

Eligibility is limited to Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal consortia. The terms "Indian tribe" and "tribal organization" have the meanings given those terms in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, Pub. L. 93-638, 25 U.S.C. § 450b. Also see sections 479B(a) and 476(c)(2)(A)(iii) of the Social Security Act.

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

### III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: No

**For all federal awards**, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR 75.306.

**For awards that require matching by statute**, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the amount required by the statutory match. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

**For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute**, where "cost sharing" refers to any situation in which the recipient voluntarily shares in the costs of a project other than as statutorily required matching. These include situations in which contributions are voluntarily proposed by an applicant and are accepted by ACF. Non-federal cost sharing will be included in the approved project budget so that the applicant will be held accountable for proposed non-federal cost-sharing funds as shown in the Notice of Award (NOA). **A recipient's failure to provide voluntary cost sharing of non-federal resources that have been accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that have been shown as part of the approved project budget in the NOA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

### III.3. Other

#### **Application Disqualification Factors**

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

#### **Award Ceiling Disqualification**

Applications that request an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period as stated in *Section II. Federal Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

#### **Required Electronic Application Submission**

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). **Paper applications received from applicants that have not been approved for an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.**

Applicants that do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents to the Internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow the applicant to submit applications in paper format. Information and the requirements for requesting an exemption from required electronic application submission are found in "Request an Exemption from Electronic Application Submission" in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*.

#### **Missing the Application Deadlines (Late Applications)**

**The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*.** Electronic applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) after 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. That is, applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), on or after 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) validation check, will not be received at, or acknowledged by, ACF.

Each time an application is submitted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), the submission will generate a new date and time-stamp email notification. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

**The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*.** Paper applications received after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not received approval of an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.**

## **Notification of Application Disqualification**

Applications that are disqualified under these criteria are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

## **IV. Application and Submission Information**

### **IV.1. Address to Request Application Package**

CB Operations Center  
c/o LCG, Inc.  
1400 Key Boulevard  
Suite 900  
Arlington, VA 22209  
Phone: (888) 203-6161  
Email: [CB@grantreview.org](mailto:CB@grantreview.org)

### **Electronic Application Submission:**

The electronic application submission package is available in the FOA's listing at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

### **Applications in Paper Format:**

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package available in the FOA's Grants.gov synopsis at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). They are also available at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

### **Standard Forms that are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794d):**

Available at the Grants.gov Forms Repository website at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>.

### **Federal Relay Service:**

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) for assistance at [www.gsa.gov/fedrelay](http://www.gsa.gov/fedrelay).

## **IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission**

## **FORMATTING APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS**

**In FY 2013 ACF implemented a new application upload requirement. Each applicant applying electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) is required to upload only two electronic files, excluding Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.**

### ***FOR ALL APPLICATIONS:***

#### **Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)**

AOR 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.

AOR authorization is part of the registration process at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), where the AOR will create a short profile and obtain a username and password from the Grants.gov Credential Provider. AORs will only be authorized for the DUNS number registered in the System for Awards Management (SAM).

#### **Point of Contact**

In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to answer any questions pertaining to the application.

#### **Application Checklist**

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials.

#### **Accepted Font Style**

Applications must be in Times New Roman (TNR), 12-point font, except for footnotes, which may be TNR 10-point font.

#### **Page Limitations**

**Applicants must observe the page limitation(s) listed under "PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:". Page limitation(s) do not include SFs and OMB-approved forms.**

**All applications must be double-spaced.** An application that exceeds the cited page limitation for double-spaced pages in the Project Description file or the Appendices file will have the last extra pages removed and the removed pages will not be reviewed.

#### **Application Elements Exempted from Double-Spacing Requirements**

The following elements of the application submission are exempt from the double-spacing requirements and may be single-spaced: the table of contents, the one-page Project Summary/Abstract, required Assurances and Certifications, required SFs, required OMB-approved forms, resumes, logic models, proof of legal status/non-profit status, third-party agreements, letters of support, footnotes, tables, the line-item budget and/or the budget justification.

### **Adherence to FOA Formatting, Font, and Page Limitation Requirements**

Applications that fail to adhere to ACF's FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will be adjusted by the removal of page(s) from the application. Pages will be removed before the objective review. The removed page(s) will not be made available to reviewers.

In instances where formatting and font requirements are not adhered to, ACF uses a formula to determine the actual number of pages to be removed. The formula counts the number of characters an applicant uses when following the instructions and using 12-point TNR and compares the resulting number with that of the submitted application. For example, an applicant using TNR, 11-point font, with 1-inch margins all around, and single-spacing, would have an additional 26 lines, or 1500 characters, which is equal to 4/5 of an additional page. Extra pages resulting from this formula will be removed and will not be reviewed. Applications that have more than one scanned page of a document on a single page will have the page(s) removed from the review.

For applicants that submit paper applications, double-sided pages will be counted as two pages. When the maximum allowed number of pages is reached, excess pages will be removed and will not be made available to reviewers.

**NOTE:** Applicants failing to adhere to ACF's FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will receive a letter from ACF notifying them that their application was amended. The letter will be sent after awards have been issued and will specify the reason(s) for removal of page(s).

### **Copies Required**

Applicants must submit one complete copy of the application package electronically. Applicants submitting electronic applications need not provide additional copies of their application package.

Applicants submitting applications in paper format must submit one original and two copies of the complete application, including all Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. The original copy must have original signatures.

### **Signatures**

Applicants submitting electronic applications must follow the registration and application submission instructions provided at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

The original of a paper format application must include original signatures of the

authorized representatives.

### **Accepted Application Format**

With the exception of the required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, all application materials must be formatted so that they are 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins all around.

If possible, applicants are encouraged to include page numbers for each page within the application.

ACF generally does not encourage submission of scanned documents as they tend to have reduced clarity and readability. If documents must be scanned, the font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable. Documents must be scanned page-for-page, meaning that applicants may not scan more than one page of a document onto a single page.

### **PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:**

The Project Description file must include these items:

1. Table of Contents
2. Abstract
3. Objectives and Need for Assistance
4. Approach
5. Organizational Profiles
6. Line Item Budget and Budget Justification

The Appendices file must include these items:

1. Certifications and Assurances
2. Third-party Agreements
3. Organizational Capacity
4. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

Total page limit, inclusive of both files, is 125 pages.

