

State of Connecticut Department of Social Services Procurement Notice
Community Services Block Grant/Human Infrastructure 08/11/14
Request for Application

The State of Connecticut Department of Social Services is issuing **Addendum 2** to the **Community Services Block Grant/Human Infrastructure 08/11/14 Request for Application**.

Addendum 2 contains an information hyperlink in Section II. Program Information, G. Organizational Standards and questions submitted by interested parties and the official responses. These responses shall amend or clarify the requirements of the RFA.

In the event that a response does not sufficiently clarify a question submitted, please forward that question and response to crystal.redding@ct.gov by **September 30, 2014, 2:00 pm**.

In the event of an inconsistency between information provided in the RFP and information in these responses, the information in these responses shall control.

A. Section II. Program Information, G. Organizational Standards

March 24, 2014, HHS issued a draft informational memorandum concerning a comprehensive set of organizational standards, developed by the CSBG Organizational Standards COE. This has been established to ensure that all CSBG eligible entities have the capacity to provide high-quality services to low-income individuals and communities. The COE-developed organizational standards are organized into three (3) thematic groups: maximum feasible participation, vision and direction and operations and accountability. They are tailored for use by both private and public eligible entities. Although not yet finalized, once issued, CAAs will be expected to comply with these standards. **The following hyperlink is provided as an informational courtesy, [Information Memorandum Community Services Block Grant](#).**

B. Questions and Responses

1. **Question:**

Page 1 – currently DSS has budget \$1,132,199.00 & Page 4-5 Total funding available \$438,904 + \$342,825 = \$781,729 why/what's the difference?

Response:

The math on page 4-5 reflects one-time funding of CSBG. The chart on Page 4 has been revised as follows:

Funding Source			
Program Type	CSBG	CSBG-one time funding	HSI
	Up to \$362,258.00 in federal funds for Federal Fiscal Year 2015, pending availability [1].	Up to \$362,258.00 in federal funds for Federal Fiscal Year 2015, pending availability [1]. (Note: allocation can be used for training and technical assistance.	Up to \$407,682.00 for Federal Fiscal Year 2015, pending availability of funds. [2]
Total Funding Available			
Number of Contracts	One year extensions exercised at the discretion of the Department		
Contract period	January 1, 2015 to September 30, 2015		

2. **Question:**

Would it be acceptable for an existing organization to carve out a sub-entity to serve as the CAA, and to establish the requisite tripartite board to govern solely that sub-entity – rather than the organization in its entirety?

Response:

Tripartite Board Requirements are prescribed by regulation. Pursuant to the CSBG Act, **SEC. 676B. TRIPARTITE BOARDS**

“(a) PRIVATE NONPROFIT ENTITIES.—

“(1) BOARD.—In order for a private, nonprofit entity to be considered to be an eligible entity for purposes of section 673(1), the entity shall administer the community services block grant program through a tripartite board described in paragraph (2) that fully participates in the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program to serve low-income communities.

“(2) SELECTION AND COMPOSITION OF BOARD.—The members of the board referred to in paragraph (1) shall be selected by the entity and the board shall be composed so as to assure that—

“(A) 1/3 of the members of the board are elected public officials, holding office on the date of selection, or their representatives, except that if the number of such elected officials reasonably available and willing to serve on the board is less than 1/3 of the membership of the board, membership on the board of appointive public officials or their representatives may be counted in meeting such 1/3 requirement;

“(B)(i) not fewer than 1/3 of the members are persons chosen in accordance with democratic selection procedures adequate to assure that these members are representative of low-income individuals and families in the neighborhood served; and

“(ii) each representative of low-income individuals and families selected to represent a specific neighborhood within a community under clause (i) resides in the neighborhood represented by the member; and

“(C) the remainder of the members are officials or members of business, industry, labor, religious, law enforcement, education, or other major groups and interests in the community served.