### **ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically unless they have requested and received an exemption that will allow submission in paper format. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* for information about requesting an exemption.

Electronic applications will only be accepted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). **ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile.**

**Each applicant is required to upload ONLY two electronic files, excluding SFs and OMB-approved forms.**

**File One:** Must contain the entire Project Description, and the Budget and Budget Justification (including a line-item budget and a budget narrative).

**File Two:** Must contain all documents required in the Appendices.

### **Adherence to the Two-File Requirement**

No more than two files will be accepted for the review. Applications with additional files will be amended and files will be removed from the review. SFs and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

### **Application Upload Requirements**

ACF strongly recommends that electronic applications be uploaded as Portable Document Files (PDFs). One file must contain the entire Project Description and Budget Justification; the other file must contain all documents required in the Appendices. Details on the content of each of the two files, as well as page limitations, are listed earlier in this section.

To adhere to the two-file requirement, applicants may need to convert and/or merge documents together using a PDF converter software. Many recent versions of Microsoft Office include the ability to save documents to the PDF format without need of additional software. Applicants using the Adobe Professional software suite will be able to merge these documents together. ACF recommends merging documents electronically rather than scanning multiple documents into one document manually, as scanned documents may have reduced clarity and readability.

Applicants must ensure that the version of Adobe Professional they are using is compatible with Grants.gov. To verify Adobe software compatibility please go to Grants.gov and click on “Support” at the top bar menu and select “Adobe Software Compatibility”, which is listed under the topic “Find Answers Online.” The Adobe verification process allows applicants to test their version of the software by opening a test application package. Grant.gov also includes guidance on how to download a supported version of Adobe, as well as troubleshooting instructions if an applicant is unable to open the test application package. There is also a help page for configuring Firefox and Chrome to open PDFs using Adobe software.

The Adobe Software Compatibility page located on Grants.gov also provides guidance for applicants that have received error messages while attempting to save an application package. It also addresses local network and/or computer security settings and the impact this has on use of Adobe software.

For any systems issues experienced with Grants.gov or with SAM.gov, please refer to ACF’s “Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues” document for complete guidance at [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems\\_issue\\_policy\\_final.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf) under "How to Apply for a Grant/Submit an Application."

### **Required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved Forms**

Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, such as the SF-424 application and budget forms and the SF-P/PSL (Project/Performance Site Location), are uploaded separately at Grants.gov. These forms are submitted separately from the Project Description and Appendices files. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for the listing of required Standard Forms, OMB-approved forms, and required assurances and certifications.

### **Naming Application Submission Files**

**Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Limit file names to 50 characters (characters and spaces).** Special characters that are allowed under Grants.gov's naming conventions, and are accommodated by ACF's systems, are listed in the instructions available in the Download Application Package at Grants.gov. Please also see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/submitting-utf-8-special-characters.html>.

### **Use only file formats supported by ACF**

It is critical that applicants submit applications using only the supported file formats listed here. While ACF supports all of the following file formats, **we strongly recommend that the two application submission files (Project Description and Appendices) are uploaded as PDF documents in order to comply with the two file upload limitation.** Documents in file formats that are not supported by ACF will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

### **ACF supports the following file formats:**

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Corel WordPerfect (.wpd)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

### **Do Not Encrypt or Password-Protect the Electronic Application Files**

If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they are encrypted or password protected, the affected file will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. This removal may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.

### **FORMATTING FOR PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS:**

The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format. Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order for a paper format application to be accepted for review. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* later in this section under *Application*

*Submission Options* for more information.

### **Format Requirements for Paper Applications**

All copies of mailed or hand-delivered paper applications must be submitted in a single package. If an applicant is submitting multiple applications under a single FOA, or multiple applications under separate FOAs, each application submission must be packaged separately. The package(s) must be clearly labeled for the specific FOA it addresses by FOA title and by Funding Opportunity Number (FON).

Because each application will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, maps, brochures, or any other items that cannot be processed easily on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Do not bind, clip, staple, or fasten in any way separate sections of the application. Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the federal government for review. **All application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes. All pages in the application submission must be sequentially numbered.**

### **Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications**

See *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper format application submissions.

### **Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications**

**Applicants seeking grant or cooperative agreement awards under this announcement must submit the listed Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications with the application.** All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package posted for this FOA at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

Other versions of required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at Grants.gov <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>.

| <b>Forms / Assurances / Certifications</b> | <b>Submission Requirement</b>  | <b>Notes / Description</b>  |
|--|--|---|
| SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities | If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application. If it is not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant. | If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  | of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. |
| SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non- Construction Programs | Submission is required for all applicants when applying for a non-construction project. Standard Forms must be used. Forms must be submitted by the application due date.                        | Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project. By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.                                  |
| Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)  | Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.                     | Submission of the certification is required for all applicants.  |
| DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.                        | A DUNS number is required of all applicants.<br>To obtain a DUNS number, go to <a href="http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform">http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform</a> .<br>Active registration at the Systems | A DUNS number and SAM registration are eligibility requirements for all applicants.  |

|                                   |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
|                                   | <p>Award Management (SAM) website must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.</p> <p>SAM registration is available at <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http://www.sam.gov</a>.</p>   | <p>See <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> for more information.</p> |
| <p>Mandatory Grant Disclosure</p> | <p>Submission is required for all applicants and recipients, in writing, to the awarding agency and to the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) all information related to violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award.</p> <p>Disclosures must be sent in writing to:</p> <p>The Administration for Children and Families,<br/> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,<br/> Office of Grants Management,<br/> ATTN: Grants Management Specialist,<br/> 330 C Street, SW., Switzer Building,<br/> Corridor 3200,<br/> Washington, DC 20201</p> <p><b><u>And</u></b></p> <p>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,<br/> Office of Inspector General,<br/> ATTN: Mandatory Grant Disclosures, Intake Coordinator,<br/> 330 Independence Avenue, SW.,<br/> Cohen Building,<br/> Room 5527,<br/> Washington, DC 20201</p> | <p>Mandatory Disclosures, 45 CFR 75.113</p>  |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance        | Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date. | Required for all applications.  |
| SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL) | Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date. | Required for all applications. In the SF-P/PSL, applicants may cite their primary location and up to 29 additional performance sites. |

### **Non-Federal Reviewers**

Since ACF will be using non-federal reviewers in the review process, applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget as well as Social Security Numbers, if otherwise required for individuals. The copies may include summary salary information. If applicants are submitting their application electronically, ACF will omit the same specific salary rate information from copies made for use during the review and selection process.

## **The Project Description**

### **The Project Description Overview**

#### **Purpose**

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. It should address the activity for which federal funds are being requested, and should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the program as described in *Section I. Program Description*. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. When appropriate, applicants should cite the evaluation criteria that are relevant to specific components of their project description. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

#### **General Expectations and Instructions**

Applicants should develop project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant-funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

### **General Instructions for Preparing a Full Project Description**

## **Introduction**

Applicants must prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria in *Section V.I. Criteria*. The text options give a broad overview of what the project description should include while the evaluation criteria identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

## **Table of Contents**

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers. The table of contents must be single spaced and will be counted against the total page limitations.

## **Project Summary/Abstract**

Provide a summary of the application's project description. The summary must be clear, accurate, concise, and without reference to other parts of the application. The abstract must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the abstract:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax)
- E-Mail Address
- Web Site Address, if applicable

The project abstract must be single-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-point font, and limited to one page in length. Additional pages will be removed and will not be reviewed.

## **Objectives And Need For Assistance**

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance including the nature and scope of the problem must be demonstrated, and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly and concisely 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 well as data describing the needs of the target population and the proposed service area as needed. When appropriate, a literature review should be used to support the objectives and needs described in this section.

## **Approach**

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed project will be accomplished. Applicants must account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Describe any design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and/or community involvement in the project. Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals that will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

Cite potential obstacles and challenges to accomplishing project goals and explain strategies that will be used to address these challenges.

Applicants must address whether they have a comprehensive child welfare program that receives reports of alleged child abuse and neglect, provides in-home services, and provides out-of-home care for children, when necessary, in foster homes/child care institutions.

Applicants must assess their current program and describe in their applications the types of child welfare services provided, the number of children and families being served, and how operating a title IV-E program would change or expand those services. Applicants must address the types of services they currently offer and determine whether the scope of services will need to expand in order to meet title IV-E requirements. Applicants must describe existing code, policies, procedures, standard operating procedures, and the level of change, if any, needed to meet title IV-E requirements. If another entity is responsible for parts of the child welfare program, applicants must provide a description and any anticipated plans to change that structure.

Using available information, the applicant must provide an estimate of the number of children in foster care who would likely be served under a title IV-E program. This number may include both children currently in out-of-home placement under the jurisdiction of the tribe and tribal court and tribal children currently in the care of the state whom the tribe anticipates serving directly once its title IV-E program is approved. Applicants must also describe their current geographic service area, the service area in which the proposed title IV-E program would operate, and the date by which the applicants expect to submit a title IV-E plan.

Applicants must describe their court system, including any levels of appeal. If the applicant does not have its own judiciary, describe how the applicant anticipates addressing the IV-E requirements that require the judicial findings and oversight.

Applicants must describe current provisions of any state-tribe title IV-E agreements, the roles of the state and tribe under such agreements, how those roles are anticipated to change if the tribe begins operation of its own title IV-E program, and how the experience of participating in that agreement has informed its planned use of the development grant.

If applicants represent a consortium of partner agencies, the applicants must identify the partners and describe their background and experience and how they would support the planning and implementation of the proposed project.

In preparing development grant proposals, applicants must consider current capacity in key areas of agency infrastructure or interagency coordination needed to operate a title IV-E program and whether changes or improvements will be needed before an approvable title IV-E plan can be submitted. In their proposals, applicants must make clear whether and

how development grant funds will be used to address areas, such as the following:

- Case planning and case review systems;
- Foster care licensing and standards for tribal foster homes and child care facilities;
- Quality assurance systems;
- Court structure and procedures;
- Data collection systems;
- Cost allocation methodology development;
- Financial controls and financial management processes;
- Training of child welfare staff, prospective foster and adoptive parents, and other stakeholders (e.g., attorneys, court-appointed special advocates [CASAs], and court staff); and
- Coordination with other related tribal or state agencies (e.g., child support enforcement, schools, Medicaid, family assistance).

In considering approaches to data collection, applicants are encouraged to review IM ACYF-CB-IM-09-02, which addresses automation requirements and options for tribes operating a title IV-E program pursuant to section 479B of the Act, and PI ACYF-CB-PI-09-11, which provides guidance on Advance Planning Document regulations that govern the types of information technology and services that are eligible for federal financial participation under title IV-E, as well as procedures that need to be followed in order to receive such funding. (See [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/laws\\_policies/index.htm#policy](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/laws_policies/index.htm#policy).)

Applicants are free to identify additional areas they wish to address through the development grant on the condition that they provide a justification for how such use of grant funds would contribute to the applicant's ability to develop and submit an approvable title IV-E plan. Overall, applicants' proposals must demonstrate that they have assessed their current child welfare program and capacities; have a clear understanding of the title IV-E program and the steps they will need to take to prepare to directly operate a title IV-E program; and have a well-thought-out plan for using development grant funds to address identified areas needing to be strengthened. The applicant must show that successful completion of the activities proposed to be completed under the grant will lead to the applicant being able to submit an approvable title IV-E plan within 24 months of grant receipt.

### ***Tribal Resolution***

Applicants must provide a tribal resolution stating their intent to implement a title IV-E program and that there is a match once the IV-E plan is implemented that the tribe will need to address.

### **Project Timeline and Milestones**

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 to be served and the number of activities accomplished. Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. For example, each project task could be assigned to a row in the first column of a grid. Then, a unit of time could

be assigned to each subsequent column, beginning with the first unit (i.e., week, month, quarter) of the project and ending with the last. Shading, arrows, or other markings could be used across the applicable grid boxes or cells, representing units of time, to indicate the approximate duration and/or frequency of each task and its start and end dates within the project period.