“(b) PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS.—In order for a public organization to be considered to be an eligible entity for purposes of section 673(1), the entity shall administer the community services block grant program through—

“(1) a tripartite board, which shall have members selected by the organization and shall be composed so as to assure that not fewer than 1/3 of the members are persons chosen in accordance with democratic selection procedures adequate to assure that these members—

“(A) are representative of low-income individuals and families in the neighborhood served;

“(B) reside in the neighborhood served; and

“(C) are able to participate actively in the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs funded under this subtitle; or

“(2) another mechanism specified by the State to assure decision making and participation by low-income individuals in the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs funded under this subtitle.

3. **Question:**

Could the mandated MIS requirements be layered onto our existing data platform and existing operations in an efficient manner? Or would the designated CAA be forced to abandon its current data management infrastructure?

Response:

The designated CAA shall be required to comply with the MIS requirements identified in the contract template, which is embedded in the RFA on page 9. The designated CAA may require its staff to complete double entry into multiple systems; however, funding is provided to assist with the Department’s expectations for data compliance.

4. **Question:**

How much autonomy would the designated CAA retain in program selection, program design, and client eligibility for existing programs not funded by the CSBG/HSI?

Response:

Programs funded through other funding sources must adhere to the contractual obligations associated with the respective funding. However, the CSBG/HSI contract template clearly states CSBG and HSI expectations. The CSBG template is embedded into the RFA on page 9.

5. **Question:**

Would the DSS consider application by a consortium of several existing agencies?

Response:

No. Please refer to page 5 of the RFA. There it states that a prospective applicant is “**A private 501(c)(3) nonprofit provider organization or unit of local government that**

may submit an application to the Department in response to this RFA, but has not yet done so.” Also, on Page 5 an applicant is defined as, “A private 501(c)(3) nonprofit provider organization or unit of local government that has submitted an application to the Department in response to this RFA”.

6. **Question:**

In reviewing the Greater Stamford and Greater Norwalk RFAs, I noticed that Wilton and New Canaan are included in the Greater Norwalk catchment area. We are applying to become the designated CAP agency for Greater Stamford catchment area. We would like to propose that Wilton and New Canaan be included in the Greater Stamford RFA because both of those towns are adjacent to our southern catchment communities (Ridgefield and Redding). If awarded the designation for the Greater Stamford area, it makes sense to include Wilton and New Canaan so that geographically we would be able to provide services to all of western Connecticut.

Response:

Please refer to page 7 of the RFA. The Department identifies the geographic area to be served as Greater Stamford. The towns are as follows: Darien, Greenwich and Stamford. The Department cannot entertain an expansion of the previously identified catchment area.

7. **Question:**

The application states that we must follow the outline and submit C. (declaration of conf. info) and D. (conflict of interest). If neither of these apply to our agency – should we just submit a page that states it is N/A?

Response:

Yes

8. **Question:**

What kind of evidence should we use to show geographic location – a map with our agency’s location highlighted?

Response:

The submission format is described in the RFA. The applicant must comply with the applicant format guidance. It is at the applicant’s discretion what documentation it will submit to comply with the guidance provided in the RFA.

9. **Question:**

Confirmation – we are going to submit 2 organization charts – one of our current org. structure and one of the proposed org. structure, correct?

Response:

The Department refers Applicant to Appendix A of the RFA. Examples of references in the Appendix A are described below:

- Page 1 of Appendix A of the RFA requests (Organization Chart (agency-wide) as part of the minimum requirements.
- Page 2 of Appendix A states, “A description of the overall staffing and experience of staff in administering and operating programs that serve the low-income population. Explain how the applicant will add staff or expertise to the organization to deliver the programs proposed in this application. Provide a description of proposed project staff, including bilingual/multicultural capacity, proposed organization charts for the agency and essential personnel dedicated to the CSBG program. At minimum, CSBG staff shall include: Program Manager, fiscal and program positions. Include a description of how new positions relate to the existing staff and organizational structure.”

Please note that the identified examples are just that, examples. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all questions are answered completely and fully, as identified in the RFA and Appendix A.

10. **Question:**

Under Organization Capacity #4 – should we include any activities that we are currently doing in the Stamford area that would segue into the start-up phase of the CAA for Stamford?