When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

### **Geographic Location**

Describe the precise location of the project and boundaries of the area to be served by the proposed project.

### **Organizational Capacity**

Provide the following information on the applicant organization and, if applicable, on any cooperating partners:

- Organizational charts;
- Resumes (no more than two single-spaced pages in length);
- Evidence that the applicant organization, and any partnering organizations, have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of programs similar to that offered under this announcement;
- Evidence that each participating organization, including partners and/or subcontractors, possess the organizational capability to fulfill their role(s) and function(s) effectively;
- Job descriptions for each vacant key position.

### **Dissemination Plan**

Applicants must propose a plan to disseminate reports, products, and/or grant project outputs so that project information is provided to key target audiences. Dissemination plans must include:

- Dissemination goals and objectives;
- Strategies to identify and engage with target audiences;
- Allocation of sufficient staff time and budget for dissemination purposes;
- A preliminary plan to evaluate the extent to which target audiences have received project information and have used it as intended.

### **Third-Party Agreements**

Third-party agreements include Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Letters of Commitment. General letters of support are **not** considered to be third-party agreements. Third-party agreements must clearly describe the project activities and support to which the third party is committing. Third-party agreements must be signed by the person in the third-party organization with the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their organization.

Provide written and signed agreements between grantees and subgrantees, or subcontractors, or other cooperating entities. These agreements must detail the scope of work to be performed, work schedules, remuneration, and other terms and conditions that structure or define the relationship.

Collaboration/consortia applicants must provide letters of commitment or MOU identifying the primary applicant that is responsible for administering the grant. The primary applicant must provide documentation of the commitments made by partnering organizations and describe in detail their roles and responsibilities as partners in the collaboration/consortia.

### **Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds**

Provide a plan describing how oversight of federal funds will be ensured and how grant activities and partner(s) will adhere to applicable federal and programmatic regulations. Applicants must identify staff that will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities, staff, and partner(s). Applicants must describe procedures and policies used to oversee staff and/or partners/contractors.

Describe organizational records systems that relate financial data to performance data by identifying the source and application of federal funds so that they demonstrate effective control over and accountability for funds, compare outlays with budget amounts, and provide accounting records supported by source documentation.

### **The Project Budget and Budget Justification**

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is entered on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C, according to the directions provided with the SFs. The budget justification consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. Applicants must indicate the method they are selecting for their indirect cost rate. See Indirect Charges for further information.

Project budget calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching or cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance). See the table in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* listing the appropriate budget forms to use in this application.

***Special Note:*** *The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, (Division E, Title VII, General Provisions – Government-Wide), limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this announcement may not be used to pay the salary, or any percentage of salary, to an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary of the "Rates of Pay for the Executive Schedule" is \$185,100. This amount reflects an individual's base salary exclusive*

*of fringe benefits and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties of the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards and subcontracts under an ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

Provide a budget using the 424A and/or the 424C, as applicable, for the proposed project that is being fully funded (the budget period and the project period are the same). Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

Applicants for development grants must submit a detailed line-item budget (not to exceed a total of \$300,000) and a detailed budget justification explaining how grant funds would be spent over a period of up to 24 months from issuance. The budget justification must be in narrative form.

Applicants must budget for travel for a minimum of three, but not more than five, staff members to attend two grantees meetings over the course of the budget period. These 2-day meetings may be held in Washington, DC. Grantees and other tribal leaders are expected to participate in peer-to-peer sharing of implementation activities.

## **General**

Use the following guidelines for preparing the budget and budget justification. Both federal and non-federal resources (when required) shall be detailed and justified in the budget and budget narrative justification. "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant funds for which you are applying. "Non-federal resources" are all other non-ACF 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. The budget justification should be in a narrative form.

## **Personnel**

**Description:** Costs of employee salaries and wages.

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

## **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 benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes, retirement insurance, and taxes.

### **Travel**

**Description:** Costs of out-of-state or overnight project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. Do not include in-state travel or 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 to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key project staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops/conferences/grantee orientations should be detailed in the budget.

### **Equipment**

**Description:** "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year per unit and an acquisition cost that 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 applicant organization's regular written accounting practices.)

**Justification:** For each type of equipment requested applicants must provide a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use of the equipment in the project; as well as a plan for the use, and/or disposal of, the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment 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 the Equipment category. This includes office and other consumable supplies with a per-unit cost of less than \$5,000.

**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. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contracts with secondary recipient organizations (with budget detail), including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. This area is not for individual consultants.

**Justification:** Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. Recipients and subrecipients are required to use 45 CFR 75.328 procedures and must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold fixed by 41 U.S.C. § 134, as amended by 2 CFR Part 200.88, and currently set at \$150,000. Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc., available to ACF.

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 contractor/sub-contractor, by agency title, along with the same supporting information referred to in these instructions. If the applicant plans to select the contractors/sub-contractors post-award and a detailed budget is not available at the time of application, the applicant must provide information on the nature of the work to be delegated, the estimated costs, and the process for selecting the delegate agency.

### **Other**

**Description:** Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: consultant costs, local travel; insurance; food (when allowable); medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional services costs (including audit charges); 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.

### **Indirect Charges**

**Description:** Total amount of indirect costs. This category has one of two methods that an applicant can select. An applicant may only select one.

- 1) The applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant federal agency.

Note: An applicant must enclose a copy of the current approved rate agreement. If the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

- 2) Per 45 CFR § 75.414(f) Indirect (F&A) costs, “any non-Federal entity [i.e., applicant] that has never received a negotiated indirect costs rate, ... may elect to charge

a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. As described in § 75.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time.”

**Justification:** This method only applies to applicants that have never received an approved negotiated indirect cost rate from HHS or another cognizant federal agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposal may request the 10 percent de minimis. When the applicant chooses this method, costs included in the indirect cost pool must not be charged as direct costs to the grant.

### **Commitment of Non-Federal Resources**

Description: Amounts of non-federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424. The match calculation applies to the total project cost (including match) and not just to the federal share.

Justification: If an applicant is relying on match from a third party, then a firm commitment of these resources (letter or other documentation) is required with the application. Detailed budget information must be provided for every funding source identified in Block 18 of the SF-424.

**Note:** Applicants are required to fully identify and document in their applications the specific costs or contributions they propose in order to meet a matching or cost-sharing requirement. Applicants are also required to provide documentation in their applications on the sources of funding or contribution(s) and, for in-kind contributions, a justification of how the stated valuation was determined.

### **Paperwork Reduction Disclaimer**

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the Project Description and Budget/Budget Justification is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection information. The Project Description and Budget/Budget Justification information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, expiration date is 01/31/2019. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

## **Application Submission Options**

### **Electronic Submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)**

Additional guidance on the submission of electronic applications can be found at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

After a grant application package is submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), a confirmation screen will appear on the applicant’s computer screen. This screen confirms that an

application has been submitted an application to Grants.gov. This page also contains a tracking number to identify the status of the application submission in the Track My Application feature.

When the application has completed the Grants.gov submission process, Grants.gov will send email messages to advise the applicant of the progress of the application through its system. **Over the next two business days, an applicant should receive two emails from Grants.gov:**

- **Submission Receipt Email:** Confirms successful receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system and indicates the application's status as "Received."
- **Submission Validation –OR– Rejection with Errors Email:** Indicates that the application was either successfully validated or rejected by Grants.gov. Either the application has been successfully validated by the system prior to transmission to the grantor agency or the application has been rejected due to errors.

#### **Application Validation at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)**

After an application has been successfully submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), it still must pass a series of validation checks. After an application is submitted, Grants.gov generates a submission receipt via email and also sets the application status to "Received." This receipt verifies that the application has been successfully delivered to the Grants.gov system.

Next, Grants.gov verifies the submission is valid by ensuring it does not contain viruses, the opportunity is still open, and the applicant login and applicant DUNS number match. If the submission is valid, Grants.gov generates a submission validation receipt via email and sets the application status to "Validated."

If the application is not validated, the application status is set to "Rejected." The system sends a rejection email notification to the applicant and the applicant must re-submit the application package. See "What to Expect After Submitting" at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) for more information.

Each time an application is re-submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), the applicant will receive a new **Submission Receipt Email**. Only applications with on-time date and time stamps in Submission Receipt Email, and that pass validation, will be transmitted to ACF. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check are not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

**NOTE:** The Grants.gov validation check can affect whether the application is accepted for review. If an application fails the Grants.gov validation check and is not resubmitted by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review.

Similarly, if an applicant resubmits their application to Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, and the resubmitted application does not pass the validation check, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review.

## Grants.gov Support Center

- If applicants encounter any technical difficulties in using [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), contact the Grants.gov Support Center at: 1-800-518-4726, or by email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov), to report the problem and obtain assistance. Hours of Operation: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Grants.gov Support Center is closed on federal holidays.
- Applicants should always retain Grants.gov Support Center service ticket number(s) as they may be needed for future reference.
- **Contact with the Grants.gov Support Center prior to the listed application due date and time does not ensure acceptance of an application. If difficulties are encountered, the Grants Management Officer listed in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)* will determine whether the submission issues are due to Grants.gov system errors or user error.**

## Issues with Federal Systems

For any systems issues experienced with Grants.gov or SAM.gov, please refer to ACF's "Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues" document for complete guidance

at [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems\\_issue\\_policy\\_final.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf).

## Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission

ACF recognizes that some applicants may have limited or no Internet access, and/or limited computer capacity, which may prohibit them from uploading large files at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). To accommodate such applicants, ACF offers an exemption from required electronic submission. The exemption will allow applicants to submit hard copy, paper applications by hand-delivery, applicant courier, overnight/express mail couriers, or by other representatives of the applicant.

To receive an exemption from required electronic application submission, applicants must submit a written request to ACF that must state that the applicant qualifies for the exemption for one of the two following reasons:

- Lack of Internet access or Internet connection, or
- Limited computer capacity that prevents the uploading of large documents (files) at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

Applicants may request and receive the exemption from required electronic application submission by either:

- Submitting an email request to [electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov), or
- Sending a written request to the Office of Grants Management Contact listed in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)* in this announcement.

Requests for exemption from required electronic application submission will be acknowledged with an approval or disapproval.

Requests that do not state one of the two listed reasons will not be approved.

An exemption is applicable to all applications submitted by the applicant organization during the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) in which it is received. Applicants need only request an exemption once in a FFY. Applicants must request a new exemption from required electronic submission for any succeeding FFY.

**Please Note:** [electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov) may only be used to request an exemption from required electronic submission. All other inquiries must be directed to the appropriate agency contact listed in *Section VII.* of this announcement. Queries or requests submitted to this email address for any reason other than a request for an exemption from electronic application submission will not be acknowledged or answered.

All exemption requests must include the following information:

- Funding Opportunity Announcement Title,
- Funding Opportunity Number (FON),
- The listed Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number,
- Name of Applicant Organization and DUNS Number,
- AOR name and contact information,
- Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving the application (i.e., the Point of Contact), and
- The reason for which the applicant is requesting an exemption from electronic application submission. The request for exemption must state one of the following two reasons: 1) lack of Internet access or Internet connection; or 2) lack of computer capacity that prevents uploading large documents (files) to the Internet.

**Exemption requests must be received by ACF no later than two weeks before the application due date**, that is, 14 calendar days prior to the application due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. If the fourteenth calendar day falls on a weekend or federal holiday, the due date for receipt of an exemption request will move to the next federal business day that follows the weekend or federal holiday.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

#### **Paper Format Application Submission**

**An exemption is required for the submission of paper applications. See the preceding section on "Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission."**

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.7.* of this announcement for address information for paper format application submissions. Applications submitted in paper format must be received by 4:30 p.m, ET, on the due date.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times* in this announcement.

### **IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)**

All applicants must have a DUNS Number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) and an active registration with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov/SAM, <https://www.sam.gov>).

Obtaining a DUNS Number may take 1 to 2 days.

All applicants are required to maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If a grant is awarded, registration at SAM must be active throughout the life of the award.