Response:

The applicant must respond to the requirement as stated. Any applicant that is providing interim CSBG/HSI services for the Greater Stamford catchment area cannot reference that experience, as it would provide an unequal playing field for potential applicants.

11. **Question:**

#2 under Organization Capacity and #1d. under Scope of Services talks about an org chart; one described as agency wide and one described as administrative – is this one and the same org. chart or are you looking for 2 (one proposed agency wide and 1 proposed admin only?)

Response:

The applicant must respond to the requirement as stated. The applicant must read the requirement and make a determination on how they will respond within the page limits.

12. **Question:**

Under Scope of Services, 1e – are you looking for the training we will provide to our staff or training needs we are expecting from the Department of Social Services or both?

Response:

The applicant must respond to the requirement as stated. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide a proposed training and identify its need to meet the CSBG requirements.

13. **Question:**

Under Scope of Services, 2c – should we include a sample of the type of reports our organization submits or just list the reports?

Response:

The applicant respond to the requirement as stated. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide a response that "Describe how client information and data is collected by the organization to evaluate client success and program effectiveness. ..." as stated in Appendix A, page 4. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that their response adequately meets the requirement.

14. **Question:**

With regards to the budget – do we have to include a budget of the full one-time funding of \$362,258? If for example what we anticipate for start-up costs is less than that – is it o.k. to submit that number or are you looking for start-up costs for \$362,258?

Response:

The budget should reflect what the applicant believes will be needed for start-up costs.

15. **Question:**

The proposed dollar amount of \$362,258 (CSBG) and \$407,683 (H.S.I) is for 9 months from January 1, 2015-September 30, 2015, correct? Therefore for a full 12 months of 10/1/15-9/30/16 would these amounts be different?

Response:

No. The allocation identified represents a 12 month allocation that is being proposed to be utilized during the period identified.

16. **Question:**

Can the city's Community Development program function as the CAA for limited programming?

Response:

The eligible entity must carry out the goals and objectives of the CSBG Act. A public organization can be a municipality and said municipality can assign an agency/unit to be the entity responsible for carrying out the goals and objectives identified in the CSBG Act, and CSBG/HSI contract, embedded in the RFA.

17. **Question:**

Are there specific requirements of what should be included in the Letter of Intent?

Response:

No. The letter is required to state the potential applicant's intention to submit an application.

18. **Question:**

Does the Interim Provider get to use their experience in the application – giving them an edge in the process?

Response:

No, the current interim service provider cannot use its experience acquired through the interim CSBG/HSI service contract with the Department. If the Department allowed such action, the interim service provider would have an unfair advantage.

19. **Question:**

Is there a limit to the Letter of the Reference?

Response:

The Letter of the Reference (Reference Reply Questionnaire) is a one page survey rating sheet. Since there are no areas for comments, it will be a one page submission.

20. **Question:**

Section G #4 – How do you answer milestones prior to January 1?

Response:

The Department reconsidered Section G #4 of the RFA Application. The date has been changed to state January 1, 2015 to March 15, 2015. Also, please note the track changes to CSBG/HSI Appendix A – Application.

21. **Question:**

What towns are in the Greater Norwalk catchment area?

Response:

Norwalk, Weston, Westport, Wilton and New Canaan

22. **Question:**

Which documents for BizNet?

Response:

Please refer to page 24 of the RFA Section E. Statutory and Regulatory Compliance.

23: **Question:**

Is Binders allowed?

Response: Yes

24: **Question:**

Can Letter of Intent be an email or does it need to be an official letter?

Response:

Yes, either form is acceptable. Please refer to page 17 of the RFA #5–Mandatory Letter of Intent.

25. **Question:**

Does one time funding need to total amount?

Response:

One time funding means that these resources will only be available during the period identified in the RFA and should not be considered by the applicant as on-going funding to support the provision of contracted services.

State of Connecticut
Department of Social Services
**Community Services Block Grant/Human Services Infrastructure 08/11/14
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Addendum 2 issued September 26, 2014

Approved: _____

Crystal Redding

State of Connecticut Department of Social Services
(Original signature on document in procurement file)

This Addendum must be signed and returned with your submission

Authorized Signer

Name of Company