**Plan ahead. Allow at least 10 business days after you submit your registration for it to become active in SAM and at least an additional 24 hours before that registration information is available in other government systems, i.e. Grants.gov.**

This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application through Grants.gov or prevent the award of a grant. Applicants should maintain documentation (with dates) of your efforts to register for, or renew a registration, at SAM. User Guides are available under the “Help” tab at <https://www.sam.gov>.

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal grant funds from any HHS Agency, or receive subawards directly from recipients of those grant funds to:

- Be registered in the SAM prior to submitting an application or plan;
- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV; and
- Provide its active DUNS number in each application or plan it submits to the

OPDIV.

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and
- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

#### **IV.4. Submission Dates and Times**

##### **Due Dates for Applications**

Due Date for Applications: **07/28/2016**

##### **Due Date for Applications:**

For this standing FOA, the application due dates are as follows:

- FY 2016: 07/28/2016
- FY 2017: 04/28/2017
- FY 2018: 04/30/2018

Grants.gov will open and receive applications at least 90 days prior to the due dates for each fiscal year.

##### **Explanation of Due Dates**

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

##### **Electronic Applications**

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.

Instructions for electronic submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) are available at: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

Applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) at any time during the open application period prior to the due date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged.

### **Mailed Paper Format Applications**

The deadline for receipt of mailed, paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

### **Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications**

Applications that are hand-delivered by applicants, applicant couriers, by overnight/express mail couriers, or other representatives of the applicant must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview* and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays). Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

### **No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:**

- Applications submitted electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.
- Paper format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

### **Emergency Extensions**

ACF may extend an application due date when circumstances make it impossible for an applicant to submit their applications on time. Only events such as documented natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or a verifiable widespread disruption of electrical service, or mail service, will be considered. The determination to extend or waive the due date, and/or receipt time, requirements in an emergency situation rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)*.

### **Acknowledgement from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)**

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Applicants should refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which serves as the official record of application's submission. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation check.

Applicants will also receive an email acknowledging that the received application is in the **Grants.gov validation process**, after which a third email is sent with the information that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, the series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged by ACF.

See "What to Expect After Submitting" at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) for more information.

### **Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:**

Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

### **Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper format application:**

ACF will not provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

## **IV.5. Intergovernmental Review**

This program is not subject to Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," or 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." No action is required of applicants under this announcement with regard to E.O. 12372.

## **IV.6. Funding Restrictions**

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions are unallowable. Fund raising costs for the purposes of meeting the Federal program objectives are allowable with prior written approval from the Federal awarding agency. (45 CFR §75.442)

Proposal costs are the costs of preparing bids, proposals, or applications on potential Federal and non-Federal awards or projects, including the development of data necessary to support the non-Federal entity's bids or proposals. Proposal costs of the current accounting period of both successful and unsuccessful bids and proposals normally should be treated as indirect (F&A) costs and allocated currently to all activities of the

non-Federal entity. No proposal costs of past accounting periods will be allocable to the current period. (45 CFR §75.460)

Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

Purchase of real property is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

If ACF awards the Indian tribe a grant, the Indian tribe must submit a title IV-E plan for direct funding to ACF no later than the end of the 24th month after the grant is awarded, and, upon ACF approval of the plan, is expected to implement a title IV-E program. If the Indian tribe does not submit a title IV-E plan within that time frame, it must repay the total grant amount. Given the statutory requirement to repay the grant if a title IV-E plan is not submitted within 24 months of grant receipt, it is important that a tribe apply for this grant opportunity only when it has already made the decision to implement a title IV-E program. ACF is authorized to waive the requirement to repay the grant if it is determined that failure to submit a title IV-E plan during the 24-month period was beyond the control of the Indian tribe (section 476(c)(2)(B)).

Title IV-E funds may not be used for costs of social services such as those that provide counseling or treatment to ameliorate or remedy personal problem, behaviors, or home conditions for a child, the child's family, or the child's foster family.

#### **IV.7. Other Submission Requirements**

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. Also see *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission.*

##### **Submission By Mail**

CB Operations Center  
c/o LCG, Inc.  
1400 Key Boulevard  
Suite 900  
Arlington, VA 22209

##### **Hand Delivery**

CB Operations Center  
c/o LCG, Inc.  
1400 Key Boulevard  
Suite 900  
Arlington, VA 22209

##### **Electronic Submission**

See *Section IV.2.* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov>.

For all submissions, see *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.*

## V. Application Review Information

### V.1. Criteria

**Please note:** Reviewers will not access, or review, any materials that are not part of the application documents. This includes information accessible on websites via hyperlinks that are referenced, or embedded, in the application. Though an application may include web links, or embedded hyperlinks, reviewers will not review this information as it is not considered to be part of the application documents. Nor will the information on websites be taken into consideration in scoring of evaluation criteria presented in this section. Reviewers will evaluate and score an application based on the documents that are presented in the application and **will not** refer to, or access, external links during the objective review.

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in this section. The corresponding point values indicate the relative importance placed on each review criterion. Points will be allocated based on the extent to which the application proposal addresses each of the criteria listed. Applicants should address these criteria in their application materials, particularly in the project description and budget justification, as they are the basis upon which competing applications will be judged during the objective review. The required elements of the project description and budget justification may be found in *Section IV.2* of this announcement.

#### Objectives and Need for Assistance

Maximum Points:20

In reviewing the objectives and need for assistance, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The application clearly demonstrates an understanding of the requirements of the title IV-E program and this FOA and makes clear how the proposed project will enable the applicant to meet those requirements.
2. The application provides a description of the child welfare services program currently operated by the tribe, including the types of services provided (e.g., child protective services, in-home services, foster care services, adoption services) and the scope of the existing program. The application describes services that would need to be developed or if another entity provides any services. The application describes existing policies, procedures, standard operating procedures, code, and the level of change, if needed, to meet title IV-E requirements.
3. The applicant describes its tribal court system. If the applicant does not have its own judicial system, the applicant describes how it anticipates addressing the title IV-E requirements for specific judicial findings and oversight.
4. If applicable, if another entity is responsible for parts of the child welfare program, the application provides a description and any anticipated plans to change that structure. If there is an existing agreement with the state, the application describes the services that the state is providing and the state's anticipated role, if any, once the tribe has implemented a title IV-E program. The applicant must address how well the arrangement is working, if there have been any challenges, and how those challenges have been addressed.

5. The application presents a clear vision of the how the title IV-E program will benefit children and families involved in the tribe's child welfare program and provides estimates of the number of children likely to benefit from title IV-E foster care, adoption assistance, and/or guardianship assistance payments. The estimate can be based on existing numbers of children in out-of-home placements served by the tribe or the state.
6. The application includes a clear statement of the goals (end results of an effective project) and objectives (measurable steps for reaching these goals) for the proposed title IV-E plan development grant. These goals and objectives will effectively lead to the development or refinement of systems, policies, and procedures that must be in place for the tribe to submit an approvable title IV-E plan.
7. The application clearly demonstrates that the applicant has a thorough understanding of the areas it must address (e.g., case review systems, judicial findings, foster parent standards, data collection systems) to be prepared to submit a title IV-E plan and implement a title IV-E program. The applicant addresses its current capacity in each of these areas and makes clear why it proposes to use grant funds to address these areas.
8. The application provides evidence that the proposed project, if successfully implemented, would likely lead to the submission of an approvable title IV-E plan and contribute to the knowledge base on building tribal capacity to implement a title IV-E program.
9. The application identifies and adequately describes the population or geographic service area or areas in which the tribe proposes to operate the title IV-E program, including, if applicable, the state boundaries in which the service areas are contained within or overlap.

#### Approach

Maximum Points:50

In reviewing the approach, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The applicant clearly identifies and describes the areas it intends to address through the grant.
2. For each area in which the applicant proposes to use grant funds, the application describes a clear plan to meet the applicant's goals, including major tasks to be achieved and proposed timelines for completing these tasks.
3. The timeline for implementing the proposed project, including major milestones and target dates, is comprehensive and reasonable. The proposed project would lead to the applicant being able to develop and submit an approvable title IV-E plan within 2 years of grant award.
4. The application addresses any existing title IV-E agreements with states or agreements the tribe is in the process of negotiating with a state. If applicable, the proposal provides a brief description of what is covered by those title IV-E agreements and which services and title IV-E procedures are currently performed by the state and which services and procedures are currently performed by the tribe. The applicant indicates whether these agreements are intended to remain in effect while the tribe operates its own title IV-E plan directly or whether such agreements will be renegotiated (modified) or terminated.

5. The application describes the roles and responsibilities of any collaborating agencies in carrying out activities under the grant and includes letters of commitment.
6. The application demonstrates that the applicant has a thorough understanding of the challenges in carrying out proposed grant activities and in developing an approvable title IV-E plan within 2 years. The applicant provides a sound plan for overcoming these challenges.
7. The applicant describes how the proposed project is likely to lead to the successful development of an approvable title IV-E plan and would enhance the capacity of the applicant to provide child welfare services to the target population.
8. The specific activities to be conducted under the proposed project are appropriate and are described in detail.

### Organizational Profiles

Maximum Points:20

In reviewing the organizational profiles, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The applicant organization and its staff have sufficient experience to successfully complete the proposed project; the applicant's history and relationship with the target community would assist in the effective implementation of the proposed project; the applicant has experience in developing collaborative working agreements with other relevant agencies; the applicant organization's capabilities and experience relative to this project, including experience with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of similar projects, would enable it to implement the proposed project effectively; and the applicant addresses any experience management and/or staff have with title IV-E.
2. If the applicant represents a consortium of partner agencies, the application explains how each agency's background and experience would support the planning and implementation of the proposed project. The application includes letters of commitment from each partner authorizing the applicant to apply on behalf of the consortium and agreeing to participate if the proposal is funded.
3. The proposed project director and key project staff possess sufficient relevant knowledge, experience, and capabilities to effectively implement and manage a project of this size, scope, and complexity. The role, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors, and/or partners, are clearly defined and appropriate to the successful implementation of the proposed project. Resumes or job descriptions are attached for key personnel.
4. There is a sound management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality. The plan clearly defines the role and responsibilities of the lead agency. The plan clearly describes the effective management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors, and consultants (if appropriate). There would be a mutually beneficial relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated, or underway with federal assistance by the applicant.
5. The applicant demonstrates via a tribal resolution that its intent is to implement a

title IV-E program and acknowledges that there is a requirement for matching funds once the IV-E plan is implemented that the tribe will need to address.

## Budget and Budget Justification

Maximum Points: 10

In reviewing the budget and budget justification, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The applicant provides a detailed line-item budget (not to exceed a total of \$300,000) and a detailed budget justification (in narrative form) clearly explaining how grant funds would be spent over a period of up to 24 months from issuance.
2. The costs of the proposed project are reasonable and programmatically justified in view of the target population and community, the activities to be conducted, and the expected results and benefits.
3. The applicant's fiscal controls and accounting procedures would ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement, and accurate accounting of funds received under this funding opportunity announcement.

## V.2. Review and Selection Process

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant or sub-recipient that does not have a DUNS number ([www.dbn.com](http://www.dbn.com)) and an active registration at SAM ([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)). See *Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)*.

### Initial ACF Screening

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets any of the disqualification factors described in *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Disqualified applications are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

### Objective Review and Results

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using only the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this announcement. Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. Scores and rankings are only one element used in the award decision-making process.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would

indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested. ACF reserves the right to consider preferences to fund organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations, including those populations located in pockets of poverty. ACF will also consider the geographic distribution of federal funds in its award decisions.

### **Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants**

As required by 2 CFR 200 of the Uniform Guidance, effective January 1, 2016, ACF is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), <https://www.fapiis.gov/>, before making any award in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000) over the period of performance. An applicant may review and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency has previously entered into FAPIIS. ACF will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR § 200.205 Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants [http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=se2.1.200\\_1205&rgn=div8](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=se2.1.200_1205&rgn=div8).

Please refer to *Section IV.2.* of this announcement for information on non-federal reviewers in the review process.

### **Approved but Unfunded Applications**

Applications recommended for approval that were not funded under the competition because of the lack of available funds may be held over by ACF and reconsidered in a subsequent review cycle if a future competition under the program area is planned. These applications will be held over for a period of up to one year and will be re-competed for funding with all other competing applications in the next available review cycle. For those applications determined as approved but unfunded, notice will be given of the determination by email.

## **V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates**

Announcement of awards and the disposition of applications will be provided to applicants at a later date. ACF staff cannot respond to requests for information regarding funding decisions prior to the official applicant notification.

## **VI. Federal Award Administration Information**

### **VI.1. Federal Award Notices**

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Notice of Award (NoA) that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NoA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail,

email, or by GrantSolutions.gov or the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES), whichever is relevant. Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head. Any other correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk and may be reimbursed only to the extent that they are considered allowable as approved pre-award costs. Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.6. Funding Restrictions*.

## **VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Unless otherwise noted in this section, administrative and national policy requirements that are applicable to discretionary grants are available at:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements>.

## **VI.3. Reporting**

Recipients under this FOA will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. Information on reporting requirements is available on the ACF website at

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-2>.

For planning purposes, the frequency of required reporting for awards made under this announcement are as follows:

|                               |               |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Performance Progress Reports: | Semi-Annually |
| Financial Reports:            | Semi-Annually |

## **VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)**

### **Program Office Contact**

Eileen West

Children's Bureau

CB Operations Center

c/o LCG, Inc.

1400 Key Boulevard, Suite 900

Arlington, VA 22209

Phone: (888) 203-6161

Email: [CB@grantreview.org](mailto:CB@grantreview.org)

## **Office of Grants Management Contact**

Bridget Shea Westfall

Administration of Children and Families

Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants

CB Operations Center

c/o LCG, Inc.

1400 Key Boulevard, Suite 900

Arlington, VA 22209

Phone: (888) 203-6161

Email: [CB@grantreview.org](mailto:CB@grantreview.org)

## **Federal Relay Service:**

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) at [www.gsa.gov/fedrelay](http://www.gsa.gov/fedrelay).

## **VIII. Other Information**

### **Reference Websites**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) <http://www.hhs.gov/>.

HHS Grants Forecast <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/hhsgrantsforecast/index.cfm>.

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>.

ACF Grants Homepage <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants>.

ACF Funding Opportunities <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/foa/>.

ACF "How to Apply for a Grant" <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/how-to-apply-for-grants>.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) <https://www.cfda.gov/>.

For submission of a paper format application, all required Standard Forms (SF), assurances, and certifications are available on the ACF Grants-Forms page through <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>.

Standard grant forms are available at the [Grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) Forms Repository webpage at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>.

For information regarding accessibility issues, visit the Grants.gov Accessibility Compliance Page at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/accessibility-compliance.html>

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) <http://www.ecfr.gov/>.

The *Federal Register* <https://www.federalregister.gov/>.

United States Code (U.S.C.) <http://uscode.house.gov/>.

### Application Checklist

Applicants may use the checklist below as a guide when preparing your application package.

| What to Submit  | Where Found  | When to Submit   |
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| DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration. | Referenced in <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> in the announcement.<br><br>To obtain a DUNS number, go to <a href="http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform">http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform</a> .<br><br>To register at SAM, go to <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http://www.sam.gov</a> .  | A DUNS number and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants.<br><br>Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period. |
| SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance   | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> .<br><br>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Mandatory."<br><br>Also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family." | Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .  |

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| The Project Description            | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> . |
| Table of Contents                  | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submit with the application by the due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .   |
| Project Summary/Abstract           | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> . The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page. | Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> . |
| Objectives and Need for Assistance | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submission due by the application due date found in <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4</i> .                                       |
| Approach                           | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> . |
| Project Timeline and Milestones    | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submission due by the application due date found in <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4</i> .                                       |
| Geographic Location                | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submission due by the application due date found in <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4</i> .                                       |

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| Organizational Capacity                                      | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submission due by the application due date found in <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4</i> .  |
| Resumes  | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submission due by the application due date found in <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4</i> .  |
| Job Descriptions   | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submission due by the application due date found in <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4</i> .  |
| Dissemination Plan   | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submission due by the application due date found in <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4</i> .  |
| Third-Party Agreements (also, MOUs and Consortia Agreements) | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Project Description</i> .  | If available, submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4</i> .<br>If not available at the time of application submission, due by the time of award. |
| Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds                    | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submission due by the application due date found in <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4</i> .  |
| The Project Budget and Budget Justification                  | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i> of the announcement. | Submission is required in addition to submission of SF-424A or SF-424C. It must be submitted with the application  |

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|   |  | <p>package by the due date in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>                             |
| <p>SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non- Construction Programs</p> | <p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p> <p>These forms are <b>required</b> for applications under this FOA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects that include only non-construction activities must submit the SF-424A and SF-424B, along with the SF-424 and SF-P/PSL.</li> </ul> | <p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p> |
| <p>Commitment of Non-Federal Resources</p>  | <p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification.</i></p>   | <p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>    |

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| <p>Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (IDR)</p>                          | <p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i>.<br/>The IDR must be submitted with the application package.</p>   | <p>If the IDR is available by the application due date, it must be submitted with the application package. If it is not available by the application due date, listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i>, it may be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p> |
| <p>Mandatory Grant Disclosure</p>                                  | <p>Requirement, submission instructions, and mailing addresses are found in the "Mandatory Grant Disclosure" entry in the table in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances and Certifications</i>.</p>   | <p>Concurrent submission to the Administration for Children and Families and to the Office of the Inspector General is required.</p>   |
| <p>SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)</p>          | <p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.<br/><br/>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Mandatory."<br/><br/>Also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p> | <p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>  |
| <p>Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)</p> | <p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p>  | <p>Submission is due with the application package or prior to the award of a grant.</p>  |

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|   | <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov page under the "Application Package" tab in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>   |  |
| <p>SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities</p> | <p>"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>For electronic application submission, this form is available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Optional."</p> <p>The form is available in the electronic application kit at Grants.gov and at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p> <p>If applicable, submission of this form is required if any funds have been paid, or will be paid, to any person for influencing, or attempting to influence, an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an</p> | <p>If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application. If it not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p> |

employee of a member of  
Congress in connection  
with this commitment providing  
for the United States to insure or  
guarantee a loan.